



Alyth Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	147496
Inspection date	29 January 2007
Inspector	Deborah Wilkinson
Setting Address	Alyth Gardens, Finchley Road, London, NW11 7EW
Telephone number	020 8455 6763
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Registered person	North West Reform Synagogue
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?

Alyth Kindergarten which has been registered since October 1992 operates from a purpose built unit within the North West Reform Synagogue, located in the Golders Green area of the London Borough of Barnet.

The kindergarten provides places for 44 children aged from two to five years. It mainly operates on a sessional basis from 09:00 until 13:00 and children attend five days a week. In preparation for school some of the older children attend from 09:00 until 14:30.

The nursery caters mainly for children of the Jewish faith although spaces will be offered to non Jewish children if the nursery is not full. There is a total of 44 children on the roll at present and the group receive nursery education funding for 31 of these.

There is a staff team of nine including the manager the majority of whom have a child care qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean and welcoming surroundings. They are well protected from the risk of infection because staff carry out effective hygiene practices guided by the clear written procedures. Children are encouraged to learn about the importance of hand washing and other aspects of personal care from an early age and are very familiar with daily routines.

Children's wellbeing is safeguarded by the thorough systems in place to deal with accidents and any medication given. Children who have accidents are given appropriate treatment by one of the qualified first aiders. Records are kept and parents informed of any action taken.

Children enjoy a healthy snack that they bring from home. Guidance about the type of foods to provide is given to parents and milk or water is provided for those who want it. Two days a week older children are able to stay to lunch in preparation for going to school. Fresh drinking water is always available.

All children have opportunities to get fresh air and exercise when they use the outside playground. They have fun when they play in the large area to the front of the building where they use the climbing frame and slide. They jump along lines of hoops, ride bikes or pedal cars. Sometimes the children go to the paved garden for snack or story time. If the weather is bad staff organise activities in the long corridor where the children play parachute games and use the balancing bars.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the attractive child-centred environment that is carefully assessed and checked by the staff each day. Children are able to explore their surroundings in comfort and safety because staff take good practical safety precautions to protect them.

Children's security is a high priority and entry into the premises is gained by using the entry phone. An additional buzzer on the door into the kindergarten alerts staff when visitors enter.

Children enjoy playing with a range of safe, clean and well maintained toys and equipment. The well organised environment helps ensure they are able to freely help themselves from low level storage units.

The overall welfare of children is positively safeguarded. Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues with up to date written procedures to follow. However details of the action taken if an allegation is made against a member of staff are not currently included.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children come into the kindergarten very happily. Staff greet them and their parents warmly making them feel welcome and secure. The established children are confident within their surroundings and familiar with the routines. Newer children are settled very gently, and staff work with the parents to give both adults and children extra support during this time.

All children benefit from the effective key worker system which enables them to form trusting relationships with a known adult. Staff know the children well and use this knowledge to plan varied and appropriate activities. There is a wide range of resources and equipment and children's independence and self confidence are encouraged as they move freely between the different areas choosing what they want to do.

Younger children sit comfortably on the cushions when they listen to a story read by a member of staff. Glitter and fluorescent paint are used to make pictures on black paper, and they contribute to a large penguin collage. When painting at the easel, the step thoughtfully placed in front allows the smaller children to reach easily. They join in an exercise session enthusiastically, bending and stretching before becoming sleeping bunnies. While playing outside they climb, use the slide and take turns on the bikes.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff complete observations of the children and use these to plan the programme. This is based around the curriculum for the Foundation Stage, with space left to allow flexibility to include activities led by children's interests or events that happen. For example, the very windy weather led to the making of kites, and conversations with two children about letting their balloons fly away when they were on holiday. The children communicate well. They have access to an extensive range of books and enjoy stories both in a large group or sitting with an adult and a few other children. They contribute to the show and tell sessions talking confidently about what they have brought and the other children listen and are interested in what they are being shown.

Posters around the classroom familiarise children with numbers. They start to learn about size when they use a variety of construction toys. Two build a tower with large wooden blocks. One involves a member of staff saying "look at our big tower" she responds with "that's a lovely tall tower, shall we count how many blocks there are?" they count together to eight. "If you want 10 blocks, how many more do you need?" the adult asks, the child thinks and replies "two".

Children have many opportunities to express their creativity. During the Shabbat party they listen when an adult plays the guitar and join in the singing with gusto. Once a week they dance using the large synagogue hall. They enjoy dressing up and a fairy adjusts her dress. She smiles as she admires herself in the mirror. Another child is helped to put on the wings and flaps away as a butterfly. Two more chat as they wheel their doll's buggies around. An area has been allocated where children can stick their own work and displays of their pictures and collages have been made.

Children's knowledge and understanding of their world is developed in a variety of ways. A trip to Kenwood enabled them to look at the trees, collect leaves and experience eating their lunch in the café. They cook regularly baking bread and biscuits for the weekly Shabbat celebration and also enjoy making apple crumble and vegetable soup. Children learn about planting and growth when they grow strawberries, runner beans and flowers in the small garden. They are beginning to find out about re-cycling separating the plastic containers and fruit skins left after snack time. Staff have taken the decision not to have a computer, however children experience technology when they speak into a tape recorder or take photos with the digital camera. Visitors to kindergarten including the Rabbi and the local policeman help develop children's experiences of their community.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. They join in, take responsibility and play a productive part in the kindergarten. They are confident within the classroom and choose freely from the interesting selection of activities available. Children are developing self esteem and respect for others. There is a range of toys and resources which promote positive images including books reflecting different cultures, genders and feelings. The children also contribute to other's enjoyment when they visit the local retirement home to sing to the residents.

Children's behaviour is good. They are kind to each other and are able to co-operate and share. This is helped by the clear rules, simple explanations and the gentle encouragement of the staff, for example, children help willingly when asked to tidy up for snack. Staff give sensitive support and do not over help children who want to do things themselves.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well cared for and integrated into the group. Staff work closely with parents and other organisations to help children participate in activities and reach their potential.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the close partnership between parents and staff. Detailed information about each child's interests and individual needs is recorded. Regular meetings with parents are held and staff are always available to discuss each child's progress. Children are able to share the Shabbat party with their families when parents, grand parents and siblings join in the Friday celebrations. Parents are very positive about the provision praising the staff for their loving care of the children.

Parents of children who receive nursery funding are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning and welcomed into the nursery to share their skills with the children. Written information about the Early Years curriculum is provided and notice boards keep parents informed about the activities and themes the children are engaged in. While the daily programme is available to parents, one comments that receiving this information earlier would enable them to plan how to contribute to this in more depth.

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

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Children benefit from the way the rooms are organised into areas linked to the learning goals and the deployment of staff within these areas.

Staff have a commitment to develop their knowledge and skills and good use is made of the training provided by the local authority and other external organisations. Staff work well as a team, they are motivated and organised. They support each other, planning and evaluating the activities to ensure they meet the children's needs. There are opportunities to discuss their work at regular staff meetings and during individual appraisals. The comprehensive policies and procedures that are in place provide a sound framework and are effectively implemented by staff.

Children are happy and learning at the kindergarten which is well organised and resourced. The arrangement of the equipment fosters children's independence. The settling of new children is done sensitively in co-operation with parents and they appreciate the care that is taken. Written policies and procedures are in place to support good practice and promote children's wellbeing. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection recommendations were made to help the provider develop their practice. Children's independence is encouraged and supported and they move around the premises freely choosing what they want to do. Older children serve themselves drinks at snack times. The younger ones who are not yet ready for this clear away their own cups and plates. Staff observe children and use the information to plan the next steps they will take to progress children's learning. Children are able to explore their surroundings in comfort and safety because staff take good practical safety precautions to protect them including the completion of risk assessments of all areas.

Written policies and procedures are in place to guide and support staff. These are reviewed and amended on a regular basis and are available in the office for reference

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):

- develop the child protection policy/procedure to include the action to be taken in the case of an allegation made against a member of staff

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):

- ensure that parents have easy access to information about activities and how they can contribute to their children's learning

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