



## Asquith Nursery - Golders Green

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY286593
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 August 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Deborah Wilkinson / Maggie Thorp
<b>Setting Address</b>	212 Golders Green Road, Golders Green, London, NW11 9AT
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<b>Registered person</b>	Asquith Court Nurseries Limited
<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*

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## 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?

Asquith Court Nursery, Golders Green which was registered in January 2005 operates from purpose designed premises. It is situated in Golders Green within walking distance of the station and local bus routes. It is part of the Asquith Court Group, which owns and manages 114 childcare provisions. The children are cared for in three age related groups, each of which has its own room and resources.

The nursery operates 5 days per week for 51 weeks of the year between the hours of

08.00 to 18.00 and is registered to provide care for 54 children aged 3 months to 5 years. Currently there are 51 children on role, and children attend for a variety of sessions. Children with special needs are included. The nursery receives nursery education funding for 14 children. Children who speak English as an additional language attend.

There are 13 staff working with the children of whom 11 are qualified. A suitably qualified manager, a cook and administrator are also on the staff team.

The setting receives support from an advisory teacher from the Early Years Childcare Partnership and from a childcare and early education advisor from Asquith Nurseries regional office.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean and bright premises. The newly painted woodwork and newly installed flooring and sinks mean that maintaining cleanliness is much easier now. Staff are careful to ensure that all the necessary measures are taken to prevent the spread of infection. Children are learning to keep healthy when staff teach them about hand washing, and safety in the sun. Children who need medicine, first aid, or have accidents receive good care; every bump and tumble is noted, and parents are informed.

Mealtimes are happy social occasions when children's independence is fostered very effectively. Children eat well and the toddlers and older children help to serve themselves from dishes on each table. Children are able to access drinks throughout the day, water is taken into the garden and staff remind children to drink, especially in hot weather.

Key workers know children's dietary needs and great care is taken to avoid children being given food they should not have. Staff sit with children who have allergies and a red plate is used to distinguish specially prepared food for an allergic child.

Babies are given the appropriate bottle feeds and their routines from home are followed. At meal times many babies enjoy trying to feed themselves with staff at hand to provide just the right amount of support or to take over if they are too tired or hungry.

Babies and toddlers are gaining new physical skills and are enjoying the freedom and challenge of outdoor play. Young children also have very good opportunities for being active indoors as they crawl up the carpeted slopes, learn to manage the steps and slide down the polished slides of the indoor climbing equipment. Older children and toddlers run, climb, and use the large equipment in the garden twice a day. Babies have their own garden; the synthetic turf provides crawling and walking babies with a good surface and lots of space to practice their newfound mobility.

Older children develop their physical skills when they use a variety of resources. Pouring at the water tray, using a pastry wheel with the play dough, sweeping up the sand and manipulating the computer mouse, helps them become increasingly dextrous. When they play in the outdoor area they have opportunities to jump and climb. They ride on bikes and one child perfects the art of propelling his vehicle around using his hands.

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

The provision is good.

Children are safe and secure on the premises. All areas and aspects of the nursery are risk assessed and separate risk assessments are completed for individual outings. Daily opening and closing checks are made on the premises to ensure that no hazards will be accessible to children. Children are learning about keeping safe for example, they know how to hold the banister and to be careful when going downstairs to the garden.

The nursery is well equipped. The new furniture and play resources recently purchased ensure children are able to play, eat and rest in comfort. In addition the play areas in each room are organised well. They provide children with rich opportunities to choose from the wide variety of accessible materials set out in each area. The toddlers have an enormous amount of choice and play resources here are very well organised. Children wanting to snuggle up and listen to a quiet story can do so undisturbed by those engaged in lively sand and water play.

Children can play securely. The nursery garden is fenced off from the path and the gate to the street. Nursery users and visitors do not have unauthorised access to children, they have to use the entry phone and code pad to gain admittance. Good arrangements are in place at arrival and collection times and children's information forms include photographs of those allowed to collect them.

Children are safeguarded by staff's Knowledge and understanding of the signs of possible abuse. The manager and deputy are well informed about how to proceed if they have concerns about a child and have recently attended training in their roles as designated safeguarding officers.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies are very confident and they actively explore the exciting environment indoors and in the baby garden with all their senses. Staff are frequently down at babies' level interacting with them. One baby examines the different types of brushes staff have attractively set out in a basket with his with hands and mouth. Another, older baby, pulls himself up at the sturdy painting easel, which is just the right height. He is soon engrossed in sloshing paint on paper, encouraged by the comments of staff. One very young baby lies gazing at her key worker who chats to her in the garden. Babies' current interests are well observed and catered for. Some are particularly

keen on tipping and filling in the water tray and staff ensure this is frequently available and that new containers or a colour is added to the water to maintain and extend the baby's interest.

Toddlers are really enjoying the variety and freedom they have to explore many different materials. Staff have created an art workshop area and children enjoy painting, gluing and drawing in this area. Sand and water are readily available. Children playing in this area enjoy choosing from the little storage unit between the two containers. Some are keen to dig and bury toys under the sand, other are very focussed on pouring; this becomes pretend play and staff watching are offered a cup of tea.

Staff observe children's play and plan how to help them develop. However, this is not always effective. Some toddlers are interested in throwing, some in pulling toys behind them, for example, but plans are not made for how to enable a child to develop and extend that interest with many different play materials. Moreover, key workers do not sit with their key children for sufficient time supporting their play and enabling children to become engrossed in what they are doing. Children of this age naturally struggle to share and activities such as making play dough are not planned and presented in ways that support this age group well. At times four children try to share one mixing bowl.

Children are generally learning to communicate well. Staff chat to children as they play and are patient in trying to understand what children are attempting to say. They help children to point to what they want if the word they are saying is not clear and use their knowledge of a child's home language to lessen a child's frustration. Children enjoy the story reading they can initiate through out the day.

#### Nursery education

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory with significant improvement made in some areas. Children are making steady progress towards reaching the early learning goals before they go to school. Staff are developing a better understanding of the Foundation Stage and have undertaken further training in this area. The room is organised into specific areas and observations of the children are used in planning a range of activities, based upon individual children's interests. However, this approach does not always ensure that children are making progress in all the aspects of each learning area. An example of this is children are not encouraged to make music and explore rhythm effectively as part of their creative development. In addition plans do not encourage children to learn about things they have yet to show interest in or to encounter, for example seasonal changes or measuring.

Children are confident and their independence is encouraged in many ways including pouring their own drinks and helping themselves to snacks. There is good co-operation between children who are learning about the importance of sharing and taking turns. They are polite, passing each other the butter when having their morning toast and helpful at clearing up time.

Children enjoy looking at books together and listen carefully when a member of staff

reads to them. They use the reading corner independently, although not all the books are easily accessible and some are in poor condition. Low boards throughout the room encourage children to display their own work and pictures of Kipper and Arnold are an attractive addition to the book area.

Children have good relationships with the staff talking to them and sharing a joke. One child tells about going to the park with his family, another explains about the need to be careful if you meet a shark. While staff are attentive and listen to the children, they miss opportunities to extend their conversation and some lack the skill of asking open questions. Children draw and are starting to write their names. Opportunities for them to access mark making materials in all areas are being developed.

Children learn about size and shape when they use the construction sets. They build roadways adding to these using the easily accessible play figures and animals. They experiment with shells and plastic creatures in the water tray, discovering which will float and which will sink and realise that liquids are heavy when they lift the jug of milk. One child adds boxes to his junk model tower making it taller, another talks with a member of staff about the tiny balls she has made from the play dough.

Children are starting to learn about the local environment when they look at road signs and cars while walking to the nearby library. Celebrating festivals and sampling different foods introduces them to other cultures.

They study the life cycle of a frog, using magnifying glasses to observe the changes and some children draw what they see. This activity is developed by staff who ask parents to bring in photos of the children as babies so they can see how they themselves have grown and developed. Children are starting to learn about technology when they use the tape recorder or create pictures on the lap top computer brought in by a member of staff.

Children have access to a wide selection of resources organised in the workshop area. They create models from junk materials, and boxes glued together form a tower which is painted pink using a toothbrush. This brush is used again by the child when she moves to the painting easel and a member of staff puts a selection of different sized brushes in a pot for her to use. Scissors, glue and sticky tape are all readily accessible and children help themselves as they wish.

The role play area is well used by both boys and girls who enjoy imaginative play when they bathe the dolls, cook and iron.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally happy and secure. Babies are relaxed and content in the care of their key workers who know them well. Staff are keen to learn about babies' individual needs and routines from their parents and follow these in the nursery.

Babies and toddlers are generally supported well by their key workers at meal and

nappy changing times. However, sometimes key workers do not make themselves sufficiently available to help new toddlers feel secure and to build supportive relationships.

Children are learning to value their own and others cultures and abilities through staff's knowledge of children's different backgrounds. The play resources, variety of food offered and displays reflect the diversity of the children that attend well. Children with special needs are included and helped to make good progress. Parents are consulted and there is liaison with other agencies to ensure children receive appropriate support and encouragement.

Older children's behaviour is good. They are co-operative with staff and considerate of each others needs. Both older and younger children are frequently praised for good behaviour and for their attempts to persevere. However, some aspects of toddlers' behaviour is less well managed. Techniques such as distraction are not always used effectively, and the number of times children have to share or wait in line are not appropriate for this age group. They also hear many negative rather than positive messages regarding their behaviour for example, "stop hitting", rather "than let's be gentle".

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Children benefit from the relationships staff have developed with parents. Parents are able to settle children slowly. Good systems are in place to enable staff to learn about new children's individual needs and to exchange information with parents about children on a daily basis. Letters are sent to notify parents of changes and events at the nursery. However, parents are not well informed about how their children are progressing and what they are learning in the nursery.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are generally happy and confident at the nursery. Changes to the way the rooms are organised, and resourced have had a very positive impact on children. All rooms now provide a stimulating environment in which children play, develop and learn.

Children enjoy the security provided by the company's comprehensive policies and procedures, which are now implemented effectively overall; children benefit from the combined knowledge in the staff team. However, there is some weakness in how the behaviour management policy is put into practice and some staff's understanding of meeting the needs of toddlers.

Children are cared for by staff that have been thoroughly vetted for their suitability and appropriate records are kept about the needs of each child.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager has made enormous progress since she started just before the previous inspection. The staff team work

well together and are led by well organised and supportive senior staff. Systems to monitor staff performance through regular meetings, senior staff modelling good practice and appraisals are in place. The Asquith group provide in-house training and use is made of the courses run by the local Child Care Partnership and the regular support provided by the early years advisory teacher.

The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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

Since the last inspection significant progress has been made. Actions which were set to help develop practice have been implemented and systems reviewed.

Children benefit from being cared for by a consistent staff team. Staff have an increased understanding of the Foundation Stage and Birth to three framework, having completed training in these areas. They are starting to use this knowledge coupled with the observations and assessments completed on the children to plan activities. The quality of teaching is monitored through regular meetings, staff supervision and on-going support from the Childcare and Education Manager employed by the Asquith organisation. The development of systems to improve communication with parents, ensuring they are informed of any changes affecting their child and to increase their understanding and involvement in their children's learning, are on-going.

Children's well being is safeguarded through vigilant monitoring by staff of the nursery and garden to ensure any hazards are identified and dealt with. The premises have been re-furbished and are bright, clean and hygienic. Very thorough accident records are maintained and a record of complaints and how these are dealt with is kept.

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

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since the last inspection. Concerns were raised regarding National Standard 11; Behaviour and National Standard 12; Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers.

Ofsted asked the provider to conduct an investigation; after considering the response, Ofsted was satisfied that the provider continues to meet the National Standards. The provider remains qualified for 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**

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):

- fine tune the routines and the way activities are presented in the toddler room to match the development and interests of the children more effectively
- ensure key workers spend sufficient time with their key children to build strong supportive relationships
- encourage younger children's good behaviour more effectively

### **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):

- continue to develop ways of involving parents in both older and younger children's learning and providing them with a clear record of children's progress
- expand on children's interests to plan and provide more adult led activities that ensure children have opportunities to explore and discover across each aspect of the six areas of learning

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