



Queen Mary University of London

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY218414
Inspection date	10 November 2006
Inspector	Maxine Rose
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Registered person	Queen Mary University of London
Type of inspection	Integrated
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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Queen Mary University of London Nursery has been in operation for approximately 10 years and moved to their present premises in January 2002. The nursery provides full day care for 65 children aged 0-5 years. The nursery premises is a purpose built three story building on the University Campus. The premises comprises of three play rooms, a parents' room, and children's bathroom on the ground floor, two play rooms and children's bathroom on the first floor, and office, kitchen, staff room and staff toilet on the second floor. There is an enclosed garden at the front and rear of the building. There are 65 children on roll of which 17 are funded children.

The nursery provides day care for students and employees of Queen Mary's University and families from the local community and operates from 08:30 - 17:30 Monday to Friday throughout the year, except for a weeks closure at Easter, during the summer and Christmas. There are 18 suitably qualified and experienced staff.

The nursery receives educational funding for three and four year olds and receives support and training from Tower Hamlets Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children develop a healthy attitude to eating because meals contain natural ingredients such as fresh fruit and vegetables served with drinking water. In addition to this the group have stringent procedures to ensure meals are free from preservatives, hydrogenated fats and genetically modified products. Children's meals are rich in natural goodness because foods are steamed or baked. Menus also take full account of children's individual dietary needs. The results are all children can sustain optimum health and vitality. The daily routine provides children with regular opportunities to wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet. This helps to reduce the spread of infection. Other procedures such as the 'Sick Child' policy also help to minimise cross-infection. Almost all staff are trained in first aid for children and young infants. They maintain appropriate record-keeping systems such as a medicine book and consent for emergency treatment. These practical procedures help to ensure children receive appropriate primary care if required. Whilst procedures do work well in practise occasionally records lack relevant details such as why medication is administered to children. There are a range of interesting activities outdoors to extend the children's physical skills. The children exert their energies as they run, jump, skip and hop. They are equally challenged by the equipment which is well chosen to enable them to practise, climbing, balancing, throwing, catching and cycling.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in surroundings that are well maintained in all areas including the resources and equipment. Effective design features and security systems help to ensure children enjoy a variety of activities safely both in and out of the premises. Secure locks on windows, door stoppers and coded entry systems prevent children from leaving the premises unsupervised. The installation of CCTV cameras and a visitor's book ensures all users of the setting can clearly be seen from all angles of the premises. The combination of security systems and staff vetting procedures ensures children are only cared for by suitable adults. In addition to these children can be closely supervised because staff maintain correct ratios and keep children's attendance registers up to the minute. The children learn about fire safety which includes ways to protect themselves and others. A record is kept on fire drills but there are times when relevant information is missing. The arrangements for recording accidents work well to ensure children receive proper care and parents are kept informed. In addition to these procedures children can be properly safeguarded from harm because staff are trained in child protection and have a sound understanding of their responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children have access to a broad range of stimulating activities which help them to make good progress in all areas of their development. Children are fascinated by the hanging mobiles which change shape when touched, make musical sounds and glow like prisms in the light. These activities promote an interactive response from the children which develops their coordination and sensory skills. Children's creative skills are well developed through exciting activities such as painting, role play, singing and dancing. All children are encouraged to explore colour and texture in a variety of mediums. They use recycled materials to create interesting objects and experiment with a variety of colours when printing with their hands and feet. Children are active participants during group activities such as story time and circle time. They share their thoughts and ideas on matters such as what activities to put out. These activities develop children's communication skills and enable them to make choices. Babies develop their independence as they are encouraged to feed themselves and achieve new milestones such as walking unaided. The staff have a good awareness of the Birth to three matters framework and implement this effectively to help children progress. Children have good opportunities for one to one care. The staff are attentive to the children's needs and warmly praise their efforts. The children feel valued and settle well.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage. Curriculum plans provide exciting challenges for the children in almost all areas of learning. Activities are prepared well with appropriate resources to motivate children to learn. This also makes learning fun and helps children to progress in all areas of learning.

The staff observe and record the children's achievements but this information is not always clearly linked to plans for the next stage of learning. Staff use appropriate teaching methods to encourage children to reach their full potential. The children are confident and inspired to learn because the staff appraise them for their efforts and plan activities well to ensure all children are fully involved. Staff are good role models. They spend time talking to the children and listening to their views, as a result the children have formed trusting relations with staff and one another. The children behave well because group activities are organised effectively to enable children to share and take turns with resources. These activities also promote children's independence because they are able to choose and select resources easily from shelves.

The learning programme places good emphasis on developing children's communication skills. The children have fun when they recreate stories through role play. They are keen to talk and write about their experiences making good use of words to convey thoughts and ideas. The children have access to an extensive range of stationery equipment to develop skills for drawing and writing. Older children write familiar words making appropriate use of upper case letters and all children are learning to recognise their names through routine activities. Younger children enjoy using a range of tools for mark making such as pencils, chalk, crayons, pens and felts.

The programme offers children the chance to count and use numbers in practical ways. For example counting the days of the week or changing the date on the calendar and weighing with scales. Children are learning to recognise shapes that are displayed on the wall. There is less opportunities for older children to calculate with the use of numbers and everyday objects in practical ways.

The children are highly imaginative. They embrace role play situations and opportunities where they can be creative for example for dressing up and painting with stencils. The children are developing a positive awareness of their culture and those of others. The children take part in festivities such as Christmas and the Chinese New Year and make good use of books, dolls and places in the locality which promote different cultures in positive ways. The learning environment is organised well to enable children to observe changes in the weather, study natural artefacts and care for living things. The children study and investigate the changes in plants with the use of magnifying lenses and they take turns to feed their pet hamster. The children are able to indulge their curiosity in other areas such as information technology. They understand the many functions of a computer and are adept at using the mouse and keyboard. The children's gross and fine motor skills are extended and supported with good access to outside play opportunities and a variety of hand held tools such as scissors, brushes, chalks and pencils.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children are valued and treated with respect. Their individual needs are met particularly well. For instance meals are prepared in accordance to children's dietary requirements and the routine takes full account of children's eating and sleeping patterns. These effective arrangements help to ensure children receive care which is consistent with that of their home life. The group have effective arrangements to care for children with special educational needs although none currently attend. The children's behaviour is very good because the staff are attentive to the children's needs. Children receive clear guidance on how they should behave and staff provide good opportunities for children to practise sharing and turn taking in group games. As a result the children have good manners and are learning to take responsibility for their actions. There is a good selection of resources and posters that raise awareness of diversity, and the children are effectively learning about the world around them. Practical activities such as portrait painting with the use of skin tone paints help children to represent themselves in positive ways.

Partnerships with parents are good.

There is a strong key worker ethos. This works effectively to ensure parents have regular contact with staff which in turn builds trusting and professional relationships. There are established systems in place to ensure parents views are sought such as the management committee. This ensures children receive continuity of care. Daily information sheets are completed, giving parents details of their child's food and sleep patterns. Useful information relating to children's activities and the Foundation Stage Curriculum is displayed in each group room. Parents also have opportunities to comment on children's learning in review meetings and on assessment reports. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered satisfactorily.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children's play and learning opportunities are positively enhanced by the practical organisation of the premises. The children make full use of the space within the setting. They experiment with sand, water and paints in the messy play area, extend the imagination in the 'home' corner, listen to stories in the book corner, build in the construction area and extend their physical skills outdoors. The staff adapt the premises well to provide a multifunctional space for the children. For instance some areas are transformed temporarily to accommodate time for children to eat and rest. During the day the children have easy access to a variety of play equipment because these are stored or displayed on low shelves, tables and mobile units. There are clear policies and procedures in place. Occasionally records lack relevant information and so do not always provide a full account of children's care plan. Policies and procedures are currently under review and the revised documents make a stronger link to the National Standards. There are appropriate procedures for staff recruitment and induction. This helps to ensure children are cared for by suitable adults. An active key worker system also ensures children receive valuable support throughout their time in the setting. An appraisal programme enables staff to identify areas of development in their skills and knowledge and seek relevant training, for example, the Birth to three framework.

Leadership and management is good. The setting has a well established staff team who have a positive attitude towards developing the provision for the benefit of the children. The staff schedule includes time to plan for children's learning and consult with external agencies such as the early year's advisory team. Staff manage their time well to plan a stimulating learning environment for the children which helps them make good progress in almost all areas of learning. The curriculum programme and children's assessments are guided by the early learning goals. Both records provide useful information about what children are expected to learn and what children do. Occasionally information about how child's learning will be extended is not clear in particular the area of mathematics. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom care is provided.

Improvements since the last inspection

The safety in the outdoor play area has improved. The installation of a soft tarmac floor surface reduces the severity of accidents to children. Also surveillance cameras and electronic gates prevent outsiders gaining access to the premises without proper authorisation. This helps to ensure adults in contact with children are suitable to do so.

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 the 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.

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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 the medication records include relevant information such as why children are being given medication

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):

- provide more challenge for the four year olds in the area of mathematics, that would enables them to practise simple calculations such as adding and taking away.

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