



## Seedlings Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY287094
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 May 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Liz Margaret Caluori
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<b>Registered person</b>	Seedlings Day Nursery Ltd
<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?

Seedlings Day Nursery is a privately owned provision which opened in 2004.

The group operates from a self-contained, two-storey building in a residential part of Honor Oak in South East London. The ground floor of the premises contains two group rooms, used by the older children, the kitchen and toilet facilities. The baby unit, office and staff facilities are on the first floor. There is also a fully enclosed outdoor play area with a brick outbuilding containing a sandpit.

There are currently 46 children under 5 years on roll in both full and part time places. This includes 15 children receiving nursery education grant funding. The setting is able to support children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens 5 days a week all year round with sessions running from 08:00 until 18:00.

A total of 13 staff are employed by the nursery including the manager and the cook, with a minimum of 10 staff working directly with the children each session. All of the staff who work with the children hold qualifications equivalent to NVQ level 2, with over half being qualified to level 3 or above.

The setting provides weekly French lessons for children and receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children flourish under the high levels of care and support they receive from staff in order to meet their health needs. They are developing good personal hygiene routines and self care skills. In addition, they are gaining an understanding of the potential risks of spreading germs, for example many children cover their mouths when coughing without needing to be prompted by staff.

All children benefit from the strong emphasis on physical development and enjoy frequent opportunities to play outside. They are able to move with control and older children are learning to throw and catch through regular practice. Staff use their sound knowledge of Birth to three matters to ensure that younger children also progress and gain strength and co-ordination.

Strong emphasis is placed on the provision of healthy, nutritious food and children enjoy freshly prepared meals that meet their individual dietary needs. Meal times for older children are very sociable occasions with children chatting happily whilst still being well supported to have good manners. Younger children receive good support and encouragement during feeding. As most of the children under three years sleep after eating, staff work hard ensure that each is fed and changed before they fall asleep. Whilst this effectively ensures that children's individual needs are met, on occasion, this restricts the children's opportunities to enjoy a sociable mealtime.

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

The provision is good.

Children work and play in an environment that is carefully planned and monitored to ensure that risks are minimised. A number of effective procedures are in place to allow children to remain safe whilst developing independence, for example whilst

older children are encouraged to visit the toilets on their own, staff are always nearby and ready to support them when necessary. Children are developing a good understanding of the need for certain boundaries in order to stay safe and pay close attention when given advice by staff. Older children know, for example, that scissors should be carried in a certain way and are able to explain why.

Children use equipment that is well maintained and appropriate for their age and stage of development. A recent reorganisation of the group rooms on the ground floor has resulted in the range of toys to which children have free access being limited, although improvements are planned. Babies have good access to a wide range of toys and equipment which are regularly cleaned throughout the day.

Children are well protected by the comprehensive policies and procedures relating to child protection and these are clearly understood by staff.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the warm, friendly environment. They form very good relationships with staff and with each other. They are developing good social skills and play very co-operatively both in the group rooms and especially in the outdoor area.

Throughout the nursery, children's individual needs are clearly identified and understood by the staff who work with them. This is initially done by obtaining information from parents and carers at the time of entry into the nursery and is maintained by regular observation and assessment. These practices also work well to support children with special needs.

Planning for younger children follows the Birth to three matters framework and staff are generally skilled at helping children to achieve well. Children under three receive a great deal of warm and positive attention from staff and are developing a strong sense of belonging. Babies enjoy long periods of the day where they are free to explore their environment which is stimulating and well resourced. Whilst a wide range of activities are provided for the children, some art and craft activities are adult directed and do not provide children with sufficient opportunities to experiment and make choices.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching of older children is satisfactory. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan an interesting range of activities aimed at helping children progress towards the early learning goals. Children take part enthusiastically and are generally making good progress in all areas of learning. On occasion, however, activities are too directed and adult led resulting in insufficient opportunities for children to experiment and make choices. Similarly, the lack of easy access to many of the toys and equipment restricts the children's freely choose activities.

Children are well supported by staff to extend their spoken language skills and often instigate and take part in complex and interesting conversations. All children show great interest in stories and books and many are able to recognise and write numerals and letters. Whilst mathematical concepts are covered spontaneously during children's play, opportunities for them to practice writing in their freely chosen activities are limited. They benefit greatly from the consistent interest of staff who respond promptly to their questions and give them a great deal of interesting information. This enhances their knowledge and understanding of the world and results in children having very good levels of general knowledge.

Whilst children are given time and space to take part in their own role play games, too much adult direction inhibits their creativity in art activities. They make use of the easel provided to paint their own pictures, however many activities are directly supervised by staff and have an identified outcome. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

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

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents is good.

Children's individual personalities and needs are well known and respected within the setting. Their play is supported by a range of resources aimed at promoting positive images of people from throughout the community and people with a range of disabilities.

Children behave very well and are able to share and take turns. They are polite and considerate and often act in a caring and compassionate way, following the positive example set by staff. Children are developing a good understanding of right and wrong and are able to play happily within the clearly set, clearly explained, boundaries.

Children with special or additional needs are well supported by the experience and knowledge of staff. Clear procedures and good working relationships with other professionals ensure that the nursery is able to work with parents and carers to identify and provide appropriate care.

Children benefit from the strong emphasis the nursery places on working in partnership with parents and carers. Through regular newsletters, meetings and special events, good relationships are maintained and regular information is exchanged.

The emphasis placed on forming and maintaining good relationships with parents allows staff to develop a good understanding of each child as an individual. Parents also receive a good range of written information to ensure that they are familiar with all aspects of the service provided.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Policies and procedures are clear and comprehensive and the high ratio of qualified and experienced staff clearly contributes to their successful implementation throughout the nursery. Similarly, emphasis on training and regular contact with other professionals, such as the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, ensures that children benefit from practices that are in line with current ideas and legislation.

The premises are generally well organised. Children are grouped appropriately and good use is made of the space available. All documentation required for the safety and well-being of the children is in place and regularly reviewed.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. The two nursery owners are familiar faces within the building and take an active part in the life of the group. However, the manager has clear responsibility for the day to day running of the nursery and has a thorough understanding of her role. She competently monitors all aspects of the service provided with a view to identifying and addressing any weaknesses. The skills of individual staff members are recognised and children benefit from the effective deployment of staff.

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

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

Not applicable

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

Concerns were raised on the 18/10/2004 regarding the rough handling of children by an individual member of staff. The concerns related to National Standard 13 - child protection, and National Standard 1 - suitable person; the way in which the incident was dealt with. The registered person provided details of the incident and the action taken and no evidence was found that the National Standards were breached. The provider remains qualified for registration.

### **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

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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):

- review and improve the organisation of resources to allow children greater freedom to select toys for themselves.

### **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):

- increase the support and encouragement given to children to practice writing in their freely chosen activities.
- increase the opportunities for children to express themselves freely using a wide variety of art and craft materials.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)