



Magic Roundabout Nurseries Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY287693
Inspection date	29 June 2006
Inspector	Pamela Bailey / Mauvene Burke
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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Magic Roundabout Nursery and Out of School Club is one of three provisions run by Magic Roundabout Nurseries Limited. It opened in 2004 and operates 12 rooms in a commercial building. It is situated on a residential road located within the London Borough of Southwark. A maximum of 105 children may attend the nursery at any

one time and 12 children may attend the out of school club. The nursery is open each week day from 07:30 to 19:00 for 50 weeks per year and the out of school club is open from 15:30 to 18:30 during school term times and from 08:00 to 18:30 during school holidays. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 73 children under eight years on roll. Of these, 11 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 20 staff, of whom 13, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications and six staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Young children are experiencing some poor hygiene practices at the nursery, these are exposing them to the spread of infection and do not help teach them about staying healthy. For example, not all staff follow good nappy changing procedures, such as wearing gloves or wiping nappy changing mats between nappy changes. Hand washing procedures in the nursery are inconsistent; children are not always encouraged to wash their hands before eating. However, good procedure in the baby room is maintained as staff and visitors remove shoes in areas where babies crawl and play.

Children are beginning to develop some healthy eating habits. They are provided with a daily variety of healthy lunches prepared on-site. However, snacks are less healthy, consisting of sweet biscuits with diluted juice; fruits are not always available to all the children. Older children are not encouraged to help themselves to water throughout the day or think of their personal needs. For example, children can not help themselves to water after vigorous exercise. The drinking water is stored on an adult height cupboard and is not offered to children except at meal times. Although the cook has appropriate training in food handling, other staff responsible for handling food are not fully aware of, or comply with regulations relating to food safety and hygiene. For example, staff do not always wash their hands before handling food.

Children are cared for in an environment that enables them to rest according to their individual needs. Staff follow babies' and younger children's individual routines for sleeping. However, babies under fifteen months old have very little opportunity to engage in outdoor play activities or receive fresh air. Younger and older children have some opportunities for outdoor physical activities, none the less, this is not used as an effective learning opportunity but more of a chance for children to run around.

Some records and documentation are in place and appropriately maintained to promote children's health. Children's individual dietary and medical needs are

appropriately met because staff gather all information regarding diet and medical history. Medication records are appropriately maintained to ensure that children receive the correct medication and dosage according to their needs. However, parents do not give prior written consent for the nursery to seek emergency treatment or countersign all entries in the accident records. There are insufficient staff that hold a current first aid certificate to ensure that there is a trained first aider present at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children's welfare is not fully safeguard or protected at all times. Although most of the staff are aware of the procedures to be followed if they have a concern about a child, their knowledge is not secure with regards to the identification of signs and symptoms. In addition to this, the manager lacks a sufficient working knowledge in this area and has insecure knowledge and understanding of the procedures to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Staff employ some positive practices to ensure children are safe and secure such as a buzzer system and visitors signing in record to monitor access to the nursery and monitoring sleeping babies. None the less, children's overall safety is compromised. Staff do not take appropriate steps to ensure that all safety risks and potential hazards to children are minimised. For example, electrical sockets are accessible to the children, a broken table leg is propped up with building blocks, fire doors are kept locked in all rooms and the stairs leading from the baby room to the playground are locked at bottom by a piece of rope. Staff are not familiar with the fire evacuation procedures and have not carried out a fire drill in some time. The lack of regular fire drills means that children do not have enough opportunities to become familiar with the routine in an emergency and are not learning to keep themselves safe. The lack of regular safety checks and monitoring of children's safety means staff are unable to identify and quickly address any potential risks or hazards.

Children have sufficient space but it is not always used effectively to meet their needs. Younger children are offered a limited range of age appropriate toys and equipment. They are unable to independently select or make choices as the toys are not easily accessible at their level. This limits children's development and self-esteem. Some of the toys are in poor condition, for example books are torn and pages are missing, dolls are dirty and children are unable to complete puzzles as pieces are missing.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Children under three have limited opportunities to explore and experiment in the nursery because staff lack the knowledge, understanding and motivation to offer children a good variety of meaningful and interesting activities. Staff are beginning to use the Birth to three matters framework to improve their practice. However, the lack

of evaluation of children's achievements means that staff do not have a secure basis on which to plan activities in order to move children on in their development. Staff do not positively interact with the children or provide opportunities for young children to develop their language and communication skills. Staff do not talk to the children and the atmosphere is very quiet at times. Children appear to be bored and are left wandering around aimlessly. The lack of meaningful activities, play opportunities and positive interaction significantly affects the setting's ability to adequately promote children's intellectual, physical, social and emotional development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Staff have insecure knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones for the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Written plans provide an overview of the range of activities and experiences in the six areas of learning that will be offered to children over a period of time. However, staff have not begun to make links between the medium and short term plans and children's progress. Staff are unable to differentiate between younger and older children's learning and ensure effective learning takes place. Staff have little knowledge of what they want the children to learn, no useful information of children's achievements and staff fail to evaluate activities. As a result, activities do not meet the needs of all the children and staff fail to offer sufficient challenge for older or more able children.

Children take care of their personal needs such as using the toilet, washing their hands and have some opportunities to develop their independence. Activities are easily accessible and allow children to self select and make choices. However, opportunities to further develop their independence are limited and not encouraged. For example, staff set table at meal times, serve meals, snacks, pour water for children and clear away utensils.

Children are not developing good relationships with their peers and adults. They are not learning to share, negotiate and resolve conflicts because staff do not have good understanding of how children learn and adapt their approach to suit the different ages and needs of children. For example, staff demand children to give toys back or ignore negative behaviours such as children snatching things from others. Staff supervise children from a distance and very rarely positively interact with the children.

Children are not developing positive self esteem or learning to express themselves. They have limited opportunities to develop their spoken language. Staff do not talk to the children unless they are managing children's behaviour. They do not plan and support activities to extend children's language for thinking such as through questioning, giving new information or allowing children to work out situations. Children are not able to talk to their peers at lunch time. Individual children seen or heard to be talking are identified by staff and instructed to "stop talking and eat your food".

Children do not readily select books and have very little opportunity to listen to stories. Children have access to mark making materials and equipment during drawing activities, however, they are not encouraged to label their work or write for a specific purpose. Some children attempt to label their own work with some

recognisable letters in their names when drawing pictures. However, they are not supported by staff and less confident children are not encouraged to attempt writing at all. Some children recognise their names and the names of other children at self registration and on the birthday charts and are confident to read the names aloud. Group games help children to recognise different letters. However, staff missed opportunities for children to link letter and letter sound.

Children have limited opportunities to develop their understanding of numbers and problem solving during practical activities and routine tasks. Adult led maths activities give children opportunities to count. However, group room rules such as number of children required to be in the home corner and routine tasks such as setting the table are not exploited to encourage children to problem solve. For example, children do not have opportunities to work out how many children are having lunch, how many chairs or cups are needed. Staff missed opportunities to ask more able children to use their knowledge of numbers to add one on, take one away or problem solve such as 'how many more'. Children's awareness of weight, measure and capacity is not fully exploited through resources such as sand and water or during cooking activities because staff do not know what they want the children to learn. Their main focus during these activities is about different textures. Some children are able to identify colours during water play. However, less confident children are not supported to learn colours. Children use construction toys to make objects. Staff missed opportunities for children to identify different shapes. For example, children made a blade-blade in the shape of a two dimension triangle and a box.

Children are not learning about the world they live in, their own cultures and beliefs and those of others because staff do not provide activities or resources to promote children's learning. Children are not provided with opportunities to discuss past or present events in their lives or the world around them. Children are not developing an understanding of time because daily routines are inconsistent and planned topics are not implemented by staff. Children have limited opportunities to explore information technology. They use cordless phones during role play. However, they show very little interest in the child size computer which staff do not encourage them to use.

Children have some opportunities to develop their finer motor skills during creative activities such as painting, drawing and sticking using different types of equipment. However, children have little opportunity to further develop their skills. For example, staff provide inappropriate cutlery at meal times.

Children enjoy dancing to music in their own way and participating in role play. However, they are not encouraged to use their imagination and express themselves in a variety of ways. Staff missed opportunities for children to learn about musical instruments and explore different sounds and rhythms during music and movement. Children enjoy listening to and singing along to children's tapes. However, they are not encouraged to join in with action rhymes or follow instruction to develop movement and control.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Children greet staff on arrival and join in with activities and children's basic physical needs are sufficiently met and this contributes to their sense of being valued. However, children's behaviour is generally poor. Inconsistent boundaries and inappropriate management of children's behaviour means children are not developing an understanding of right and wrong or learning the important social skills such as sharing or developing positive self esteem. Older children are not learning to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Staff threaten children with their parents and command them to do things. Staff do not praise, guide, encourage or make expectations of behaviour clear and give reasons for request to ensure children understand why certain behaviours are not acceptable. Staff do not always provide appropriate activities and behavioural issues are not challenged. The lack of stimulation and challenge hampers the development of children's confidence and personal independence. As a result children become bored and distracted.

Children come from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, however, are not beginning to develop an understanding of diversity because staff do not plan effectively or provide appropriate learning opportunities. Staff have the right intention towards introducing children to different cultures, but lack of information and preparation results in activities planned not taking place, for example, the cultural theme, where children were to dress up and parade in national costumes. Children have limited access to resources that reflect diversity and the wider world. For example, some books reflect different cultures and religion but dolls are not a true representation of differences such as black dolls have a white body which is confusing for children. Children with special needs are not fully integrated into the setting. Although there is a special needs policy in place, staff have insecure knowledge of the Special Needs Code of Practice and there are no systems in place to support children who have special needs. This means that staff are unable to promote the welfare and development of children with special needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is inadequate. Parents do not receive any information on the Birth to three matters framework or the Foundation stage. Although staff share information with parents about children's general care needs, parents do not know how their children are progressing and developing. This limits parents' ability to fully contribute to the setting and their children's learning. There are weaknesses in the procedures for recording complaints from parents and informing them of the outcome within the required time limit. Staff do not ensure all complaints are recorded, nor are parents provided with sufficient information about the complaints procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Ofsted has not been informed of changes to the manager of the nursery and there has yet to be in place a rigorous system to ensuring that staff working with children are suitable to do so. Ineffective induction procedures, written policies and procedures in combination with the lack of training do not ensure children's welfare is

safeguarded and promote the children's enjoyment and achievement. All policies, procedures and documentation are in place. However, staff do not ensure that parents are kept well informed about all relevant policies and procedures or that these have been updated in line with current regulation, for example, the complaints policy and complaint record. Procedures are not sufficiently rigorous to ensure that all staff are secure in the procedures for child protection, special needs, behaviour management and fire safety. Staff have not considered the impact of this oversight on children's safety and well-being. Staff have not worked together to develop a coherent and well understood policy for children's learning and play and as a result the progress of all children is hindered.

Children are generally settled and appropriately cared for. For example, their basic care needs are being met appropriately. However, staff time and deployment is not well organised as staff spend a lot of time preparing for snack times, lunch times, toileting, sleeping and pay very little attention to actually providing the children with a stimulating and exciting environment.

Leadership and management is inadequate. Too little is done to ensure that the range and quality of activities for children over three years is good enough; this has an adverse effect on children's learning. Although sufficient staff are appropriately qualified, the manager has not ensured that those working with children in receipt of funding for nursery education have sufficient knowledge of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage to enable children to achieve well. The lack of clear direction and systematic monitoring of teaching and learning means gaps in children's learning continue unnoticed. Plans continue to lack details and there are no recording systems in place to assess children's development. As a result staff have very little useful information about children's achievements to share with the parents and enable them to move children on in their next steps in learning. Staff are unaware of how well they promote positive outcomes for children and which areas require improvement. This hinders children's learning and parents' ability to fully contribute to the nursery. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff are suitable to work with children
- plan and provide a suitable range of indoor and outdoor activities for babies and young children which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs
- provide a suitable range of equipment to meet the developmental needs of younger children from 15 months to under 3 years and ensure that these are appropriately maintained
- assess the risks to children in relation to the fire evacuation procedure and fire safety and take action to minimise these ensuring they comply with any recommendations made by the fire safety officer
- make sure that all staff are informed and aware of the settings policies and arrangements to promote children's health, prevent the spread of infection and raise children's awareness of good hygiene practices
- ensure that anyone responsible for the preparation and handling of foods are fully aware of, and complies with, regulations relating to food safety and hygiene
- make sure enough staff are trained in first aid to ensure that at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate is on the premises or on outings at any one time
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of anti-discriminatory practice and provide a range of resources which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disabilities
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Code of Practice for the identification and assessment of Special Educational Needs and take positive steps to promote the welfare and development of the children
- develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development

- make sure that the complaints policy is updated in line with current regulations and keep a record of complaints relating to the National Standards and any action taken, ensure these are shared with parents
- ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the procedures to be followed if they have a concern about a child
- make sure that Ofsted is informed of any significant changes or events. In this case the manager
- ensure all records which are required for the efficient and safe management of the nursery and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are accurately maintained and shared with parents. In this case the accident records, children's progress records, children's attendance records and staff signing in and out records

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve assessments and records of children's achievements to provide a clear link with the stepping stones and early learning goals
- introduce a rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching so that areas for improvement are identified and quickly addressed
- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage to improve the quality of teaching and children's learning
- improve partnership with parents and carers to enable them to contribute to their children's next steps in learning and receive information about the curriculum

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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