

Chelwood Nursery School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	100668
Local Authority	Lewisham
Inspection number	323323
Inspection dates	26–27 January 2009
Reporting inspector	John Carnaghan

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number on roll	
School (total)	125
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Mrs Stella Jeffrey
Headteacher	Ms Nikki Oldhams
Date of previous school inspection	6 March 2006
School address	Chelwood Walk Turnham Road Brockley London SE4 2QQ
Telephone number	020 7639 2514
Fax number	020 7639 2514

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Introduction

The inspection was carried out by one Additional Inspector.

Description of the school

Chelwood Nursery School is a satellite service within the Hatcham Oak Children's Centre. Just over a third of children are White British, and about a quarter have a Black or Black British background. Children come from eighteen cultures and a variety of ethnic backgrounds, and eleven languages are represented. About a third of children have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and the largest group of these have speech and communication difficulties.

Key for inspection grades

Grade 1	Outstanding
Grade 2	Good
Grade 3	Satisfactory
Grade 4	Inadequate

Overall effectiveness of the school

Grade: 1

This is an outstanding school. One parental comment, among many positive replies to questionnaires, sums it up. 'Chelwood is the best thing that has happened to my baby. She is so excited about her school that she wants to go to school on Saturday after shopping, and on Sunday after church.' No parents expressed any concerns about the school.

The headteacher is highly capable and is an outstanding role model for teachers and children. She knows the strengths that come from sharing responsibilities. To this end, she leads a very cohesive team of staff, who have similar values and demonstrate a powerful commitment to include all children. The project that they are all engaged on is to ensure that all children receive the best possible opportunities and that no child falls behind. Leadership and management are outstanding.

The way the school plans and delivers a personalised curriculum for all children lies at the heart of much of its success. Clear, precise observations and assessments provide the school with an accurate view of each child's capabilities and changing learning needs. Very careful planning, regularly updated, provides children with a wide range of stimulating activities. These are backed by interesting resources that are carefully prepared in advance. For example, children's role play in the 'Chinese restaurant' in the playground provided great opportunities to develop both their language for communication and their personal and social skills, as they acted as waiters and customers. This outstanding curriculum, coupled with excellent and lively teaching, powerfully promotes learning. These major strengths mean that the children, who generally start school with skills well below those expected for their age, leave at levels similar to, or above age expectations. This represents excellent achievement for all. Children play a dynamic role in their learning - working enthusiastically, behaving well and showing an exceptionally high degree of confidence, independence and concentration.

The promotion of children's welfare is outstanding. Their safety and well-being are a high priority for all staff, and are substantially enhanced by the school's consistently strong policies, procedures and practices. Ongoing assessment leads to children receiving a continuous flow of guidance and advice, but this does not lead to the setting of simple targets to enhance their knowledge of what they should do to improve. The nursery's great strengths in teaching, the curriculum, and care all promote children's outstanding personal development. In particular, children's developing confidence and independence means that they are exceptionally well prepared for later school life.

What the school should do to improve further

- Build on developing self-assessment to make the next stages of learning explicit to all children.

Achievement and standards

Grade: 1

Children enter the school with skills and aptitudes that are well below those expected for their age. A large proportion of children start school with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and many are at an early stage of speaking English. The high quality of the school's initial assessment permits a rapid diagnosis of the issues facing those who are disadvantaged. The school quickly moves to offer powerful support and encouragement, so that barriers to learning are soon diminished and overcome. By the time children enter primary school, their aptitudes

are at or above the expected levels for their age, and their achievement - including that of children with speech and communication difficulties and those for whom English is not their mother tongue - is outstanding.

One of the school's strengths is its remarkable success in developing children's personal, social and emotional development. Close links with parents help new children to settle into school life very quickly. Teachers and other adults expect maturity and independence from children, providing very good role models for how they should behave and relate to one another. Even the youngest soon learn to express themselves clearly, saying 'excuse me' if they want to get by or 'stop it, you're hurting me' if they are in distress. Children move to primary school thoroughly prepared for the next phase in their education.

Personal development and well-being

Grade: 1

The school's exceptional curriculum and personalised support ensures that children develop as very happy and fulfilled individuals. Their enjoyment in learning is palpable and they work individually, in pairs and in groups (large and small) as a matter of course. This means that they develop the skills that equip them for the future exceptionally well. The school provides numerous opportunities to help children to understand the factors that promote good health, and they display sensible habits such as taking energetic exercise and buttoning up warmly before going outside on a January day. Children enjoy growing their own vegetables, which are subsequently used in cooking sessions.

Attendance is better than expected for this age range. To all adults in the school, the safety of their charges is paramount. Their strong promotion of this area ensures that children develop an excellent understanding of how to guard their own safety and that of their classmates. This is enhanced by their mature behaviour. Children's views make a major contribution to the school community. When they express their preferences for play and activities, these are often incorporated into their personal curriculum. Children contribute to the harmony of the school community by joining in tidy-up time and caring for the school environment.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are outstanding. Their social development is particularly strong, with constructive relationships making a major contribution to the school's excellent ethos. The cycle of regular cultural festivals, which are marked by the school in its curriculum planning, promotes children's strong multicultural understanding.

Quality of provision

Effectiveness in promoting children's learning and development

Grade: 1

Children's rapid development and impressive learning is closely bound to the school's highly effective planning and organisation. Systematic observation and assessment helps adults to track and review children's achievement. Rigorous monitoring by senior managers ensures the accuracy of these assessments. Analysis of this continuous flow of information enables precise support to be directed to groups or individuals, as and when required.

Educational programmes are planned and adapted, on a daily basis, to address each child's developing learning needs. This highly responsive and flexible approach affords each child the best possible opportunities to make progress. Children have freedom to select activities from a range that is on offer, and this motivates them strongly. Teachers know what attracts each

child and subtly organise the classroom so that, while children are having great fun, they are also developing their knowledge, skills and attitudes. All adults in classrooms work in close collaboration, maintaining a clear focus on learning.

Classrooms are invariably calm places where children and adults get on amicably, helping one another out as a matter of course. Children show maturity far beyond their years. This enables sessions to proceed with little interruption and promotes rapid progress. Resources are well organised and deployed to maximise enjoyment and learning opportunities. Both indoor and outdoor learning are outstandingly well managed, and planning maintains a constant focus on promoting all the different areas of learning. The balance of adult-led and child-led activities results in active and enjoyable learning.

Effectiveness in promoting children's welfare

Grade: 1

Arrangements to safeguard children are comprehensive. All adults take great care in their daily school routines to ensure that children work and play safely, and they constantly stress consideration for others. Routines for outside play and for the unlocking of the gate are rigorously adhered to. Very effective record keeping ensures that each child's particular needs are well known to all relevant staff. Numerous staff are trained as paediatric first-aiders, and all have good knowledge of child protection procedures. There are clear, effective routines for the arrival and departure of children from the premises.

The excellent outside areas allow children to be adventurous, while being vigilantly supervised. Children are regularly reminded about how to move around the premises safely. Excellent partnerships with parents ensure that children make a smooth start to their schooling, and this continues throughout their time at the nursery. Children receive helpful advice about how to improve their skills, but the school recognises that there is scope to provide them with simple, precise targets for improvement.

Leadership and management

Grade: 1

Parents attest to the numerous qualities in this area, one writing about the strengths of the 'involved, hands-on headteacher' and many expressing gratitude for the approachability of all staff. The headteacher is a pivotal figure in setting the tone for the school. Her door is always open to staff and children, and she knows the school intimately. All staff share the commitment and drive to make sure each child achieves to their full potential. Accurate self-evaluation enables this to be constantly checked on. In this way, leadership and management have a substantial impact on children's achievement and development.

Leadership and management roles are shared among all staff. For example, the curriculum is managed by six teams of staff (one for each learning area), and the whole staff meet to agree on priorities and resources that should be allocated. Governors monitor the school well, working in close collaboration with staff to set priorities in the clear, effective school development plan. Governors check carefully to ensure that these priorities are met, but sometimes do not challenge the school sufficiently. Thorough development planning and the school's excellent recent track record ensure that the school's capacity for improvement in the future is outstanding.

Teaching, assessment and the curriculum are closely monitored to assure their high quality. This also means that there is strong consistency in the school's provision. The school is highly inclusive and gives very strong support to disadvantaged children to help them 'close the gap'. It uses wide-ranging links and partnerships to full advantage in promoting children's learning and development.

The school has a clear understanding of what is required to promote community cohesion, based on a sound analysis of its own community and of children's needs. It is effective in ensuring equal opportunities for all to succeed, by removing barriers to participation in learning, and eliminating variations in outcomes for different groups.

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Annex A

Inspection judgements

Key to judgements: grade 1 is outstanding, grade 2 good, grade 3 satisfactory, and grade 4 inadequate	School Overall
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Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the EYFS?	1
Effective steps have been taken to promote improvement since the last inspection	Yes
How well does the school work in partnership with others to promote learners' well being?	1
The capacity to make any necessary improvements	1

Achievement and standards

How well do children in the EYFS achieve?	1
The standards[1] reached by learners	3
How well learners make progress, taking account of any significant variations between groups of learners	1
How well learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities make progress	1

Personal development and well-being

How good are the overall personal development and well-being of the children?	1
The extent of learners' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1
The extent to which learners adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which learners adopt safe practices	1
The extent to which learners enjoy their education	1
The attendance of learners	2
The behaviour of learners	2
The extent to which learners make a positive contribution to the community	1
How well learners develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1

The quality of provision

How effectively are children in the EYFS helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of the children in the EYFS promoted?	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the EYFS led and managed?	1
How effectively leaders and managers at all levels set clear direction leading to improvement and promote high quality of care and education	1
How effectively leaders and managers use challenging targets to raise standards	1
The effectiveness of the school's self-evaluation	1
How well equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination eliminated	1
How well does the school contribute to community cohesion?	2
How effectively and efficiently resources, including staff, are deployed to achieve value for money	1
The extent to which governors and other supervisory boards discharge their responsibilities	1
Do procedures for safeguarding learners meet current government requirements?	Yes
Does this school require special measures?	No
Does this school require a notice to improve?	No

Annex B

Text from letter to pupils explaining the findings of the inspection

09 February 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Chelwood Nursery School, London, SE4 2QQ

Thank you for helping me so well when I visited your school recently. It was great meeting you and good to find out that you are happy and doing so well in such an excellent school. I especially liked being served by so many keen waiters when I visited your outdoor Chinese restaurant. It was very good to see how sensible and grown up you are becoming.

Your teachers are doing an excellent job. You get so many interesting things to do that you learn extremely well and your achievement is excellent. This is because all the grown-ups are always ready to help you. I am sure you will agree that you are really well looked after. This helps you to grow up as sensible young people, and makes sure you are ready when it is time to move on to your next school.

There is one thing that I have asked the grown-ups to think about:

- you need to be told more clearly how to improve your learning.

Once again, thank you for all your help. It was lovely meeting you.

Yours faithfully

John Carnaghan

Lead Inspector