

# Red Balloon Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY277361
<b>Inspection date</b>	05 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Rebecca Elizabeth Khabbazi
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Mary Magdalene Church Hall, Trinity Road, London, SW17 7SD
<b>Telephone number</b>	01367 850 461
<b>E-mail</b>	amd@rbns.co.uk
<b>Registered person</b>	Red Balloon Nursery School 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*

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](http://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?

Red Balloon Nursery School first opened in 1986 and was re-registered under company ownership in 2004. It operates from a church hall close to Wandsworth Common within the London Borough of Wandsworth. The nursery is open from 08:45 to 16:00 each weekday during term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 66 children from two years to under five years old on roll. Of these, 40 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language. The nursery school adopts a Montessori approach combined with the Foundation Stage curriculum.

The nursery employs seven staff who work with the children. All staff have relevant childcare qualifications. The setting receives support from the Local Authority through an early years advisor.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is protected because systems are in place to keep records about their health needs, any accidents they have and any medicine they need to be given. There is always at least one person on duty who has a first aid certificate and can take good care of children who have accidents or become unwell. Children benefit from regular meals and snacks, enjoying their mid-morning snack of fruit and a drink or the packed lunch they bring from home if they stay all day. They can help themselves to water from a jug whenever they are thirsty, which ensures they are well hydrated.

Children take part in regular indoor and outdoor activity that supports the development of their physical skills and contributes to a healthy lifestyle. They enjoy frequent outings to the local playing fields and common, and take part in ballet and gymnastics lessons several times a week. Children run around in excitement and have fun in the fresh air during a visit to the field, playing a parachute game, practising kicking a ball or taking big steps as they play 'What's the time, Mr Wolf?'. Children move with confidence during a ballet lesson, co-ordinating the movements of their arms and legs as directed by their teacher. They develop their fine motor skills as they use practical Montessori resources, carefully pouring water from a jug or using tweezers to move dried pasta from one bowl to another.

Children learn simple good hygiene practices when they independently wash their hands after using the toilet, without prompting, using the liquid soap and then the warm air drier to dry them. However, not all children routinely wash their hands before snack time, so they are not fully protected from the risk of cross-contamination.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in suitably maintained premises with facilities to meet their needs. Staff make sure they set up resources and equipment before children arrive, to create a welcoming environment, and children have access to a good variety of play materials and Montessori resources that are kept clean and in good condition, which helps ensure they can play safely. Staff make carefully daily risk assessments of the premises and ensure precautions are in place, such as safety gates to restrict access to some areas of the building, and security procedures for children's arrival and collection. Outings are well planned. Children are familiar with procedures for walking across to the playing fields together and staff wear bright florescent jackets so they can be easily identified. This all helps promote children's safety and reduce their risk of accidental injury.

Children learn to keep themselves safe when staff show them how to use the slide carefully or demonstrate how to hold the scissors. Their welfare is safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into place when necessary. There are clear fire safety precautions in place, and regular evacuation practices occur. There is a written emergency procedure as required, but this is not currently displayed in an area where all staff and visitors can see it easily if needed.

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

The provision is good.

Children are confident and settled in the nursery. They settle securely due to the effective key group system and the high level of individual support they receive from staff who know them very well. Children follow the daily routines, changing their shoes and putting their overall on, and quickly choosing an activity. They take part in a wide variety of activities and experiences which teachers adapt to meet their individual needs. Children enjoy selecting their own materials and resources, moulding and shaping the play dough, 'singing a rainbow' at circle time, or telling their friends about the toy they have brought in for 'show and tell'.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure understanding of the expectations for children's learning in the Foundation Stage. Children are engaged in a broad range of developmentally appropriate activities that provide realistic challenge and help them move on in their learning. Teaching motivates children so they are keen to learn, and they show good levels of independence, curiosity and concentration, although opportunities for children's free expression in some activities are not fully extended. Staff plan activities carefully around children's individual needs and abilities and make regular observations of their achievements. They know children very well and use this knowledge to effectively differentiate activities and ensure that all children continually build on their existing knowledge and skills and make good progress towards the early learning goals. The written system for recording observations and targets for children, however, does not currently clearly reflect this good progress in relation to the areas of learning within the Foundation Stage.

Children are keen to communicate and they use language well to start conversations and share their news at circle time. They look at books independently and listen attentively to stories. Children learn about the sounds that letters make and many write simple words, forming recognisable letters. Staff encourage children to develop their literacy skills through worksheets and when they write their weekly 'news' in their book, but there is less encouragement for children to make marks spontaneously during everyday play such as role play. Children develop their awareness of space, shape and measure when they use a range of Montessori materials, such as number rods and spindles. They count confidently and work out how many there are when one more is added.

Children find out about the world around them when they work on a project about the weather, learning about volcanoes and earthquakes. They explore a globe or find where they are in an atlas and take part in topic work on continents such as Africa or Asia. Children build models purposefully with construction kits and materials, and find out about the uses of everyday technology when they have a turn with an electronic toy. They use their imaginations when they 'make dinner' in the home corner, move their bodies in time to the music during a ballet lesson, or enthusiastically join in with the words to a song at circle time. Children enjoy adult planned creative activities, such as making an Easter chick or a spring flower, or sugar painting a cut-out egg. Although children express their own ideas when they cut and stick or paint a picture at the easel during free play, there are less opportunities for free expression during these planned activities.

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

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the setting and valued as individuals. Staff build strong relationships with children and their families, and this helps children feel included and settle quickly. Children take part in a variety of experiences over the year that help them develop a positive view of diversity, such as activities for St David's Day or American Thanksgiving, celebrating Chinese New Year, or making lamps for Diwali. Systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and fully include all children in the life of the school. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children quickly grow in independence and learn to do things for themselves. They select resources that they want to use from the shelves and set them out on a table or mat to play with, manage their own shoes and coats, and pour their own drinks when they are thirsty. They are familiar with daily routines and remind their friends when it is time to tidy away. Staff respond calmly to children and emphasise good manners and courtesy, which helps children learn to get along harmoniously together.

The partnership with parents is good. Information is exchanged verbally on a daily basis as children arrive and leave, and parents have access to all policies and procedures. Parents have regular opportunities to discuss children's progress, find out about the curriculum and raise any issues or concerns. Staff provide parents with comprehensive written information in the form of a regular newsletter, which includes clear details of the aims and learning objectives for their child for the term and enables parents to be fully involved in their child's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Effective recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are cared for by suitably qualified and appropriately checked staff. The staff team work very well together and have clear roles and responsibilities, sharing tasks and duties throughout the day while co-ordinating the care and education of their key children. All required documentation that contributes to the efficient running of the setting and promotes children's health, safety and wellbeing is in place. Space and resources are well planned so that children have plenty of space to take part in activities and can easily make choices and decisions. The session is organised to provide a balance of active and quiet times, group activities and free play, and children are occupied and stimulated throughout the day.

The leadership and management of the nursery education provision is good and contributes towards children's progress towards the early learning goals. There is a good commitment to continual development and improvement. Systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the provision, for instance through discussions at staff meetings, an improvement plan, staff appraisals and evaluations of the effectiveness of weekly plans in meeting objectives.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting were asked to ensure that the toilets were maintained at a suitable temperature during the winter. New options for heating this area have now been

explored and a new system purchased to ensure that this area is warm enough for children to use in the colder months.

### **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.

## **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 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):

- improve hygiene precautions in relation to children's hand washing before snack time
- make sure that the fire evacuation procedures are displayed so they can be easily seen by any visitors to the premises

#### **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 the system for making written observations of children's achievements so that the individual objectives identified for their learning clearly link to the six areas of learning and demonstrate children's progress within the Foundation Stage
- extend opportunities for children's free expression in creative work, designing and making, and mark making activities

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)