Inspection of an outstanding school: James Lee Nursery School

Gliddon Road, London W14 9BH

Inspection date: 16 May 2023

Outcome

James Lee Nursery School continues to be an outstanding school.

What is it like to attend this school?

Children at James Lee Nursery get an exceptional start to their education. Staff develop warm and nurturing relationships with children. Parents and carers enjoy joining children in the nursery space each morning. This helps children to feel happy and secure. They settle quickly because their environment is familiar and engaging.

Parents spoken with appreciate the caring staff and how children are supported to build their confidence. One parent summed up the views of many, saying, 'I would rate it five stars: it is excellent.'

Leaders have high expectations of children. They focus on building children's resilience and independence. Staff ensure that resources are easily available so that children can select what they need. For example, while following an instruction booklet to mix paint, children said, 'now we need to get aprons'. Leaders make sure that children have the necessary knowledge, love of learning and independence to thrive. They are very well prepared for primary school.

Children behave impeccably. Staff teach children to solve conflicts positively and to be respectful and kind to each other. Children are friendly and polite to adults. They learn how to look after their nursery environment. Bullying is extremely rare and would be dealt with swiftly, were it to occur. Children feel safe and are kept safe.

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

Leaders and staff are highly ambitious for all children, regardless of their starting points or educational needs. They have designed a curriculum that is aspirational and individualised to meet the needs and circumstances of each child. Staff understand the curriculum well and what they want children to achieve. Children are encouraged to lead their learning. Staff guide children through the steps they need to take to deepen their knowledge and understanding.

Staff are experts in early years practice. They explore what children say and are doing. Staff provide appropriate direction and interaction to build children's knowledge very effectively. Staff question skilfully to check what children understand, and then further deepen children's understanding and use of language. For example, when observing the chick eggs, children were encouraged to explain their ideas about whether the chicks could be fed.

Teachers use assessment effectively. Staff use information they gather from home visits and when children are settling to set ambitious curriculum milestones. They check children's progression carefully and make sure that children are on track. Reviews of learning are used to check what children have understood. The planned future learning is then amended to ensure any misconceptions are addressed swiftly.

Children develop a clear love of books, stories and rhymes. They enjoy accessing the range of quality texts on offer across the nursery. Story times are carefully considered. Children are highly motivated throughout these sessions. They enjoy having the chance to retell stories that they know by heart. For example, they join in with and use familiar phrases such as 'I'll huff, and I'll puff' from the tale of 'The Three Little Pigs'. Children enjoy choosing a new book with their parents on library day. They even make recommendations to their friends.

Leaders have focused on making sure that children are able to communicate and use language confidently. Staff take opportunities to model full sentences in different situations, such as being a customer in the fruit and vegetable shop. Staff routinely use and model ambitious vocabulary. With staff's careful guidance, children are keen and confident to use these new words themselves. For example, during story time, children shared that the little pigs put a 'cauldron' of water under the chimney.

Provision for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND) is exemplary. Staff are skilled at identifying children's specific needs early. They use the expertise of therapists to put necessary adaptations in place. Because of this, children with SEND access the same curriculum as their peers. Children with SEND have the support they need to join in with all aspects of school life.

There is a calm, purposeful atmosphere throughout the nursery. Children sustain concentration for prolonged periods. They try hard and persevere even when it is tricky. For example, children did not give up when trying to drill a hole. Routines are well established, and children enjoy being responsible, for example when setting the tables for lunchtime.

Leaders provide a range of rich experiences beyond the planned curriculum. There are daily enrichment activities such as 'wiggle waggle' and yoga. Weekly visits to Wimbledon Common, where children learn and explore outdoors, are valued by staff, parents and children. The important work of the eco school committee is visible throughout the nursery. For example, children care for the plants in the greenhouse that has been made from recycled plastic bottles.

Staff enjoy working at the nursery. They value the strong team ethos. Staff feel well supported by leaders, valued and listened to. They appreciate that leaders are considerate of their workload and well-being.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Staff know children and their families extremely well. This means that they quickly identify and follow up anything that causes concern.

Leaders understand the types of risks that children may face. They ensure that staff receive regular training and updates. Staff understand how to record and report any concerns that they may have.

Leaders make sure that the nursery environment is safe. For example, they check equipment and resources daily, and maintain appropriate levels of supervision. The curriculum has been designed to help children understand how to stay safe and take appropriate risks, for example when using tools such as drills and saws.

Governors understand their responsibilities and check that safeguarding procedures are followed.

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 May 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' refers to those pupils who attract government pupil premium funding: pupils claiming free school meals at any point in the last six years and pupils in care or who left care through adoption or another formal route.

School details

Unique reference number	100317
Local authority	Hammersmith & Fulham
Inspection number	10255535
Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3 to 5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	47
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair of the governing body	Louise Jones and Jolie Collett (Co-Chairs)
Headteacher	Anne-Marie Strachan (Executive Headteacher) Janice Moore (Head of School)
Website	www.jameslee.lbhf.sch.uk
Date of previous inspection	5 October 2017, under section 8 of the Education Act 2005

Information about this school

- The school is part of the Thames Federation.
- The school runs a breakfast club.
- Leaders do not use any alternative provision.

Information about this inspection

- This was the first routine inspection the school received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. Inspectors discussed the impact of the pandemic with leaders and have taken that into account in their evaluation of the school.
- Inspectors spoke to school leaders about different aspects of school life. They also met with a group of governors, as well as a representative from the local authority.
- Inspectors carried out deep dives in these areas of learning: communication and language, mathematics, and physical development. For each deep dive, inspectors spoke with leaders, visited lessons, and spoke with staff and children.
- Inspectors also spoke to leaders about the curriculum in other areas of learning.

- Inspectors met with staff about well-being and workload as well as professional development opportunities.
- Inspectors collected a range of evidence about safeguarding. This involved speaking to leaders, including governors, and staff about safeguarding procedures. They also checked key documentation and records.
- Inspectors gathered parents' views, both through responses to surveys, including the Ofsted Parent View survey, and through meeting with parents at various points throughout the day.

Inspection team

Helen Morrison, lead inspector	Ofsted Inspector
Rekha Bhakoo	Ofsted Inspector

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