

Ambler Children's Centre & Extended School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY340678
Inspection date	02 May 2007
Inspector	Moreen Johnson
Setting Address	Ambler Primary School, Blackstock Road, LONDON, N4 2DR
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Registered person	Governing Body of Ambler Primary
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School care, Crèche

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?

Ambler Children's Centre and Extended School has been registered since 2006. The group is managed by the governing body of Ambler Primary School. The setting is situated in the Highbury area of the London borough of Islington. The building is constructed from part of the Ambler Primary School building. Children have five group rooms and secure outdoor play areas.

The provision includes a day nursery and a crèche which open from 08.00 until 18.00 all year round, a breakfast club which opens from 08.00 until 09.00 term time only and an extended day from 15.30 until 18.00 term time only. In addition to these facilities the group have an outreach service which serves the local community.

There are currently 29 children, aged from seven months to three years, on roll. Children attend on a full-time and part-time basis.

The group employs 18 staff, most of whom, including the managers, hold early years qualifications. There are three unqualified staff members.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Effective daily routines and staff good practice prevent cross infection. When changing children's nappies staff wear gloves and dispose of nappies appropriately and wipe the changing mat. Children's cups and bottles are sterilised and are clearly labelled. Staff ensure children use their own items. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene. When children attempt to eat food that falls on the floor, a staff member states 'it's dirty' and takes the food from the children and places it in the bin. Several children drop their knives and forks on the floor and staff provide children with clean cutlery.

Children are cared for in a clean environment. Staff ensure that a high standard of cleanliness is maintained throughout the building. Staff follow good food hygiene procedures by wiping surfaces, washing hands and ensuring food is maintained at the appropriate temperature. Staff are aware to notify Ofsted about communicable diseases.

Staff do not implement medication and accident procedures well because recording systems are not sufficiently robust. Children's names are not always entered on the medication record sheets. Several accident records are not consistently signed by staff and parents. Children are appropriately treated in the event of emergencies because some staff members are trained in first aid. However, no staff member in the baby room holds a first aid certificate, which means that younger children do not receive immediate treatment.

Staff have a good awareness of children's nutritional needs and promote healthy eating well. The menu is varied and provides children with healthy options. At lunch time children receive a healthy meal of chicken, broccoli, sweet corn, roast potato, salad, cauliflower cheese, fruits, wholemeal bread and water. Children choose what they want to eat and many children confidently ask for more food. Children are given drinks throughout the day.

Staff have a good awareness of children's special dietary needs. Information about individual children's need is accessible to all staff members.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. All areas are bright, clean and inviting. Children's work is displayed in their group rooms. Staff use the space effectively to meet children's needs. Children have ample space indoors and outdoors and move freely between the two areas. Children have access to a suitable range of good quality toys and equipment.

There are good sleeping arrangements in place, which means that children rest comfortably. Babies and younger children sleep in their own sleep room. They have the opportunity to sleep in accordance with their individual needs. Staff supervise children well when they are resting.

Children are kept safe whilst in the building because staff follow good procedures. Children are protected from intruders, the premises are safe and secure and no person can gain entry to the building without being admitted by a staff member. All areas meet with safety requirements and the premises are in a good state of repair. Staff ensure that risk assessments are effective so that children are protected from potential hazards.

Children's wellbeing is safeguarded because staff have a good awareness of the group's policies and procedures and how to implement them. They know that they must keep records of concerns and are fully aware about notifying Social Services and Ofsted of concerns. The group relies heavily on the school's policy and procedures for guidance. However, they are updating the current policy to meet the needs of the nursery. Parents do not have access to policies and procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies enjoy exploring and experimenting as they play in the garden with a wide range of activities. They are supported well by staff who engage in the children's play. Older children play energetically, running, riding bikes and pushing wheel barrows and buggies. Children are developing their independence as they choose equipment and initiate their own play. Staff are well deployed, which results in children being well supervised.

When babies come indoors there is a lull in activities because staff focus on changing children's nappies and preparing them for lunch. After this session children engage in a number of activities. Some children play independently the home corner, whilst others play in the play-house. Initially this area provides children with little stimulation because there are no items in the house. A staff member then extends the activity by placing a netted cover over the house. This results in children showing delight and they play excitedly. Some children play with the rice activity. When some children eat the rice staff discourage them from doing so but do not develop the activity for the children.

Children receive good individual attention from staff. When children cry or become unsettled, they are held and comforted by staff.

Children have good opportunities to develop an appreciation of music. Children confidently choose instruments and staff join in the activity by singing and children respond by dancing. Staff further extend the activity by playing nursery rhymes on the audio tape. Children also enjoy the music and movement session led by the music teacher.

Children have good relationships with each other and staff. They co-operate well whilst playing with activities. At the lunch table children happily converse with each other and staff.

Children are developing their independence as they freely choose activities. However, at lunch time more able children are not given the opportunity to develop their self help skills. Although the food is placed on the table where it is easy accessible, children are not encouraged to serve themselves

Staff have a good understanding of the Birth to three matters. Staff ensure that children's individual activity plans are clearly linked to Birth to three matters. Staff have a good understanding of how children are progressing. Children's observations and assessments identify the next stage of their learning. However, there are inconsistencies in updating children's records.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's self esteem is promoted well. They are treated equally and are encouraged to engage in all activities. When children become unsettled staff provide them with reassurance. Children have good opportunities to learn about their own and other people's cultures. They have access to resources that reflect diversity. Children with learning difficulties receive good support from staff.

Children behave well. Staff have high expectations of children and focus on positive re-enforcement to help children to develop an understanding of right and wrong. Staff value children's contributions and praise them for achievement. Managers ensure consistency in staff practice by discussing issues at staff meetings and by providing training.

The partnership between parents and staff is good. On arrival staff greet parents warmly and they spend time exchanging information. The nursery has established good links between home and nursery by doing home visits. Parents are given good formal and informal information about their children's progress. There is a good complaints procedure in place.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most staff hold relevant qualifications. Staff are aware of the significant changes that Ofsted must be notified about. There is a good recruitment procedure in place, which ensures that staff have appropriate experience and go through the vetting process. Staff do not receive adequate individual supervision.

Most of the policies and procedures used by the nursery relate to the school. However, staff are currently updating all policies and procedures to reflect the service offered by the nursery. The system for recording children's arrival and departure needs improving. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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.

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):

- ensure that children's daily attendance register record details of arrival and departure times and ensure that staff and parents sign accident records
- continue to update policies and procedures
- make policies and procedures available to parents

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