

Barkantine Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY288508
Inspection date	12 September 2007
Inspector	Vivienne Rose
Setting Address	105a Mellish Street, Isle of Dogs, London, E14 8PR
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Registered person	Barkantine Community Nursery
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 satisfactory. 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?

Barkantine Community Nursery opened in 2004 and operates from a purpose built building and is part of a four-storey building with wheel chair access. The two lower floors are occupied solely for childcare purposes with no access from the nursery to the upper two floors. The provision is located on the Isle of Dogs in the London borough of Tower Hamlets.

The Nursery consists of the following: Ground floor-reception room, dayroom, one baby room for birth to one year olds, cot/sleep area, bathroom, pushchair storage, milk room, kitchen, general office, manager's office, staff room and toilets.

First floor consists of Toddler room one children aged one to two years, Toddler room two children aged two to three years, pre-school room and a communal play area (indoors), out door play area, children's toilets/wash room. A maximum of 52 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery operates each weekday from 07:30 - 18:30 all year round except bank holiday and Christmas periods. There is also a crèche provision which operates alongside internal training courses on Saturdays. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 48 children aged three months to four years on roll, of these one receives funding for early education. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 19 members of staff. Of these 19 hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The group receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted through being cared for in a satisfactorily maintained environment. They follow hygiene routines which help to prevent the spread of infection and contribute to their well-being. For example, older children have individual face towels and they wash their hands before eating and after messy play. Staff provide explanation as to the importance of this which raises children's awareness. Effective procedures such as staff wearing disposal gloves and cleansing changing mats after changing babies supports a high level of hygiene. Nappy changing is carried out in the playrooms. However, the arrangement of this does not always support the privacy of the child being changed. This impacts on the children's welfare and self-esteem.

Children's health is well promoted as prior written permission is given for emergency treatment and medication. Most staff hold current first aid certificates this means that they can give appropriate care if there is an accident. However, although accidents are records are maintained staff do not always remember to request parents to sign and acknowledgement of these accidents. This does not fully protect children's welfare.

Children benefit from healthy diet. Children enjoy eating fresh fruit for snacks and they are confident to make choices about what they would like to eat, for example, when a child asks 'can I have some more custard please?' Fresh food is cooked daily on the premises and care is taken to ensure that children's dietary and medical needs are respected. However, children are not always encouraged to serve themselves at mealtimes to support the development of their independence skills. All children throughout the nursery have access to drinking water throughout the day this contributes to their good health and helps them to understand the needs of their bodies.

Toddlers and older children have access to a small outdoor play, however, use of this area is limited and lacks overall planning to enable children to get the most from this area throughout the day. Young babies have suitable opportunities to move around safely to enable them to develop their walking and crawling skills. In addition they use equipment such as play tunnels. They have the opportunity to play with objects such as shakers and use visual prompts such as puppets when they sing songs and rhymes each day. These sound games help to develop their awareness and to make connections in their play. Children who become distressed are supported and comforted by staff that understand their needs and support their well-being. Sleep routines are followed for very young babies and older children have sleep times according to their individual needs

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children move safely and confidently around the environment making choices from the activities organised for them. Staff organise space to enable the children to play in comfort and to have quiet areas, where they look at books or where babies can relax and be comforted by staff. Some samples of children's work are displayed in the rooms. Children are provided with a suitable range of play equipment and resources much of which is presented at low level. However, sometimes the equipment lacks variety to present sufficient challenges for all ages attending. Regular risk assessments are carried out on the equipment to ensure that children safety is well protected and risks are minimised. Children take part in regular fire drills to support their understanding of the process to ensure their safety and well-being. They learn to keep themselves safe when they are requested to pick up toys from the floor at tidy up time. There are effective processes for monitoring visitors to the premises this includes a visitors book and a security entrance system. This contributes to the security of the children. However, the procedure for recording children's attendance does not record arrival and departure times of children. This has an impact on children's safety.

Staff have a satisfactory understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse. They are fully aware of the action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This supports children's welfare well.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children arrive happy and confident and are warmly greeted by staff. They benefit from daily routines which are consistent. Children respond well when they receive good adult interaction, for example when they listen to stories and participate in singing sessions. For example 'Old Macdonald had a farm'. The daily routine includes time for free play and some focussed activities such as playing with 'Jelly' which the children thoroughly enjoy. Children appear settled and play with the activities provided. However, activities are not always based on what the children know and can do, as observations lack consistency and evaluation to give a clear picture of children's developmental progress. As a result the resources and activities provided sometimes lack challenge and variety. Children are developing their personal and social skills well, they help themselves to the aprons and practise turn taking. The caring and warm approach of staff helps younger children to become familiar with their surroundings and daily routines. Staff working with younger children are beginning to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to support their planning for children.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress because staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. There are comprehensive planning systems in place however; these do not always clearly identify the six areas of learning. Children are encouraged to explore and learn as staff question them effectively to encourage their understanding, for example, when they talk about events that take place in their home. There are systems in place to record developmental progress and planning for the children's next steps of learning. Children's individual profiles have evidence of development observed however, these observations are not consistently evaluated against the stepping stones to enable staff to plan effectively and as a result activities are not always based on what the children know and can do.

Children communicate well with their peers. They enjoy talking about their home life and the decorator coming in to decorate their bedroom and what colour it is going to be. Staff showing an interest in them and their family life helps them to develop high levels of self-esteem. Children demonstrate good self help skills such as asking 'can I have some more apple please' at snack time and when they want to do sticking with flowers on their collage. They are learning new vocabulary when they have stories read to them or when they choose their favourite songs.

Children have opportunities to see print within the setting although some labelling lacks consistency to fully support this learning. Children do have the opportunity to practice the sounds of letters. However, there are limited opportunities for children to recognise their own names or to reinforce their early writing skills. This impacts on the development of children's early mark making skills.

Children are beginning to count up to ten confidently. Staff use their skills providing children with a basic understanding of addition and subtraction when they talk about more and less than. For example, they use rhymes to subtract and bricks to talk about addition. Children are beginning to learn about living things and growth when they plant seeds and watch them grow. They learn basic science when they bake cakes and ice them. However, there are fewer opportunities to begin to discuss how and why things happen and how things work.

Children are using their imagination when they play in the home corner. They are extending their learning about the environment when they go on visits to the local park and library. Children are beginning to understand the world around them and their sense of place, when they discuss their home and where they live. Some technological equipment is available which requires batteries such as the shop cash register and the remote controlled car, however this is limited. Children build and construct using paper and glue to encourage their awareness of two dimensional objects when they use waste materials. Children enjoy listening to stories and expressing their ideas through painting and sticking and tactile play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming inclusive environment. Children with learning difficulties/and or disabilities are welcome. Children's individual needs are recorded and addressed appropriately by staff for example, dietary needs and language needs. This ensures that children feel a sense of belonging. New child checklists and daily diaries for babies identify children's individual needs to enable staff to support consistency of care for children. Children have satisfactory levels of confidence and relate well to each other and to staff which ensures they feel secure and this supports their self-esteem. They have regular opportunities to celebrate festivals, and use a range of resources which show positive images of culture, ethnicity gender and disability. For example, a toy wheelchair which supports children understanding of similarities and differences.

Children are generally well behaved and polite in response to the expectations of staff. Older children show growing confidence in taking turns. Children respond well to praise for their help when tidying away. This promotes their self-worth and helps them to learn right from wrong. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children benefit from the partnership with parents that has been developed by the provider and staff. Staff exchange daily information about children and their activities and care through daily discussion and the plans on display.

There are clear policies and procedures available for parents and a notice board keeps them regularly informed of changes to policies and the activities within the setting. Parents of younger children feel they are kept well informed about their children's progress and development. The management have recently developed a questionnaire to involve parents more fully in the organisation of the setting through regular verbal exchange. However, there is no formal procedure in place at present to exchange information on children's progress within the Foundation Stage.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the setting. Children's care is promoted by the satisfactory organisation of staff and activities provided. Ratios are maintained at all times however, there are times during the day when the organisation of staff who work with children does not promote consistency of care. This has an impact on the well-being of children. All staff recruited undergo an effective induction procedure. This contributes to the care and learning of the children attending the setting. Training needs are identified and staff are supported to attend further in order to update their child care qualifications. Most of the required documentation is in place and is regularly updated in line with new legislation. The appropriate policies and procedures work well in practice to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded. However, the accident records need to be maintained to ensure they contain a written acknowledgement by the parents. Staff do not record arrival and departure times of children. The way the setting is organised children's activities sometimes lacks variety and challenge further, babies have fewer opportunities to access the outdoor garden area for fresh air and play.

The Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff meet regularly to plan and attend inset training. The manager has the regular support of the organisations teacher on site. This supports the staff and oversees how the process for planning is implemented. However, the observation, planning and evaluation at present lacks consistency and as a result the overall planning is not based on what the children know and can do. The management are aware of the areas for improvement which include ensuring that the activities provided throughout the nursery for babies and older children are reflective of the observations carried out and that profiles are updated consistently and are evaluated in line with the next steps for children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to; develop staffs' knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework; provide a variety of toys and resources for children to be able to choose from independently.

Children are now access resources from low-level storage which enables them to have independence and choice. The majority of staff have attended Birth to three matters training to support the learning of the young children in their care. Observation and planning methods have been adapted to reflect the framework. However, at present these systems have not been fully implemented to meet children's individual needs.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been one complaint since the last inspection. Concerns were raised on the 11th January 2007. Relating to National Standards 2, Organisation; Standard 3 Care, learning and play

Standard 3; Partnership with Parents Standard 12. Concerns were raised about staff: child ratios being met the suitability of toys and keeping parents informed of changes in the setting. An unannounced visit was conducted by Ofsted on the 12 February 2007. The childcare inspector made observations, looked at documentation and discussed the concerns in detail with the person in charge. As a result an action was set to inform Ofsted of changes. Ofsted was satisfied with the steps taken by the provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 provider has recorded all complaints made by parents.

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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):

- make improvements as indicated in the nursery education section (below)
- ensure that all accident records include a written acknowledgement by parents
- ensure that children under one year have regular planned opportunities to access the outdoor area

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 consistency in the observation and record keeping for children's progress and development to ensure that planning is based on what children know and can do (also applies to care above)
- provide further opportunities for children to explore and investigate why things happen and how things work; increase opportunities for children to consolidate their pre-writing skills

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