

Inspection of an outstanding school: Chelsea Community Hospital School

369 Fulham Road, London SW10 9NH

Inspection dates:

1 and 2 November 2023

Outcome

Chelsea Community Hospital School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils said that they feel safe at this school. Staff are caring, encouraging and welcoming in their approach. Some pupils are not at this school for long, but staff take the time to understand quickly how they can help them with their learning during their stay in hospital. Other pupils are long-term in-patients or attend a community setting. These pupils' needs are also carefully planned for and well understood. This helps pupils to enjoy their learning and to get the most out of the individual support that staff provide.

Leaders are extremely ambitious for pupils. They work closely with staff and external professionals to reduce disruption to pupils' learning while they are in hospital. Leaders provide a broad and rich curriculum so that pupils are able to return smoothly to their home schools once their treatment has finished. The school's community settings provide a safe space for pupils to learn in. Many pupils in these settings have missed a lot of education, but leaders provide a learning environment that allows them to regain the confidence to return to school.

Staff take time to understand pupils as individuals. They know exactly how to foster a nurturing and calm atmosphere. Pupils respond to this very well and are ready to learn. If pupils become distressed, staff deal with this discreetly and effectively. Staff praise pupils regularly and reward them with 'warm fuzzies' or 'positive pockets'. Pupils value these approaches.

What does the school do well and what does it need to do better?

Leaders have designed a highly ambitious curriculum that meets the needs of the wide range of pupils who attend the school. They make sure that pupils can continue to study all the subjects that they learn in their home schools. This ensures that pupils can return to their school with as little lost learning as possible. Leaders' work on understanding pupils' needs is underpinned by close, collaborative working with pupils' home schools. Leaders also understand when pupils need a highly personalised approach to their

learning. In these situations, staff swiftly identify what pupils' barriers to learning are and design a bespoke curriculum to meet pupils' specific needs.

Leaders think very carefully about the way in which the curriculum orders the knowledge that pupils need to know and remember. Subject content is sequenced with precision so that pupils are well supported to build up knowledge. For example, in history, pupils in Years 7 and 8 learn about the concept of empire in relation to the British Empire. This prepares pupils to learn about and understand the causes of the First and Second World Wars when they study these periods in Year 9.

Leaders use assessment effectively to ensure that they know pupils' starting points when they join the school. They use this information to put in place a personalised, well-targeted programme of learning for each pupil. This includes a focus on reading, including for children who are beginning to learn to read in early years and older pupils who are struggling to read fluently. Pupils studying for GCSEs or A levels also receive the curriculum that they need in order to work successfully towards these qualifications.

Many pupils have an education, health and care (EHC) plan. Leaders include the EHC plan targets purposefully in pupils' individual learning plans. As a result, staff know exactly what steps pupils need to take next in their learning and development. Teachers expertly use these plans to track pupils' progress through their curriculum. Teachers have strong subject knowledge. They are very skilled at adapting their approaches to meet pupils' needs and ensuring that pupils understand and recall knowledge.

Reading is a priority. Leaders have invested in a phonics programme to teach pupils how to decode words and quickly become fluent readers. Pupils join the school having learned to read with the programmes used in their home schools. Leaders are extremely flexible, and together with staff, skilfully use the programme from a pupil's home school where it is most appropriate in supporting reading development. This helps smooth pupils' return to their school after their stay in hospital. Leaders think carefully about what books pupils read, including the books that children in early years should know well. Leaders also ask pupils what interests them and give them access to a wide range of books.

Many pupils have faced a lot of disruption to their education when they come to this school. Some pupils return frequently, while others have missed a great deal of school before joining. Teachers are experts at working with pupils and engaging them in their learning. This leads to improved attendance for those who have missed a lot of school. Teachers know their pupils well. They know what motivates and interests them. As a result, pupils rarely disrupt their own learning or the learning of others. If this does happen, staff know how to respond sensitively and quickly to resolve any issues.

Leaders make sure that pupils have access to a wide variety of opportunities beyond the classroom. Pupils enjoy horse riding and swimming sessions, for instance. They also enjoy visiting the theatre and going to theme parks. Creative arts are valued by leaders, and pupils enjoy their workshops with the Royal Court Theatre and the London Symphony Orchestra. Pupils are involved in decision-making at the school via their weekly discussion groups. Pupils recently contributed to the design and decoration of the new site at St Charles Square.

Staff are extremely proud to work at the school, and leaders support them well to fulfil their roles. Staff at all levels receive appropriate training and can ask for support from leaders. Staff said that leaders listen to them and act on their suggestions. Leaders ensure that staff workload is manageable.

Governors know the school well and hold leaders to account effectively. Governors fulfil their statutory duties regarding safeguarding and equalities.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

When we have judged a school to be outstanding, we will then normally go into the school about once every four years to confirm that the school remains outstanding. This is called an ungraded inspection, and it is carried out under section 8 of the Education Act 2005. We do not give graded judgements on an ungraded inspection. However, if we find evidence that a school would now receive a higher or lower grade, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection, which is carried out under section 5 of the Act. Usually this is within one to two years of the date of the ungraded inspection. If we have serious concerns about safeguarding, behaviour or the quality of education, we will deem the ungraded inspection a graded inspection immediately.

This is the second ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be outstanding in September 2014.

How can I feed back my views?

You can use [Ofsted Parent View](#) to give Ofsted your opinion on your child's school, or to find out what other parents and carers think. We use information from Ofsted Parent View when deciding which schools to inspect, when to inspect them and as part of their inspection.

The Department for Education has further [guidance](#) on how to complain about a school.

Further information

You can search for [published performance information](#) about the school.

In the report, '[disadvantaged pupils](#)' is used to mean pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND); pupils who meet the [definition of children in need of help and protection](#); pupils receiving statutory local authority support from a social worker; and pupils who otherwise meet the criteria used for deciding the school's [pupil premium funding](#) (this includes pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years, looked after children (children in local authority care) and/or children who left care through adoption or another formal route).

School details

Unique reference number	100549
Local authority	Kensington and Chelsea
Inspection number	10289780
Type of school	Special
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	2 to 19
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Gender of pupils in sixth-form provision	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	81
Of which, number on roll in the sixth form	21
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Francesca Smith
Headteacher	Janette Steel
Website	www.cchs.org.uk
Dates of previous inspection	1 May 2018, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school provides education for pupils with chronic medical or mental health conditions. Many of these pupils are in-patients at one of the hospital sites. Other pupils attend a community setting daily. For many of these pupils, their medical conditions have caused them to miss prolonged periods of education before joining the hospital school.
- The school is based across six sites. These are the Royal Brompton & Harefield Hospital, Sydney Street SW3 6NP; the Chelsea & Westminster Hospital, 369 Fulham Road SW10 9NH; St Mary's Hospital, 7th Floor, QEOM Building, Praed Street W2 1NY; Lavender Walk Adolescent Unit, 1 Nightingale Place SW10 9NG; Collingham Child & Family Centre, 1A Beatrice Place, Marloes Road W8 5LP; and Chelsea Community College, 85 St Charles Square W10 6EB.
- Many pupils who attend the school have special educational needs and/or disabilities. Many pupils also have an EHC plan.

- Leaders do not make use of alternative provision.
- The school meets the requirements of the provider access legislation, which requires schools to provide pupils in Years 8 to 13 with information and engagement about approved technical education qualifications and apprenticeships.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time judgement about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school had received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors visited four of the six sites as part of this inspection.
- Inspectors met with the headteacher and other senior leaders. The lead inspector met with the chair of the governing body, another governor and a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors did deep dives in early reading, mathematics, and personal, social, health and economic education. For each deep dive, inspectors held discussions about the curriculum, visited a sample of lessons, spoke to teachers, spoke to some pupils about their learning and looked at samples of pupils' work. Inspectors also considered pupils' learning in other subjects, including science, history and geography.
- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, inspectors: reviewed the single central record; took account of the views of leaders, staff and pupils; and considered the extent to which the school has created an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts pupils' interests first.
- Inspectors met with pupils. Pupils' behaviour in lessons and at breaktimes was observed.
- Inspectors spoke to a range of staff about the school's work, including about safeguarding and behaviour. Inspectors also looked at the responses to its staff and its pupil surveys and to Ofsted Parent View.

Inspection team

Mark Smith, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Gaynor Roberts

His Majesty's Inspector

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