

Clapham Manor Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY333461
Inspection date	02 May 2007
Inspector	Linda Close
Setting Address	Clapham Manor Primary School Annexe, 16 Belmont Close, LONDON, SW4 6AT
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Registered person	Clapham Manor Primary School & Childrens Centre
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Clapham Manor Children's Centre is part of Clapham Manor Primary School. It operates from three main rooms on the ground floor of a low rise residential block. The building was purpose built originally as a nursery but has been extensively altered and refurbished for the children's centre. It is situated within a local authority housing estate in Clapham. The local authority is the London Borough of Lambeth. The centre is open every week day from 08:00 to 18:00 for 48 weeks of the year. There are 16 children on roll at the time of this inspection. There are 14 present and three of these are three years old and in receipt of nursery education grant funding. At the time of their fourth birthday the children are eligible to take up places in the primary school nursery class. A small number of children have learning difficulties. Most of the children who attend speak another language or hear other languages spoken at home. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The centre employs four members of staff to work with the children with additional support provided by the family services manager. Almost all members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Unqualified staff are very experienced and are currently working towards a suitable qualification. The Children's Centre also provides a crèche, a drop in centre for childminders, ante-natal classes and a range of courses and classes for adults.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are carefully protected from the unnecessary spread of infection because the staff help children to develop a very good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. Children say that they know they must wash their hands properly so they do not "get sick" and they clean their teeth after lunch to prevent tooth decay. Medication is only given to children after stringent procedures have been followed which contributes to their good health. Almost all of the centre staff have attended relevant first aid courses and update training is planned for all in the near future including the receptionist and the manager. This sensible forward planning ensures that a child will be cared for correctly and without delay if they have an accident. A strict cleaning rota ensures that all resources are clean and hygienic for the children. If there are any infections prevalent in the setting the furniture, fixtures and fittings are carefully treated with anti-bacterial cleaner for added safety.

Children are assured of having fresh food served in hygienic surroundings because all staff attend food hygiene training. Meals are prepared in the school kitchen and transported the short distance to the centre in thermally insulated boxes. The temperature of the food is measured and recorded when packed and unpacked. This ensures that there has been no deterioration in the condition of the children's food. They enjoy tasty, nutritious meals and eat with pleasure. They confidently try new foods with enthusiastic encouragement from the staff. Food allergies and parental preferences are well known to all staff so that children only have food that agrees with them.

Children have excellent opportunities for healthy exercise in the outdoor area. They play under a perspex covered area if the weather is wet. They show confidence and accuracy in steering wheeled toys around obstacles outside. Children play happily in the shade of mature trees. They roll hoops down grassy slopes, hone their throwing and catching skills using small apparatus and climb bravely on their climbing frames.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are safe in the building and the garden because there is a very high standard of security maintained at the centre. Internal connecting doors have further security mechanisms to separate children from other centre users. Children are warmly welcomed into an exceptionally well prepared learning environment. Staff spend considerable amounts of time and effort arranging resources and making labels and displays to attract the children's interest. There is ample space for the children to eat, rest and play in comfort. A quiet area with cushions and soft toys promotes the enjoyment of books. The fixtures, fittings and furnishings at the centre are of very good quality. Background music and the arrangement of comfortable furniture in the reception area makes the centre pleasant and welcoming to all. The 'Friends of Clapham Manor School' have worked exceptionally hard to raise funds to enhance the children's centre.

Children's safety is supported by a comprehensive risk assessment procedure. The Facilities and Premises Manager and other staff check the outdoor space daily so that children do not find dangerous or unpleasant objects in their play area. Indoor spaces are checked and prompt steps taken to minimise identified risks. Children are safely collected by adults who are made known to the staff by parents. Children are safe in relation to child protection issues. The

manager and staff are very well informed about the signs or symptoms of ill-treatment. They have a detailed procedure to refer to if they have concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy an excellent range of well planned activities that are carefully chosen to meet their individual needs. Staff have studied the Birth to three matters framework in detail together with every aspect of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. They have devised an in depth system of planning that incorporates all aspects of both of these frameworks. They ensure that their teaching strategies, and the activities that they provide, promote the best learning opportunities for every child in the group at the right level. Key workers involve parents and carers in target setting and review so that all of the adults involved can work together to help the children to make the very best progress. All four members of staff are aware of the needs of every child in the group. They observe all of the children they work with each day and they take observation notes to share with all of the key workers.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff take careful note of what each child has achieved on entry to the setting. They identify areas that each child needs to work on and they set targets which they revisit and revise on a regular basis. Children are gaining high levels of independence which they demonstrate at meal times when they serve themselves, in self-care when they dress themselves. They cut up their own fruit and vegetables for snack time and they choose and use equipment in both the indoor and outdoor learning environment. The children's centre actively supports the ethos of the primary school in all matters relating to behaviour management. Children discover that they do not have to accept ill treatment from their peers. They learn to hold up one hand and say firmly "stop it now I do not like that". They also demonstrate positive ways of interaction with others when they praise each other's drawings. The children are confident, happy and very well behaved.

Children show a keen interest in their activities and a willingness to learn. They are eager to make concertina 'Hungry Caterpillar' books with the staff and they show a growing understanding of how to write. They make good use of writing materials which are plentiful and readily available. Children eagerly choose books from the immense range available in their room. They handle them with care, they hold them the right way up and they turn the pages in the correct order. Their vocabulary is extended at every opportunity. Staff talk with them all the time. They introduce new words over free play and planned activities. Children find their name cards to add to the registration board.

Children learn about numbers and counting through their play and practical activities. Staff make excellent use of all eventualities to encourage the children to count and calculate. They use songs such as 5 little ducks to show what happens when one is taken away from a group. Worthwhile activities introduce the names and attributes of simple shapes. Children are skilled in their use of a modern computer and an interactive white board. They demonstrate new skills with software and hardware which is swiftly learned after one brief demonstration. Children dig and explore in their growing area. They tend their cress, peas and herbs and eat the produce when it is ready. Plans, photographs and records show that the children revel in worthwhile multi-cultural activities which include dance, music, food and dressing up. Very attractive low level displays of natural materials invite the children to touch and explore. The children have

an exciting 'water way' to explore outside. They can switch on the hose at the tap and float plastic balls round a system of drainpipes which shows them how water moves and flows.

Children handle a wide range of materials which include dough, corn flour, water and sand. Their creativity is nurtured exceptionally well by the staff who encourage them to produce paintings, models and collages according to their own ideas. The whole setting is festooned with colourful examples of children's art work. The displays add an interesting dimension to the play room making it bright, attractive and very inviting. The children enjoy making music together and they know the names of many of the instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children and their parents and carers are made warmly welcome at the centre. The manager and staff work closely with the head teacher of the primary school to ensure that family needs are well met. Children's individual health, dietary or learning needs are discussed in detail with parents and carers and assistance is gained from outside agencies. Specialists such as the school special needs coordinator, speech therapists and educational psychologists are called in to advise if appropriate. The needs of every child are carefully identified and targets are set and regularly revised.

Children's home languages, cultures and family backgrounds are very well known to the staff. They ensure that words in various languages are displayed and cultural activities reflect the people who attend the children's centre. They provide sensitive support to the children and their families. The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. A starter pack is given to each family when they register their child at the setting. The pack contains extensive written information about the day to day running of the centre and what is available for children and their parents. A wealth of information about planned activities is displayed together with details of the framework for learning. Policies and procedures are made available together with a complaints procedure. Parents are invited to look at their child's portfolio of work whenever they wish. They meet staff to discuss records of progress, contribute to individual target setting and to find out how they can consolidate and extend their children to learn at home.

Behaviour management is a clear area of strength in the children's centre. Children respond very well to the calm, pleasant way in which staff speak to them. The staff are excellent role models. They are polite but firm at all times and they set clear boundaries so that the children know what is expected of them. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

All members of staff are checked for their suitability to work with children at the time of their employment. A robust induction programme ensures that staff are able to gain familiarity with the policies and procedures of the setting. Every member of staff has a job description to support the smooth running of the centre. The emphasis is strongly on teamwork and all staff support each other well.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. The manager supports and supervises her staff on a regular basis. She arranges cover so that staff can meet weekly to discuss children's progress and plan together for the week ahead. She actively supports her

staff to train for their professional development and to meet the needs of the setting. She assesses risks to staff and children before any outings or visits are made. Contingency plans are in place to cover unexpected staff absences and cover for staff attending training courses. The manager is supported very well by the primary school business manager who does her utmost to support the children's centre.

Leadership and management is outstanding. The manager is fully committed to ensuring that all children receive the highest quality care and education. She encourages staff to evaluate their practice on a regular basis. She monitors their planning and teaching strategies to make sure that every child's needs are met. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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 by parents.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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