

Inspection of a school judged good for overall effectiveness before September 2024: The Livity School

Adare Walk, Streatham, London SW16 2PW

Inspection dates:

14 and 15 May 2025

Outcome

Evidence gathered during this ungraded (section 8) inspection suggests that the school's work may have improved significantly across all areas since the previous inspection. The school's next inspection will be a graded inspection.

What is it like to attend this school?

Pupils at this school learn to be as independent as possible, thanks to a team of specialist teachers, therapists and health professionals. The school sets ambitious goals for each individual pupil. Pupils rise to achieve these. Their learning, care and well-being are very well supported.

Staff make it their business to understand pupils' interests, likes and dislikes. They understand the nuances in each pupils' behaviour and communication. Consequently, they know pupils exceptionally well. This helps to ensure pupils' behaviour is supported and managed well and that pupils feel safe and happy.

The school encourages pupils to be responsible. Pupils vote for their peers to be on the pupil council. The pupil council helps make important decisions about changes to the school uniform or about school visits. Pupils take part in environmental workshops and look after local gardens. Pupils are encouraged to tidy up after themselves. They take care of their surroundings and are kind to one another.

The school nurtures pupils' confidence and talents. All pupils have opportunities to perform in productions. They take part in a sleepover at school. They can attend a range of clubs, which includes karaoke, capoeira and disco dancing. Pupils acknowledge one another's achievements and they celebrate together.

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

The school's curriculum is aspirational and ambitious for all pupils. The school carefully balances academic learning with pupils' personal and social development. There is deliberateness in all activities and no moments of learning are wasted.

The staff team identifies personalised outcomes for each pupil. Teachers segment outcomes into logical steps. They understand what is most important for each pupil to learn next. This ensures that pupils learn important knowledge and skills in the right order. Staff creatively adapt learning, resources and approaches. This enables pupils to engage and contribute meaningfully to their learning. It also helps children in the early years to settle well and quickly.

Members of the multi-agency team share their expertise with staff and deliver training. Staff value this training and apply it well. Staff review and check the impact of teaching and other therapies precisely. Consequently, children in the early years and older pupils know and can do more over time. They achieve their personalised goals exceptionally well.

The school is committed to enabling all pupils to be as independent as possible. Staff ensure communication and physical development are integrated thoughtfully and appropriately throughout the school day. For example, pupils learn to stand, navigate staircases and use walking frames. Pupils have the means to be able to communicate meaningfully. Staff understand the subtleties in pupils' communication and pupils are listened to carefully. This ensures pupils can make choices, give consent and express their feelings and emotions. All this further enhances pupils' resilience and independence. Furthermore, it supports positive, calm behaviour in and outside of classrooms.

The school fosters pupils' enjoyment and love of reading. Books are bought to life through enthusiastic story telling. All pupils learn the foundations of reading. Staff identify when pupils are ready to learn the sounds that letters make. There is a determination for early readers to become fluent. This means pupils learn the phonics knowledge they need and read books that are matched to their stage of learning.

The school provides many opportunities for pupils to learn outside the classroom. Pupils visit local shops to buy ingredients for cooking lessons. They use public transport and visit museums. For those pupils who are not able to access their community as readily, the school ensures they have a range of experiences also. For example, staff turn classrooms into the seaside. Visiting musicians perform for pupils and a mobile zoo enables pupils to experience a range of exotic animals. This all helps to further develop, nurture and broaden pupils' interests.

The school's procedures to monitor pupils' attendance are robust. The school acts swiftly if attendance rates fall. Staff seek to understand the reasons behind any absences. They work collectively with families and other agencies, including medical teams, to find solutions to improve pupils' attendance. If the need arises, the school puts remote learning in place for selected pupils. This enables pupils to continue to receive their education and participate in shared experiences, such as music lessons and school assemblies.

Those responsible for governance ensure priority improvement plans set by leaders are right for the school. They rigorously monitor the implementation of these plans and check the school's effectiveness. Governors work collectively with leaders to ensure that the school maintains and improves upon its high standards.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Background

Until September 2024, on a graded (section 5) inspection we gave schools an overall effectiveness grade, in addition to the key and provision judgements. Overall effectiveness grades given before September 2024 will continue to be visible on school inspection reports and on Ofsted's website. From September 2024 graded inspections will not include an overall effectiveness grade. This school was, before September 2024, judged to be good for its overall effectiveness.

We have now inspected the school to determine whether it has taken effective action to maintain the standards identified at that previous inspection. 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's work has improved significantly or that it may not be as strong as it was at the last inspection, then the next inspection will be a graded inspection. A graded inspection 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 third ungraded inspection since we judged the school to be good for overall effectiveness in January 2013.

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	133440
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	10345888
Type of school	Special
School category	Community special
Age range of pupils	2 to 11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	133
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of governing body	Michael Jenner
Headteacher	Joanna Tarrant
Website	www.thelivingschool.co.uk
Date of previous inspection	16 July 2019, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school caters for pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities. All pupils have an education, health and care plan.
- The school does not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- Inspections are a point-in-time evaluation about the quality of a school's education provision.
- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the school and has taken that into account in her evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors held meetings with the headteacher and other members of the senior leadership team.
- Inspectors visited a sample of lessons, looked at samples of pupils' work and spoke to some pupils about their learning.

- To evaluate the effectiveness of safeguarding, the 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 spoke with members of the local governing body, including the vice chair of governors. An inspector also spoke with representatives from the local authority.
- Inspectors spoke with staff about their workload and well-being. They also took account of the responses to Ofsted's online survey for staff.
- Inspectors looked at a range of policies and documentation relating to pupils' welfare and education. They observed pupils' behaviour during lessons and around school.
- Inspectors took account of the responses to Ofsted Parent View, including the free-text comments.
- Inspectors spoke with groups of pupils about their experiences at school and considered the responses to Ofsted's pupil survey.

Inspection team

Kieran Bird, lead inspector

His Majesty's Inspector

Lucy Bruce

Ofsted Inspector

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