



## Lambeth College Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	144680
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 September 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Catherine Greenwood
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<b>Registered person</b>	Lambeth College
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care

## ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

### The key inspection judgements and what they mean

*Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality*

*Good: this aspect of the provision is strong*

*Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound*

*Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough*

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Lambeth College Nursery was registered in 2003 and is run by Lambeth College. It provides childcare for the children of students who attend the college and to staff working at the college if places are available. It is located in a purpose built modular building, which has been totally refurbished to accommodate the provision.

The premises comprises of two group rooms, children's toilet facilities, staff facilities, kitchen, office and an outdoor area. A maximum of 30 children aged two years to under five years may attend the nursery at any one time and there are 37 children on roll, this includes children who receive funding for nursery education. Children attend a variety of sessions both full time and part time. The setting operates during college term times only and is open from 08.30 to 17.30, Monday to Friday.

There are six full time staff who work with the children all of whom have qualifications in early years. In addition there is a suitably qualified nursery manager and a head of student access who has overall responsibility for all Lambeth college nurseries/crèches. The college works in partnership with the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and The Learning and Skills Council through its 'Additional Childcare Places' scheme.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff follow good hygiene practice, for example when changing children's nappies. However, children do not have their own separate beds and linen and are therefore at risk of cross infection. Children have well balanced and nutritious meals which meet individual dietary requirements and are provided by the college canteen. Staff prepare healthy food for children to eat at teatime, however, they are often given biscuits for the morning snack, which means they do not learn about healthy eating. There is no water made easily accessible to the children throughout the day. All staff hold a food hygiene certificate which means that children are not at risk from cross infection when staff prepare meals. Staff have good understanding of accident and medication procedures and some of the staff hold a current first aid certificate although these were not available for inspection. In addition, children are at risk in the event of needing emergency medical treatment because the setting has not sought written parental consent.

### Physical development

Children are beginning to show good hand and eye co-ordination as they engage in activities such as filling and emptying water bottles from the tap and using teaspoons to transfer cornflour into small containers. They show interest in building and constructing independently using stickle bricks and with adult support are learning to complete puzzles successfully. However, there are no accessible resources for children to build and design on a large scale. Children develop fine motor skills, for example when using the writing and drawing resources to make marks and learn how to handle malleable materials and use tools such as rolling pins and cutters when playing with the dough. Photographs displayed in the entrance area show children developing gross motor skills as they run freely around the garden and ride the wheeled toys. However, children do not have the opportunity to take part in a wide range of outdoor activities which contribute to their physical development. Although there is an adjacent garden, staff do not make regular use of this area throughout the day to help children develop control of their bodies. In addition, staff do not adapt planning to provide indoor physical activities when the weather is bad and there is currently no equipment available for children to develop skills in climbing and sliding. Children in the pre-school group have the opportunity to join in planned dance activities once a week. However, staff do not make good use of planning to show how the outdoor area will be used to provide older children with opportunities that are sufficiently challenging.

## **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to move around the main play areas safely, freely and independently because staff identify and minimise potential risks, for example, parents and visitors are greeted individually at the front door and all rooms not used by the children are kept locked during the hours that the nursery operates. Staff complete a daily check of all areas of the premises, to ensure they are safe for children to use and there is a good range of well maintained, suitable and accessible play equipment. Children are not currently taken on outings, although previously they have been taken into the surrounding college grounds to look at plants. During these times the children are safe, due to the enclosed grounds and good security within the college. The nursery has a clear written evacuation procedure, however, a fire drill has not recently been carried out, which means that new children attending this term do not know how to evacuate the building safely, and are therefore at risk in the event of a fire. Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give top priority to children's welfare.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff join the children at activity tables and give them the necessary support and help to achieve their aims. Consequently, children show interest in the activities and resources, concentrate well and persist at tasks. They form good friendships with each other, play together co-operatively and enjoy each others company. Children particularly enjoy playing with the play dough, sand, water, and painting at the easel. They are encouraged to take part in large group singing activities and show great enthusiasm for familiar songs such as wibble wobble jelly on a plate. Staff provide a range of planned activities for all children and are beginning to introduce experiences that are related to Birth to three matters. However, this does not include sufficient opportunity for children to use resources in different ways such as on the floor and in the garden. Children do not move around freely, explore their environment or use their own initiative because staff often expect them to sit at the tables when they are using the play equipment. Staff set out a selection of play equipment and resources, which are mostly on child height tables prior to the children's arrival. However, children do not have enough opportunity to select alternative resources which are stored in boxes in the main play areas, which means they do not develop good personal independence within their play. The setting have recently reviewed and adapted the system used to record children's development so that it is related to the guidance for Birth to three matters. Staff have a good knowledge of children's individual needs and are observant of the progress they are making. However, they have not yet completed any written observations of younger children's play.

## **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled at the nursery and are confident about making independent choices from the table top activities, although they do not have sufficient opportunity to choose and set up their own resources. They concentrate well and play independently for long periods.

Children show good self confidence when talking to staff about what they know. For example, they are encouraged to think and use different words to describe how cornflour feels when they are playing with it. When children say that it is 'sticky', staff use this opportunity to introduce questions about the sounds of letters and further extend learning by helping children to identify words which begin with the same sound. Children enjoy large group story times but do not show interest in looking at books independently for enjoyment, or have sufficient opportunity to recall elements of stories. Older children are beginning to write their own name. Children can count in numerical order up to 10 and show interest in number when joining in large group singing activities. Older and more able children can successfully identify number at random when using the computer and when staff ask them to say the numbers they see on animal flash cards. Children learn about capacity, when they repeatedly fill and empty bottles at the sink. They show interest in using the accessible computer and children know how to use the computer to print their own work, for example when they have used the colour painting programme. Children learn about the wider world, for example through projects about space, however, they do not have sufficient opportunity to explore their environment, handle and explore natural and real life objects, or learn about the features of living things. Staff encourage children to recall the processes they follow to effect change and learn about consistency as they mix water and cornflour together. Children build and construct with stickle bricks, however, the range of accessible resources in this area of learning are not sufficiently challenging and do not allow children to build and design on a large scale. Children learn about themselves and others and have a positive attitude to differences through planned activities which recognise and embrace festivals and celebrations. They enjoy exploring different media such as rice and glitter to complete collages, and use playdough, paint, water and sand. Children are confident to play imaginatively with others, however, the range of resources and opportunities for this area of learning are poor, for example, in the home corner, and due to the limited use of the outside play area. Children draw creatively and independently using the writing table and take part in large group activities such as sponge painting. However, there are no accessible resources for children to choose to paint freely or initiate and complete their own creative ideas. Children play at the low level sink in the room and use the tap to fill and empty containers. However there is insufficient room for more than three children and consequently they become frustrated when playing in a group. Staff do not present water play in different ways to support and extend children's learning.

Staff have a knowledge of the early learning goals and how individual children are making progress in most areas of learning. However, they do not have a secure knowledge of children's progress in relation to the stepping stones within the early learning goals for knowledge and understanding of the world and physical development. Consequently, these areas of learning do not provide sufficient challenge for children, particularly in relation to outdoor play. Staff engage with the children during their play and show interest in what they say and do. They ask children appropriate questions which extends their learning, and know when to join children and offer help and when to let them play independently. Staff work well as a team and have a good knowledge of the learning objectives for most activities. Staff complete planning for the following day using their observations of children's individual learning and the written evaluation of activities. However, the current system used to record assessment of children's progress duplicates information and does not help staff to be consistent in their observations of all children, or cover all areas of learning.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children form good relationships with each other and staff. All children are welcomed and play a full part in the nursery. Each day on arrival, children are greeted warmly and helped to settle because staff give them individual care and attention. This includes hugs, cuddles and reassurance. In addition, parents complete a questionnaire about their child's routine, favourite toys, and what they like and dislike. Staff use this information to care for children and meet their individual needs. However, not all parents use the gradual settling in process before their child starts, which means that some new children are upset because they are not familiar with the staff and the environment. Children are well behaved and co-operative and work together well on their own and in large and small groups. This is because staff set clear boundaries and talk to children about the consequences of their behaviour. As a result children have a good awareness of right and wrong. Children welcome others involvement in their play, for example when playing imaginatively with the dinosaurs in the sand tray. Staff praise children for their individual achievements which means that children feel good about themselves and develop confidence. Children learn about differences and the wider world through taking part in activities and projects about different celebrations. They have access to some books and play equipment that reflect positive images of differences. However, these resources are insufficient and do not include disability.

There are no children with learning difficulties and/or disability currently attending the nursery, however staff have a good knowledge of different conditions and how to support children. The supervisor is the SENCO worker and has established support from the inclusion team in Stockwell.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are happy with the progress that their children are making. They speak positively about the nursery although they feel that some areas could be improved, such as the opportunities for parents to be involved with their child's learning and for children to go on outings to nearby Clapham Common. Parents are currently invited to formal keyworker meetings to talk to staff and look at children's progress records and receive newsletters which include information about activities and themes. Children benefit from the informal daily communication with parents about their individual needs. However, parental involvement is limited due to parents attending college at different times of the day. There are opportunities for parents to watch their children in planned performances, and newsletters contain information about activities and topics. In addition parents have access to all policies and procedures which includes information about the curriculum. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The environment is well maintained, warm and welcoming. Staff work together well as a team and are clear about their responsibilities, which means children are happy and settled. The nursery has a good ratio of staff to children, although when staff are taking lunch breaks all the children are currently looked after in one room. This restricts older children's communication, play, and movement, as the younger children are asleep. Children have the opportunity to make independent choices from resources which are set up on child height tables. They are expected

to sit at the tables to use the resources and staff have not reviewed the way in which the play equipment is presented to make it more inviting to the children. This means that the way the space is laid out does not maximise play opportunities for children and restricts them from moving around freely and interacting with others. Although other play equipment is available, it is not made easily accessible to the children at all times.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The supervisor who is currently acting as manager works closely with staff and children and provides a positive role model due to the way she engages with the children and responds to their individual needs. There are good systems in place to support staff and ensure effective accountability, for example through regular communication with senior managers and college personnel. The nursery has completed its own self evaluation form with actions and targets for improvements to outcomes for children. This also includes strengths and areas for development in relation to provision for the Foundation Stage Curriculum under each area of learning. For example, the need to improve resources for designing and making, outdoor equipment and the opportunities for children to explore the outside world. Children's welfare is protected because the registered person ensures that staff are appropriately vetted, however, not all documentation is available for inspection, including staff suitability, first aid certificates, and there is no system in place to record complaints. Procedures are used effectively to promote children's well-being. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider agreed to conduct a risk assessment of the children's sleep time and the nappy changing routine and ensure Ofsted is promptly informed in writing of all staff changes. As a result, the provider has fitted new carpet to provide more space for children to sleep. However, they have not yet provided separate bedding for children and therefore there is a risk of cross infection. The nappy changing routine is clearly displayed and followed by all staff. This means that the provider has made improvements to children's health in some areas. Ofsted have been informed of staff changes.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been two complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action to meet the National Standards. The complaints related to National Standard 12 - Working in partnership with parents, National Standard 7 - Health. Concerns were raised over information for parents and no response from the manager to a complaint raised, inappropriate sleeping arrangements and equipment, a smell of smoke in the nursery and keeping records of accidents and obtaining parents signature on the record. Ofsted required the provider to investigate. As a result the provider held a meeting and invited all parents, fitted new carpet to provide a bigger sleeping area for the children, found no evidence that the nursery smelt of smoke, reminded staff of correct accident reporting procedures and issued revised guidelines which are displayed in the nursery, to ensure children's health is safeguarded. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider remains qualified for registration at the time the investigations were closed.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?**

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure children's snacks are healthy, make drinking water easily accessible to older children throughout the day and provide separate bedding for children.
- improve the opportunities for children to use the outside play area on a daily basis and develop gross motor skills
- complete regular fire evacuation practises
- improve the opportunities for children to independently select additional play equipment throughout the day and complete regular written observations of children's progress in relation to the outcomes for birth to three matters guidance
- make all documentation available for inspection, including staff suitability and devise a system to record complaints.
- increase the opportunities for staff to evaluate how they organise the environment and present the play equipment so that children make good progress in all areas of learning.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- review activity planning and systems used to record observation of children to ensure they include evaluation of learning in all areas.
- ensure staff help children work towards the Early Learning Goals in physical development and knowledge and understanding of the world.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)