

Inspection of LJS Nursery School

Liberal Jewish Synagogue, 28 St. Johns Wood Road, London NW8 7HA

Inspection date: 29 September 2022

Overall effectiveness	Outstanding
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The quality of education	Outstanding
Behaviour and attitudes	Outstanding
Personal development	Outstanding
Leadership and management	Outstanding
Overall effectiveness at previous inspection	Outstanding

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is outstanding

Children at this setting get the best possible start. The rich range of experiences offered to them by the strong staff team ensure that children develop the skills and knowledge they need to go on to the next stage in their education. Children from all backgrounds are greeted with open arms into this warm and welcoming nursery. Children who are new to the setting are treated with great care, and bespoke settling-in arrangements ensure that both children and their parents receive the sensitive support they need to make their introduction to nursery as smooth as possible.

Children behave extremely well in response to the simple, clear guidance provided by the consistent staff team. There is very little challenging behaviour because children are active, interested and busy. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and are excellent role models. Children learn to take care of their environment, as they tidy away the resources and wipe the tables to ensure they are clean for snack time.

Staff have a shared understanding of what they want children to learn. The strong focus on making sure children have a solid foundation to their learning means that children flourish and have a voice. They grow in confidence as they go through the nursery. For example, they sing on their own in front of the group, make their preferences known and chat about their lives with great ease.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- The headteacher is an excellent leader. She is highly respected by the staff, who report that their well-being is given every consideration. The care and education of the children who attend the nursery are her top priority. She has developed meaningful, warm and trusting relationships with parents, who told the inspector of the headteacher's open approach and willingness to offer support and advice to families whenever they need it.
- Staff have excellent opportunities to hone their teaching skills at the setting. Senior members of the team are excellent role models. Opportunities to attend training mean that staff continue to develop their professional skills, despite some having been part of the team for many years. The headteacher makes good use of staff's individual skills to enhance the curriculum and children's experiences even further. For example, children take part in yoga, cookery and folk-dancing sessions led by this talented team.
- Children's personal, social and emotional development is at the heart of the nursery's work. Staff get to know the families extremely well and plan meticulously to meet children's individual needs. Feedback from parents is overwhelmingly positive. They describe the nursery as a 'fantastic' and 'special'

place. They feel very much part of a nurturing community. This aligns with the nursery's 'team around the child' approach.

- Support for the high proportion of children who start nursery with English as an additional language is very strong and they make excellent progress. Staff use a range of effective strategies to help children understand and learn, such as visual cues, body language, patient repetition, and using key words from home. Staff use props at circle time when singing songs and telling stories, such as 'five speckled frogs' and 'Dear Zoo'. This means that all children can participate and benefit from these sessions.
- Children who may have gaps in their learning and/or development are identified swiftly due to the staff's accurate early assessment processes. This ensures that any extra support needed is provided quickly. Staff take a holistic, child-centred approach to their practice, making excellent use of children's interests to support their development through thoughtfully prepared activities. This ensures that children develop across all seven areas of learning. For example, children roll cars down a slope so that they land on a number. Children who can already recognise numbers benefit from playing with others and taking turns, while other children begin to develop an understanding of number.
- Leaders have an excellent understanding of what children need to know and do in order to be ready for school. They ensure that this is shared with staff. Children's independence is encouraged across all age groups. Children learn to put their things away in their own drawers, hang their bags on their pegs and practise using knives safely. They are able to make choices, for example, when deciding what toppings to put on the pizzas they are making. Older children demonstrate that they are capable communicators. For example, during the cooking activity, they ask for more tomato puree, express their love of olives, and recall making honey cakes.
- Children are given time to explore resources fully and this helps them develop their concentration skills. For example, young children love conducting science experiments using water and powdered sugar. An interesting range of resources, such as pipettes, encourages children to develop their small-muscle control. 'I'm mixing,' a child told the inspector proudly. These many marvellous opportunities to 'have a go' mean that children develop positive attitudes to learning. The staff talk to the children about making mistakes and explain that they can always try again if they do not get something right straight away. This helps children to develop the resilience they need.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

Children's safety is given the highest priority. Staff talk to the children so that they learn how to keep themselves safe. The youngest children sing a song as they go down the staircase, carefully holding the banister and using their 'magic fingers' to keep close to the wall as they turn the corner. The difference between 'blunt' and 'sharp' knives is explained so the children know why the knives they are using to spread the tomato puree on their pizzas are safe.

Staff understand child protection policies and procedures and their role and responsibility in keeping children safe from harm. They know to report any concerns to the experienced designated safeguarding lead. Liaison with other agencies is conducted effectively when required. A clear process for escalating concerns is in place and understood by the team.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY303591
Local authority	Westminster
Inspection number	10138253
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register, Compulsory Childcare Register, Voluntary Childcare Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	2 to 4
Total number of places	52
Number of children on roll	21
Name of registered person	The Liberal Jewish Synagogue
Registered person unique reference number	RP905700
Telephone number	0207 432 1286
Date of previous inspection	2 July 2015

Information about this early years setting

LJS Nursery School registered in 2005. It is situated in the London Borough of Westminster. The nursery is open each weekday, term time only, from 9.15am to 12.15pm for the youngest group of children, and until 2.45pm for older children. There are seven members of staff, of whom one holds qualified teacher status and five others hold recognised early years qualifications at level 2 or above.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Penny Fisher

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the provider.
- The headteacher and inspector completed a learning walk together of all areas of the nursery and discussed the early years curriculum.
- The headteacher and staff spoke to the inspector about their intentions for children's learning.
- The inspector spoke to children and staff at times throughout the inspection.
- The inspector spoke to the headteacher, who is also the nominated individual for the setting, about the leadership and management of the setting.
- The inspector observed the quality of education being provided, indoors and outdoors, and assessed the impact this was having on children's learning.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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