



Finchley Yochien

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY303773
Inspection date	18 September 2006
Inspector	Maggie Thorp
Setting Address	Golders Green Yochien, 6 Hendon Avenue, London, N3 1UE
Telephone number	020 8343 2191
E-mail	
Registered person	Golders Hill School Ltd.
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Finchley Yochien provides care and education for a group of two to three year olds at Maeda Gakuen: Finchley Yochien, one of four independent schools for two to seven year olds. It is run by Golders Hill School Ltd. operating under the trading name of Maeda Gakuen and part of the Maeda Gakuen Group.

This school opened in 1992 and the group for two to three year olds was registered by Ofsted in 2005. The group operates from two interconnected ground floor rooms in a large detached house in which the rest of the school is accommodated. It is situated in a quiet residential area of Finchley Central. All children share access to an enclosed garden and the school hall.

A maximum of 22 children aged two and three years may attend this group at any one time. Currently there are 16 children on roll. It is open each weekday from 09.15 to 14:45 term time only. Another company Eikoku Maeda Gakuen Ltd. [part of the same group] run this provision in the school holidays.

Most of the children attending come from expatriate Japanese families and will be returning to Japan to continue their education. Japanese is the main language used at the nursery and some children are learning to speak English as an additional language. The nursery supports some children with special educational needs.

The nursery has four staff and is managed by the head teacher of the whole school. There are three staff with appropriate early years qualifications and one unqualified assistant. The nursery receives support and advice from Barnet local authority and one of their early years advisory teachers.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted effectively. The environment children use is clean and appropriate routines are in place to maintain this. Children are learning about how to keep healthy and are confident and independent in this area. The facilities and time allocated for children to use the bathroom fosters children's independence and self help skills very effectively. Children wash their hands at appropriate times, for example, before eating and after using the toilet. Children really enjoy carefully lathering, rinsing and drying their hands. They change their own pull up nappies with help and are very confident in using the toilet. After playing outdoors children rinse their mouths.

However, not all the appropriate steps are in place to meet children's needs if they need medication or first aid. There are sufficient trained staff on duty each day to administer first aid but the first aid box is not appropriately equipped. It contains products that are administered without parents consent having been obtained first. In addition, the nursery is not proactive in ensuring they are well prepared to meet the needs of children requiring ongoing medication.

Children have a good diet and care is taken to check if children have any allergies. They enjoy both packed lunches and food prepared and brought in by the nursery. Mealtimes are social occasions. Children sit in small groups and chat as they eat. Staff eat with the children and offer them support as needed. However, most children are very independent and eat well without help. Drinks are offered with meals and a bottle of water is in the room to provide children with drinks at their request throughout the day.

Children really enjoy using the garden where they exercise, run and climb. Children climb on the low level or more challenging frame and slide, with staff beside to keep them safe. Some children dig in the sand pit or pedal wheeled toys on the paved area while others roll down a grassy slope on to the large lawn. However, outdoor play is only for half an hour each day and indoor opportunities for children to refine and develop their large physical skills are more limited. Lively activities are mainly confined to a daily music and action song session.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a generally welcoming and bright environment. Indoors children have ample space in the two adjoining rooms they are based in. However, displays are rather high for two and three year olds to enjoy. The bathroom is easily accessed by children and very well set out to foster children's self help skills. The garden is very large with a variety of different gated areas that are safe and well maintained. Children have suitable equipment and furniture to enable them to eat and sleep in comfort. However, there is a limited range of accessible play materials for them to choose from. They only have access to the toys set out for approximately half an hour in the morning, a planned group activity after snack time, then to books throughout the day.

Children are protected by the effective measures in place to keep them safe. The security of premises is good; children play outdoors in gated areas, the front door is kept closed and notices remind people to keep it so. At collection and arrival times staff are posted at exits to monitor children's safety. Risk assessments are carried out and daily safety checks done before children arrive. Fire safety is good; there are clear fire exit signs and diagrams of possible escape routes so that they can be easily understood by people of any language. Staff's good understanding of child protection issues, their awareness of the signs of abuse and of the procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child, provide safeguards for the children they care for.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy many of the activities planned, but have little opportunity for free play when they can make choices and explore a range of different play materials. They listen attentively and participate well in story and song times, and they enjoy sitting looking at books independently as well as with a member of staff. Free play times are restricted to approximately half an hour at the beginning of the day and half an hour in the garden. Indoors during free play, children play with the toys set out and these do not offer children a wide choice of activities. Sand play is not offered indoors and water play is only available in summer months in the garden.

Children have few opportunities to develop their creativity and imagination through free use of art and natural materials, and for pretend play. There is no home corner or dressing up clothes. After free play, children participate in a whole group activity. Most of these are art activities that have an end product that children are guided to produce rather than offering children the chance to explore and experiment with paint, glue and other mark making resources.

However, children's play and enjoyment is encouraged by the warmth and attentiveness of the staff. Staff obviously enjoy the children's company; they play, chat with children and are animated and enthusiastic. Children respond well to this and there is lots of smiling and conversation. Children are learning skills such as how to manage their own dressing and undressing and this fosters children's self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children are happy and secure and have good relationships with the staff. However, new children do not have a special person to help them settle in and to act as a link between the nursery and the parent so sometimes find it hard to settle. Overall children are co-operative and behave well. They willingly help at tidying up times. Sometimes children struggle to share or take turns, as is natural for their age, and staff give sensitive support to help them.

Children with special educational needs receive good support. Extra help is sought to ensure children receive the help they need and to enable them to join in the activities and routines of the day. Children are learning to value their own culture through the activities and books provided, for example, they send postcards to their grandparents for Japanese elderly people's day. However, they are not finding out about cultures different from their own. The equal opportunity policy is very comprehensive and describes using resources and activities to reflect the diversity of society positively for children. However, this is not being implemented in the nursery through the displays, books and play provided.

Children benefit from the good relationships between staff and parents overall. Staff have obtained detailed information from parents about the individual needs of their child and this is carefully recorded. Parents have lots of information about the nursery group. Posters, newsletters and a daily diary keep them well informed. All staff are available and chat to parents at both ends of each day, but parents do not have a specific person to ensure the continuity of their child's care, for example, so that the same little routines can be followed to help new children say goodbye to a parent.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are generally happy and confident. Their self-esteem and independence is supported well by many aspects of how the nursery group is organised. The organisation of mealtimes, toileting and sleep times all encourage children's self help skills effectively. However, the lack of a key person system makes it harder for new children to settle easily. Children enjoy the attentiveness and sensitive care of the appropriately qualified staff team. However, staff are unable to access ongoing training and support to develop their practice. They are not developing their skills in planning activities and play times that are finely tuned to the interests and development of these young children.

Children's welfare and individual needs are well met by the staff who have appropriate records in place to support their understanding of the children they care for. Each child has their own file in which contact information and information about children's individual needs are kept. The policy for administering medicine and for maintaining an appropriately equipped first aid box is not effective but there are sufficient first aid trainers to care for children who have accidents. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection improvements have been made. The actions raised regarding safety, child protection, keeping Ofsted informed of changes and carrying out appropriate checks on staff have been met. Thorough risk assessments are now carried out, careful notes are kept to ensure staff checks have been completed satisfactorily, staff have received training in child protection and Ofsted has been kept informed of the change of head teacher. This has significantly improved children's safety and well-being.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet National Standards.

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

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.

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):

- improve the provision for children needing first aid by having an appropriately equipped first aid box, obtaining specific consent for any medicinal product administered, recording when these are given and being well prepared to meet the needs of children requiring ongoing medication
- provide children with more opportunities to develop their creativity and imagination through open-ended art activities and pretend play and more opportunities to choose from a wider variety of play materials that are easily accessible
- develop ways of helping children find out about other cultures, backgrounds and abilities through the displays, books and play provided
- make better use of local authority advice, training and support to develop high quality play and learning that is finely tuned to the interests and developmental stages of two year olds
- put a key person system in place to ensure continuity of care for children and to help new children quickly feel secure at the nursery

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk