

Linden Tree Nursery Schools

Unique reference number (URN): 2752627

Address: 16A OLD TOWN, CLAPHAM, LONDON, SW4 0JY

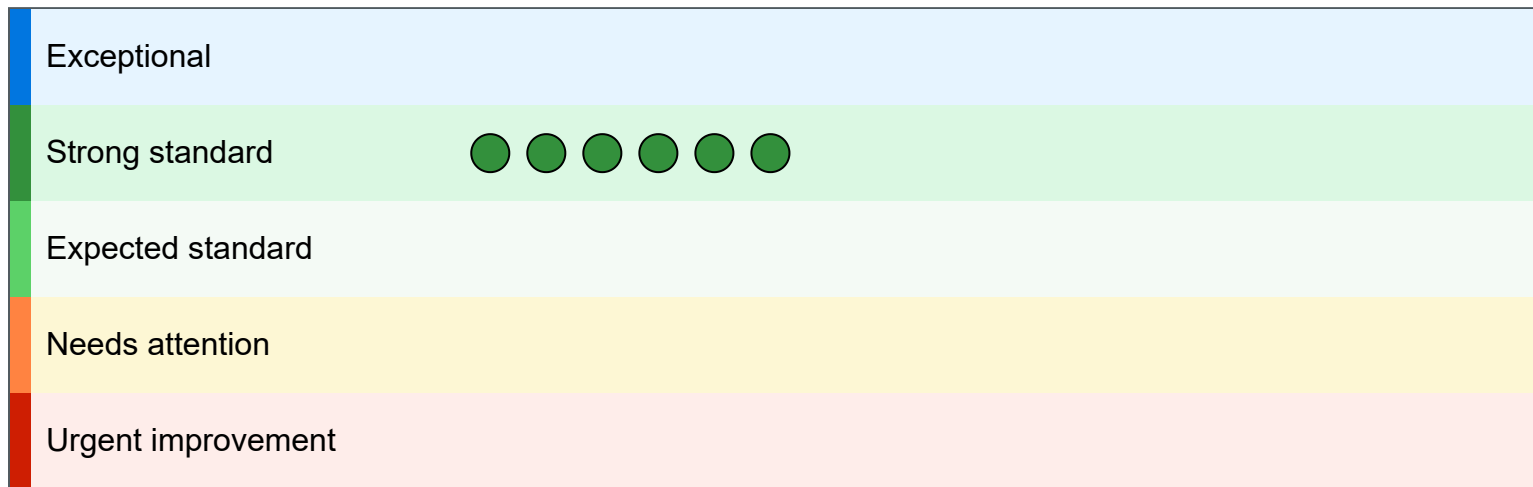
Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registered with Ofsted: 22/09/2023

Registers: EYR

Registered person: Linden Tree Nursery Schools Limited

Inspection report: 20 February 2026



Safeguarding standards met

The safeguarding standards are met. This means that leaders and/or those responsible for governance and oversight fulfil their specific responsibilities and have established an open culture in which safeguarding is everyone's responsibility and concerns are actively identified, acted upon and managed. As a result, children are made safer and feel safe.

How we evaluate safeguarding

When we inspect settings for safeguarding, they can have the following outcomes:

- Met: The setting has an open and positive culture of safeguarding.
- Not met: The setting has not created an open and positive culture of safeguarding. Not all legal requirements are met.

Strong standard ●

Achievement

Strong standard ●

Children achieve well from their starting points as they engage in meaningful experiences across the day. During group times, children sustain attention, join in repeated refrains and take turns with instruments, demonstrating developing self-regulation and communication. In creative activities linked to outings, children talk about natural materials they have collected and use newly introduced vocabulary. In sensory play, children remain engaged, regulate their emotions and increasingly play alongside others with confidence. Children show growing independence in self-care, such as clearing the table and washing up after lunch.

Children who require additional support make good progress. They develop confidence in transitions, increase their engagement with others and begin to use more spoken language. Children apply skills across different contexts, demonstrating that learning is secure and remembered over time. As a result, children develop confidence, independence and secure knowledge across the areas of learning, preparing them well for their next stage.

Behaviour, attitudes and establishing routines

Strong standard ●

Children demonstrate consistently positive attitudes to learning in a calm, established routine. High-quality teaching keeps children deeply engaged throughout the day. They show curiosity, determination and increasing independence as they explore sensory materials, construct with blocks and participate in focused group times. Transitions are smooth and purposeful, enabling children to remain settled and ready to learn.

Relationships are a clear strength. Adults provide children with warm, respectful interactions and emotionally attuned responses. Children seek adults confidently and return to play reassured. Parents describe staff's open, frequent communication and feel involved in supporting children's routines and behaviour.

Behaviour is supported proactively. Leaders monitor patterns carefully and use analysis to refine routines and environments. Targeted strategies, embedded in the graduated response, support children to develop their emotional regulation during transitions. As a result, children feel secure and behave thoughtfully towards one another.

Leaders take a strategic approach to behaviour and attendance. Monitoring systems inform adjustments to practice, and staff training strengthens consistency across rooms. Attendance is actively promoted through partnership with families, ensuring children access learning regularly. High aspirations for all children are evident through inclusive practice and responsive support, enabling children to make sustained progress.

Children's welfare and wellbeing

Strong standard ●

Children's welfare and wellbeing are prioritised through secure systems and emotionally attuned practice. The environment is calm, enabling children to feel safe and settled. Adults are consistently present and responsive, supporting children to regulate their emotions and

develop resilience. Care routines are respectful and unhurried. At lunchtime, children independently serve freshly prepared, nutritious meals, use cutlery competently and wash up afterwards, developing self-care skills and healthy habits. Handwashing routines are embedded and understood, supporting children's hygiene and independence.

Leaders promote active lifestyles throughout the day. Children have frequent opportunities for climbing, balancing, yoga, dancing and outdoor play, supporting their balance, strength, coordination, spatial awareness and overall wellbeing. Risk is managed thoughtfully by staff, enabling children to take safe challenges while learning to keep themselves safe. Adults daily risk assessments and monthly accident analysis inform preventative action and environmental adjustments, demonstrating strong oversight.

Leaders' and adults' inclusive practice underpins children's welfare. Children's individual needs are understood well, and adjustments ensure children with barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities participate fully and confidently in routines and learning.

Leaders demonstrate strong strategic oversight of welfare systems. Health and safety monitoring and risk management are systematic and well understood by staff. Professional development strengthens consistency in supporting children's emotional wellbeing, healthy lifestyles and physical development. Parents describe children as settled, confident and well cared for. As a result, children feel safe, develop healthy habits and flourish.

Curriculum and teaching

Strong standard ●

Leaders have designed an ambitious curriculum that is implemented with consistently high-quality teaching. Adults demonstrate strong knowledge of child development and use this to shape purposeful learning across the day. Communication and language underpin practice. Adults narrate play, introduce vocabulary and extend thinking. For example, during a craft activity, children compare height and length using mathematical language modelled naturally by adults. In sensory exploration, adults sit alongside children, 'wondering' with them as they explore materials. These experiences support children to regulate their emotions, sustain attention and engage alongside others, building confidence in social play.

Teaching is intentional and adapted in the moment. Adults balance explicit teaching with responsive interaction, revisiting key concepts such as counting, comparison and positional language across contexts. Everyday moments, including transitions between activities, are used as calm, language-rich learning opportunities. High expectations are embedded, enabling children to develop confidence, independence and secure foundations for future learning.

Leaders have an accurate understanding of curriculum quality and ensure it is taught consistently well. Assessment is integrated into interactions, enabling adults to identify what children know and their next steps. Adaptations are embedded in the provision, ensuring all children, including those with barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing, access an equally ambitious curriculum. As a result, children develop secure knowledge and skills across the areas of learning and are well prepared for their next stage of education.

Inclusion

Strong standard 

Leaders have established a strong, inclusive culture where children's needs, including those with barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, are identified early and supported through a secure, graduated approach. Children are supported closely in their transitions and in developing skills to manage social situations. Leaders use careful monitoring and reflection to identify patterns and triggers, refining routines and making thoughtful environmental adjustments. As a result, children's engagement improves and transitions become calmer and more successful over time, demonstrating that support is responsive and effective.

Leaders and adults work closely with parents to establish clear starting points and next steps for children with communication and language delays. Practical strategies, including modelling simple language, the use of visual supports and structured opportunities for interaction, are implemented consistently. The setting supports families to access external programmes and ensures approaches are aligned between home and nursery. Parents report improvements in children's language development and confidence.

Leaders have strengthened communication and language provision across the setting through an audit and targeted improvements. This has led to focused activities, environmental adaptations and adult training, embedding communication in the universal offer. Impact is reviewed regularly through meetings and updated support plans. Training has strengthened adults' understanding of identifying needs and planning appropriate next steps. Parents feel listened to and supported, and documentation reflects collaborative work with families and professionals. Adjustments are proactive, reduce barriers and support sustained progress for all children.

Leadership and governance

Strong standard 

Leadership and governance are strong and well structured. Systems are clearly defined, well organised and implemented consistently across the provision. This enables staff to work with clarity and purpose, maintaining a consistent focus on children's care, safety, learning and wellbeing. Staff's induction, supervision and probation processes are clear and purposeful, ensuring shared expectations and consistent pedagogy. Leaders' oversight of safeguarding, incident monitoring and risk management is systematic and reflective rather than reactive, which benefits the practice significantly. Leaders analyse information carefully and use it to refine routines, environments and targeted support.

A strong culture of reflection underpins the provision. Leaders are visible, hands-on and deeply knowledgeable about children and practice.

Professional development is extensive, structured and ongoing. All practitioners complete a comprehensive induction programme of core training modules, and leaders continue to engage in regular professional learning. Training is not standalone. It is discussed with staff in supervision, reflected on in team meetings and visibly embedded in classroom practice. As a result, professional learning consistently strengthens teaching quality, inclusion and children's outcomes.

Staff describe feeling valued and supported, with flexibility focused around their wellbeing and workload. Parents experience open, frequent communication and meaningful engagement opportunities. Community links and family events provided strengthened partnerships with parents and children's sense of belonging.

What it's like to be a child at this setting

Children experience a calm, welcoming day where they feel safe, valued and ready to learn. They settle quickly because adults build warm, secure relationships and provide predictable routines that help children regulate their feelings. In the mixed-age provision, children move confidently between well-organised areas and become deeply engaged in purposeful play. Adults stay close, tune in and 'wonder' with children, extending vocabulary and thinking as children explore sensory play, create cards for others and use natural materials gathered from the common. For example, children counted and compared flowers collected on an outing, while adults modelled precise language and encouraged careful observation.

Children achieve well from their starting points because learning is thoughtfully sequenced and revisited. Mathematical understanding develops through meaningful experiences, such as block play, where children compare size and length, and through subitising and counting in play. Physical development is prioritised throughout the day. Children confidently use climbing equipment, practise balance and coordination, and develop fine motor control through malleable play and cutting activities. Adults understand progression, supporting shoulder stability and grip strength before expecting greater control, which prepares children well for early writing.

Care routines are rich learning times. At lunch, children independently serve themselves, use cutlery competently and clear away. Adults model conversation and sensitively scaffold children's social problem-solving, giving children time to negotiate before intervening.

Children who face barriers to their learning or wellbeing are fully included. Adults plan activities and the environment so all children participate safely and independently. Early identification, careful incident analysis and environmental adaptations reduce triggers for others, strengthening communication and emotional regulation. As a result, children develop confidence and form friendships and the secure foundations they need for their next stage of learning.

Next steps

- Leaders and those responsible for governance should sustain their work to ensure continued improvement and high standards. They should focus on creating a transformational impact on the outcomes and experiences of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who may face other barriers to their learning and/or wellbeing.
-

About this inspection

The inspector spoke with leaders, adults working in the setting, the special educational needs coordinator and parents during the inspection.

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.

Inspector:

Joanna Moran

About this setting

Unique reference number (URN): 2752627

Address:

16A OLD TOWN
CLAPHAM
LONDON
SW4 0JY

Type: Childcare on non-domestic premises

Registration date: 22/09/2023

Registered person: Linden Tree Nursery Schools Limited

Register(s): EYR

Operating hours: Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday : 08:00 - 18:30, Friday : 08:00 - 18:00

Local authority: Lambeth

Facts and figures used on inspection

This data was available to the inspector at the time of the inspection.

 This data is from 20 February 2026

Children numbers

Age range of children at the time of inspection

2 to 3

Total number of places

37

Our grades explained

Exceptional 

Practice is exceptional: of the highest standard nationally. Other settings can learn from it.

Strong standard 

The setting reaches a strong standard. Leaders are working above the standard expected of them.

Expected standard 

The setting is fulfilling the expected standard of education and/or care. This means they are following the standard set out in statutory and non-statutory legislation and the professional standards expected of them.

Needs attention 

The expected standards are not met but leaders are likely able to make the necessary improvements.

Urgent improvement 

The setting needs to make urgent improvements to provide the expected standard of education and/or care.

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) inspects services providing education and skills for children and learners of all ages, and inspects and regulates services that care for children and young people.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may reuse this information (not including logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence, write to the Information Policy Team, The National Archives, Kew, London TW9 4DU, or email: psi@nationalarchives.gsi.gov.uk.

This publication is available at <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk>.

Interested in our work? You can subscribe to our monthly newsletter for more information and updates: <http://eepurl.com/iTrDn>.

Piccadilly Gate
Store Street
Manchester
M1 2WD

T: 0300 123 1231

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.gov.uk/ofsted

© Crown copyright 2026



© Crown copyright