

Hendon Campus Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	147583
Inspection date	12 October 2007
Inspector	Gill Harrison
Setting Address	The Burroughs, Hendon, London, NW4 4BT
Telephone number	020 8411 6032
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Registered person	Middlesex University
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hendon Campus Nursery is one of four nurseries run by Middlesex University. It opened in 1995 and operates from purpose built premises on the university campus in Hendon. It provides full day care for a maximum of 40 children aged three months to five years. There are 36 children on roll at the current time. Places are predominantly for the children of staff and students of the Middlesex University, but, there are places available for local residents.

The nursery is open from 08:30 to 17:30, it operates fully during term times and a limited service is offered during university holidays. There are three playrooms, one for children under two, one for two year olds and one for three to five year olds. The nursery has nursery education funded places for 12 children. The nursery also has outside play space.

There are nine staff working with the children and a manager, most have level 3 qualifications in child care and early years education. Some children speak English as an additional language. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are able to attend. The nursery is part of the Barnet Early Years Childcare Planning Group and staff access the training and support they provide and that of the childcare department of Middlesex University.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Throughout the nursery staff are clear of the required and appropriate hygiene procedures. In the baby room, information regarding hygiene standards and routines are clearly displayed and adhered to. Baby's personal needs are met and there is a separate room for nappy changing, ensuring hygiene and privacy. Parent's wishes are always taken into account. Older children follow routines that help them maintain personal hygiene, for example, they know to wash their hands after they have been to the toilet and before they eat.

Positive steps are taken to ensure children's health and wellbeing. Staff are trained in first aid. Parents give authorisation for emergency medical treatment and are always informed if their child has had an accident or is unwell. These systems are robust.

The children benefit from having a hot nutritious meal at lunch time. These are adapted according to children's individual needs and parents' requests. Menus are displayed and reflect, overall, a healthy balanced diet. Throughout the day, children come together and have fruit and drinks. Staff sit with the children to share food, creating relaxed social occasions throughout the day that also promote language skills.

All children take part in physical activities; some of these take place in the small area outside. Planned local walks provide fresh air and exercise. Children enjoy using the gym, where they develop skills in running, balancing, climbing, crawling and jumping. Babies are supported in developing control of their movements, with help, they use a seesaw and a static frame and have room to move around and explore their surroundings. All children have access to resources that develop their hand/eye coordination well. In addition, all children are able to rest or sleep according to their needs and staff supervise the children well during these times. Bedding is either provided by the nursery or the parents to meet children's needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The three rooms used to accommodate the children are spacious, well organised and secure and organised so they can move around safely. They meet the needs of the different age groups accommodated in each room. For example, chairs and tables are the correct size for the age of the children, meaning that they sit comfortably as they take part in activities. The baby room has aspects that reflect a home environment. A sofa is used to good effect as adults and children can sit closely together as they interact. This supports children's feeling of security and wellbeing. Carpet areas provide opportunities for activities that require more space, such as construction. The rooms are organised to meet the needs of children who need to sleep or relax without interfering with play activities of the other children. Good use is made of nearby facilities, including a large gym next to the nursery. Children benefit from these facilities as they develop their physical skills. The outdoor areas are safe and secure and the children are safely escorted on walks.

The furniture and equipment are in good condition and appropriate to the needs of the different ages of children. In the baby room, children's photos are placed over their cots so that staff ensure that babies are placed in the correct cot. Play resources are suitable and plentiful for

the different age groups, although some books in the pre-school room are in poor condition. This affects children's love of books and reading as they are not attracted to the reading area

Steps are taken to ensure children are safe in the nursery. Detailed risk assessments are carried out each term. Internal doors are secure to prevent children leaving their rooms unescorted, although the older children are encouraged to go to the toilet independently. On a day-to-day basis staff ensure the rooms are safe, but in the toilets, the large mops in the cubicles pose a potential hazard. Detailed policies identify the procedures for emergencies, such as fire, and these procedures are tested routinely.

Children are safeguarded because the lead for child protection in the nursery has the right qualifications and is very experienced. All staff are aware of potential signs of child abuse and know their responsibilities if suspicions are aroused. Clear policies provide consistent guidance for staff and support their practice

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff show genuine interest in the children they work with and their warmth and kindness means that children settle well and enjoy their time in the nursery. The key worker system is effective throughout the nursery; children are confident and secure because they build up a close relationship with a particular member of staff. Resources are well organised and children choose activities that they enjoy sharing with friends. Staff working with the younger children in the nursery make observations routinely and use this information to plan the next steps for the children, based on the 'Birth to Three' framework. Great thought and discussion is put into this, resulting in these children enjoying their time and progressing well. However, this system of planning is not as effective in the pre-school room. There is an appropriate focus on developing children's speaking and listening skills. This is achieved through many individual discussions with children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. Staff show an adequate understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum however they do not use this knowledge sufficiently to extend and challenge older children's learning. Staff know the children's interests from their frequent observations and contact with parents, but they do not use the information gained from assessment well enough to plan challenging tasks. Activities are more closely aimed at the younger children and so older children do not grapple adequately with new ideas and learning and so do not progress as well as they should. In addition the progress children make is not tracked in line with the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage curriculum and so staff are not always clear about how to target teaching and how to identify any gaps in learning. The six areas of learning are covered in the planning however they focus on activities and provision rather than expected learning intentions.

The room is also organised to broadly reflect the six areas of learning. This means children know where to find resources and so have opportunities to choose what they want to do. This supports their independence.

Children's learning does not always progress as well as it should in early literacy skills. Books in the reading area are in a poor state of repair and the shelves are cramped. As a result, children do not show a keen interest in reading or sharing books. Children's early writing is developing

and examples are displayed, celebrating their efforts. Children enjoy learning through role-play however the lack of writing materials available in this area do not extend and challenge children's early writing skills. Children's speaking and listening skills are supported by staff while playing in this area and this particularly helps supports children with English as an additional language.

Children learn about the natural world by taking part in interesting first hand experiences, such as going on local walks and collecting leaves and conkers. They consolidate and record their learning by making displays and pictures of what they have found. Staff successfully integrate learning into day-to-day routines, such as snack times. Younger children's mathematical understanding is developing by counting out cups, talking about the shape and colour of their fruit and by cutting their fruit 'in half'. Staff's use of questions aimed to challenge children are lacking, resulting in older and more able children being unable to extend their knowledge of number and calculating.

Staff have a warm relaxed manner with the children that supports their confidence and helps the children who are new to the pre-school room to settle quickly. All children are included and supporting children's identity and home-life is a successful part of the nursery ethos. Activities support this, for example, children paint self-portraits titled 'I'm Glad I'm Me' and their portfolios include photos of their family.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met. Parents of children with English as an additional language spoke very positively about the support given to them and their children. Younger children develop a sense of belonging through taking part in group activities. Through warm interaction and plenty of conversation, staff affirm each child's sense of self and their right to be acknowledged and listened to. Observations and the key worker system mean that any difficulties a child may be having are quickly identified.

Staff are good role models and generally promote positive behaviour. Clear moral codes and routines enable children to share and be kind to each other so they usually play happily. If children show challenging behaviour, staff remind them kindly to 'wait your turn please' or 'don't snatch'. However, at times, staff are not consistent in supporting children's understanding of their boundaries. This is particularly true when older children dominate the space of the younger children. These situations occur when some older children are not sufficiently engaged or challenged, which results in them distracting other children.

Staff adopt many routines to support children's social development, such as lining up before leaving the room. Circle time enables children to come together and sing and share experiences. This engages the younger children but activities do not always interest some older children. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. This partnership enhances the provision and outcomes for the children. Parents of older children are kept informed about what their child is doing and are given information relating to the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff actively encourage parent's involvement and support for their child. Parents like receiving their child's portfolio at the end of the year. The manager is currently introducing new initiatives to keep parents involved and informed. These include a home/nursery diary that parents and staff update and regular 'open' times when parents visit and meet with staff. Parents report that staff are consistently caring, warm and reliable. They also appreciate the aspects of continuity

of care. One parent said she appreciated that the menus at the university and the nursery are the same and so she knows what her child has eaten that day.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

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

Systematic recruitment procedures are in place to ensure staff are suitable to work with young children. The staff team are experienced and the qualification requirements are exceeded, so helping provide a secure basis for children's care. Staff are encouraged to update and/or increase their knowledge and skills, but there is not yet a robust system of identifying training needs. There is an effective system of induction for new staff. Staff ratios are maintained and often exceeded and so children are well supervised and cared for.

All required records are maintained and the quality of documentation that ensures the children's welfare and care is very good. The registration certificate is displayed for parents in the foyer, along with other useful documents written since the last inspection. Children and staff register each day and so manager has an accurate record of who is on the premises. The manager has a good understanding of the strengths and weaknesses of the nursery in relation to care and these are reflected in her self-evaluation form and in the action plan.

Leadership and management of nursery education are satisfactory. Staff meet regularly and discuss their observations of the children, although these are not always sharply focussed on challenging children's learning. There is good team work. The manager supports staff in their professional development; this is agreed through discussion and informal monitoring of the quality of teaching. There is not a robust system of monitoring and evaluating the curriculum or how well this is taught. This means that weaknesses in teaching are not identified resulting in some children not progressing as quickly as they could. There is little mobility of staff and they are motivated, showing great commitment to their work. The manager has established a commitment to inclusion and this successfully permeates throughout the nursery. This means the children gain in confidence and are secure. Positive relationships between the staff, the children and their families are well established.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were a number of recommendations made at the last inspection mainly linked to improving documentation. All the recommendations for improving the care standards have been met, especially those linked to a significant number of documents that are now fully in place improving outcomes for children.

Some of the recommendations for the improvement of the funded nursery education have been met. Staff take time to discuss how activities have gone, but children's learning is not tracked well enough resulting in a lack of challenge for some children.

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):

- ensure cleaning equipment does not pose a hazard to safety

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):

- improve the quality of the books and their availability to the children
- use assessment more effectively to identify the next stage in children's learning and offer more challenge
- improve staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how to implement it effectively.

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