

Lisson Green Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135053
Inspection date	17 March 2008
Inspector	Lynn Denise Smith
Setting Address	4 Lilestone Street, London, NW8 8SU
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Registered person	Westminster Childrens Society
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 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?

Lisson Green Community Nursery is voluntary owned and run by Westminster Children's Society. It opened in 1998 and operates from the first floor of a converted children's home. It is situated on the Lisson Green Estate in North West London. A maximum of 39 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open from 08.15 to 17.45. All children share an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 39 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these 18 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 11 staff. Of whom eight of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health needs are extremely well-met as staff are vigilant about following good hygiene practices. They play and learn in a clean environment as staff carefully wipe all surfaces and wash the floors at regular times during the day.

Children learn about their personal hygiene and how to keep healthy as they follow the staff's clear directions. They understand that they need to wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals. They do this proficiently. Children use individual flannels to wash their hands and faces after lunch, these are then washed immediately before being used again. Visual displays in the bathroom remind children about hand washing and help children who speak English as an additional language to understand the procedure.

Younger children's personal needs are efficiently met as staff check them regularly and change their nappies whenever they require changing. Staff effectively reduce the spread of infection by using appropriate gloves whilst changing nappies and wiping the surfaces clean in between each uses.

Children's medical needs are superbly met as staff obtain relevant information about their individual requirements and seek advice and guidance about the most appropriate way to administer medication. Children who have accidents within the setting are comforted by proficient staff who use their up-to-date first aid qualifications and experience to deal with their injuries. A clear and accurate account of the injury is logged and shared with the parents.

Children have superb opportunities to experience fresh air on a daily basis. Staff are extremely committed to ensuring children play outdoors as much as possible. They make excellent use of the fully enclosed garden to provide children with fresh air and they also go for regular walks within the local community.

Children enjoy a varied and healthy diet during their nursery day. They are provided with a superb range of healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. They have a huge amount of fruit and vegetables within their meals. Children sit together and share this important time of the day with their friends and with the staff. Children's individual dietary needs are extremely well communicated to staff through the registration forms parents complete and through their daily verbal discussions. Staff are vigilant about following the parents wishes. Children who have specific dietary requirements are subtly identified by a coloured star on their place mat and have their meals presented on easily identifiable plates. This ensures that cover staff and temporary staff are always made aware of children's allergies or special requirements.

Children have superb opportunities to learn about foods which are good for them and those which are not so good as they enter into lively discussions with staff during their meal times. They also take turns to play an active role in making decisions about meals. They decide on a full day's menu, informing the chef what fruit they would like to see for the mid morning and afternoon snacks and what meals and deserts they would like for lunch. The chef follows their requests and produces their menu for the whole nursery. Their suggestions are photographed and entered onto a wall display. This provides excellent opportunities for the staff and children to use the menu to discuss healthy eating.

Children are provided with exciting opportunities to develop their physical skills both indoors and outdoors. They have use of a full and exciting selection of equipment which promotes this aspect of their development. When playing in the garden they run around negotiating space well. They access bikes and tricycles, throw and catch a range of balls, jump on a trampoline and roll around in a large rolling wheel. Staff encourage them to fully explore the exciting selection of resources and to extend their physical skills by using the equipment in different ways, for example children throwing the small plastic balls around are calmly encouraged to throw them into the container they were presented in. This requires additional skills and concentration. Children's fine manipulative skills are superbly promoted through the use of an extensive selection of tools and equipment. They participate in both planned and free play activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children enter this exciting and vibrant environment through a main door on the ground floor, they climb a flight of stairs and are welcomed into the main foyer of the nursery by a member of staff. On approaching the first floor they are greeted with a superb display of photographs of the staff's heads, to which their bodies have been hand drawn by the children. Well-presented photographs of the children participating in exciting activities are also presented on the walls of the stairwell. Once children have entered the foyer they place their coats and belongings on the clearly labelled coat pegs which display their photograph. Younger children are then taken by their parents to the baby room which is situated just off of the main corridor. This room and the hallways leading to it are beautifully decorated with well-displayed examples of the children's creative work and clearly presented written information for parents. The baby room consists of well-organised and appropriately sized furniture and play equipment which children access with ease.

Older children have opportunities to play in a number of different rooms and areas. They have one large main room which is partly partitioned to provide calm and secure base areas for different types of play equipment for example they have an arts and crafts area, a technology area, a large and comfortable book corner a mathematics area, a knowledge and understanding of the world area, a musical instrument area and a dining area. In addition to this room all children have access to a sensory room, a construction play room and a role play room. All of the rooms are clean and well-presented providing excellent play opportunities. The walls are beautifully decorated with fun and exciting examples of children play and work.

Children experience outdoor play in an interesting and fully enclosed rear garden. The garden is covered with a soft flooring so that the younger children who are less mobile can crawl around safely and older children who fall over receive less injuries. The garden has a number of large plants in pots and is made welcoming and fun by staff presenting the equipment in an exciting way.

Children have superb opportunities to self-select toys and resources from the low-level storage containers presented around the nursery. The boxes and shelves are well-labelled with words and pictures which enables children to easily identify the contents. Children play with clean and hygienic resources as staff have meticulously high standards of cleanliness and ensure that the equipment is cleaned on a regular basis by using a clear cleaning routine.

Children's safety is given high priority within this setting. Staff carry out extensive risk assessments each morning to ensure that the premises are safe, secure and ready for the

children's arrival. A log of their findings is available and any safety or maintenance concerns are referred to the maintenance person immediately. Clear and effective written procedures are in place which provide staff with the tools to do their job efficiently.

Children have extensive opportunities to develop an understanding about keeping safe as they follow the staff's clear and simple directions. For example, when walking down the stairs to access the garden, they know that they must line up carefully, hold onto the safety bar as they walk down the stairs and when at the bottom of the stairs they must line up sensibly and wait for all of the children to get downstairs before they can proceed into the garden area. They articulate their understanding well and know why they are carrying out such procedures.

Children are superbly protected from potential harm as staff have an extensive comprehension of their responsibilities with regards to safeguarding children. They regularly update their child protection knowledge through training courses and work closely with other outside agencies connected with the protection of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very actively involved in an excellent range of play and learning opportunities. Children of all ages explore their environment and are provided with well-organised appropriate play things. Children develop superb relationships with the adults caring for them, they approach them for cuddles and are affectionately responded to by caring and professional staff. Children develop good relationships with each other for example older children are seen with their arms around younger children taking them to the toilet and guiding them around the nursery.

Children are extremely creative, they are provided with an extensive selection of creative play materials which are on hand at all times. They are very actively encouraged to explore textures, materials and different foods. Their creative work is entirely child-led and they are encouraged to express themselves through art. They have examples displayed on the wall of their interpretations of different artists work.

Children become extremely engrossed in role and imaginative play. They currently have a 'boutique' set up in one of the small rooms. Here they have access to a superb selection of dressing up clothes, hats, jewellery, mirrors and soft lighting. All of the role play set ups come from the children's ideas. A child who had been shopping with her mum told the children about her day, she informed them that some clothes shops are called boutiques. This focused the staff's attention on providing an appropriate environment for them to explore.

Children enjoy cooking, they participate in helping the cook to prepare meals as well as making cakes and biscuits. Children have excellent opportunities to play outdoors and to explore the world around them. They have a fully enclosed interesting garden and also go for walks in the local area.

Younger children's needs are superbly met as staff demonstrate an excellent understanding about exploratory play. Babies are provided with fun and exciting play opportunities, for example they always have sand, but sometimes have it with glitter or pasta in. They have shaving foam in a large tray. They have textured boards on which they have paper taped, they colour over the paper with crayons creating a pattern of the texture underneath.

Babies have excellent nature materials to play with. The nursery has been using treasure baskets for many years and staff continuously add to the selection of items in them. Babies have fun looking at themselves in the low-level baby mirrors attached to the walls of the baby room. They bob up and down in front of them and giggle at their reflection.

Babies enjoy the close interaction they receive from staff. They approach all staff with ease as they see the staff from the older children's room when they play together in the garden. Their babbles and coos are enthusiastically responded to by staff who are fully committed to providing the children with their care with excellent quality attention. Staff demonstrate a superb knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They use this to effectively inform their planning and to ensure that they are providing appropriate activities for younger children.

The nursery has a firm commitment to facilitating children's individual interests. They acknowledge that babies have interests too and focus on their individual interests. They work closely with the parents to determine the children's likes and dislikes at home. They are currently presenting a display board entitled 'Blossoming moments' which provides examples of the children's interests. Staff identify that some of the children love balls, so they present a fun and exciting display of different balls in one corner of the room. They have a small ball pool with a range of different sized and shaped balls. They use this theme to encourage colour recognition, catching and throwing and rolling.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding.

All staff demonstrate an extensive knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Photographs displayed around the walls are used to demonstrate aspects of learning, effectively evidencing that staff knowledge is good. Staff demonstrate their understanding through the language they use with children, the way in which they present the toys and play opportunities and the way in which they enable children to make superb choices over their learning.

The setting has a unique way of organising planning. Staff facilitate planning meetings with a small group of children. They ask the children what they would like to do and the children provide them with ideas. They have covered themes such as 'Barbies and Pirates', 'Giants and Fairies' and 'Superheroes'. The children provide the basic ideas and the staff then meet together to extend the planning. Further planning meetings are held every three weeks with the children and they are asked to consider what else they can do to extend their theme. Staff ensure that the children's ideas become purposeful activities which cover aspects of learning and are transferred to activity sheets. The long term planning is taken from the children's ideas therefore is very fluid and is added to as and when the theme runs out of steam.

Excellent, clear and effective records of children's progress and achievement are in place. Staff take a huge amount of photographic evidence to support their observations. The observations are plotted onto the children's stepping stones records and clearly track the children's progress.

The children's day consists of a good amount of free play as well as some focused group activities. The older children are split into three groups, mostly by age and ability. The lead workers for these groups plan and prepare the small focused activities.

The small focus groups enable staff to differentiate activities to meet the needs of individual children. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the children's stages of development and adapt their activities and approaches to meet them. The nursery benefits from having a

number of rooms, therefore children who need additional support can be taken into a spare room for one to one activities if this is required.

Children learn in an extremely well-organised and effective environment. Staff ensure that the ambiance within the rooms is calm and relaxing. Again the use of the different rooms enables staff to offer different activities in another room if they need to. The setting prides itself on providing a fully inclusive environment. All children are offered the opportunity to participate in activities.

Children concentrate well, they are motivated to learn and take full responsibility for choosing activities. Children get on well together, they are observed cuddling each other, chatting freely about their home and interests and sharing the toys and resources. They are encouraged to consider each other's feelings and to take it in turns to talk when in circle time or in small groups. Children develop a good sense of belonging as they place their belongings on pegs which display their name and photograph. They are encouraged to bring photographs of their family and pets in to be displayed on the wall. They are encouraged to tell each other about their family from the photographs. Children have a 'positive thinking' chair situated in the older children's room. It is a low-level, beautifully decorated chair in which children are encouraged to sit and think or chat quietly to their friends. This idea was implemented from a child's comment that 'she just wanted to think'.

Children play and learn in an environment which is extremely rich in print. All resources are well-labelled and provide opportunities for children to see that words have meaning. Children have superb opportunities for mark-making throughout the nursery. They have pens, paper and writing resources at their height in all areas, including outside. Children attending the planning meeting take it in turns to be the chair person and are shown how to conduct a meeting. Another child takes it in turns to write minutes of the meetings. Children are beginning to develop clear and recognisable letters. Some children write their own names, all are encouraged to have a go. Children are proficient speakers, they chat confidently in small and large groups. Their language is fully extended by staff who ask them open ended questions and enable them time to answer. A number of staff speak different languages such as German, Arabic and Dutch. This helps the children for whom English is not their first language to communicate and understand. Children thoroughly enjoy looking at books. They have a large and comfortable book corner which is furnished with soft bean bags and cushions.

Children access an exciting range of mathematical equipment which is presented in the maths area. They freely use the resources and clearly understand what to do with each piece of equipment. Effective displays encourage children to consider numbers and counting. Photographs of each of the children are placed on a display board in lines under the title 'how many boys are there and how many girls are there?' Children count spontaneously throughout the day. They use simple calculation with little or no encouragement from staff, for example at the dinner table, a child counts how many boys then how many girls and tells staff how many more girls there are than boys. At dinner time children know that if the cheesecake pieces are put together they will make a circle. Staff use the themes and ideas put forward by the children to extend all areas of learning, for example when covering giants and fairies, the children received a giant letter from the giant and a tiny letter from the fairy. Staff used the two to consider size and comparisons.

Children's knowledge of the natural world and the world around them is superbly extended through an exciting range of activities. Children have opportunities to learn about growing and planting. They explore insects through magnifying glasses in the garden. They catch and measure

rain water in containers in the garden and explore a huge range of different materials and textures. Children have daily access to technology equipment, they use a computer, a digital camera and have programmable robots. Children construct with a very good range of construction toys, they sometimes use the construction toys during their small group time, for example a small group of children make individual models with large wooden blocks, the children then sit in a circle and talk about what each of them have made. They tell each other what they think it is and what it reminds them of. Children have superb opportunities to learn about other people through an excellent range of festivals. Visitors come into the setting to extend the children's knowledge, for example a parent came in to play musical instruments to the children.

Children are extremely creative, they participate in a wide range of creative play activities. They have good role play and imaginative play opportunities. The planning meetings throw open opportunities for children to fully extend their imagination by contributing ideas and suggestions for activities. Children paint freely indoors and outdoors. They enjoy a wide range of music. They listen to c.d.'s and participate in singing activities, the singing and rhymes are repeated both in the traditional way and also as a 'rap' version if the children choose this. They have an excellent range of musical instruments available to them at all times they access these freely and confidently.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely settled and content. They enter the setting with ease and immediately begin their busy day. Staff greet the children at the top door and lower themselves to the children's height to greet them as well as spending valuable time chatting to their parents and making them feel welcome. Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the children's home backgrounds and family set up. Children's individual interests are acknowledged as staff ask parents to complete a sheet detailing the things the children like to do at home.

The nursery is very child-friendly as seen by the fantastic display of children's photographs which greet you on entry to the building. All work displayed on the walls is child-led and supported by written information by staff.

Children play with fun and exciting resources which reflect our multi-cultural society and diversity. They have a superb selection of dolls and puzzles of children from different backgrounds. The books reflect a wide range of family situations and the role play equipment throughout the nursery includes woks, chop sticks and various cooking utensils. Children explore an exciting range of festivals within the setting, most of which reflect the ethnic and religious make up of the nursery. They fully uncover the festivals through crafts, food, music and role play.

Children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are effectively cared for. Staff spend valuable time discussing the children's needs with the parents and agreeing on a consistent way forward which will enable the child to play a fully inclusive role in the setting as well as to learn and develop effectively. The setting has an identified Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who has attended all relevant training. She works effectively with other agencies. At present the majority of children with additional needs are receiving help with speech and language. All staff follow the SENCO's directions and use Makaton with all of the children to assist those with poor language skills.

Children's behaviour is superb. They are busy and active throughout their day which prevents them becoming bored and restless. Children make excellent choices over their play and learning which enables them to build their self-esteem and to take responsibility for their actions. Staff demonstrate an excellent awareness of children's developmental stages and acknowledge that some behaviour is related to age. They are very positive with children and provide them with lots of praise and encouragement. Staff are very clear in their directions and guide children in a positive way. Clear and effective written behaviour management procedures are in place.

Parents are made extremely welcome within this setting. They are encouraged to play a very active role in their children's care. They inform staff about their children's needs and extremely effective ongoing communication ensures that staff and parents are always kept up-to-date with any changes.

Parents are provided with an extremely professional parents information booklet, which contains details about the charity and how it works. Parents' courses are held at the setting on a regular basis, these cover a number of issues such as behaviour management.

Parents are provided with a huge range of information which is effectively displayed around the nursery on clear notice boards. Parents complete regular questionnaires and have the opportunity to make suggestions about the nursery through the suggestions box. Parents comments are always acknowledged and where improvements can be made, they are.

Parents are effectively introduced to new staff and have an opportunity to say goodbye to old staff who are leaving as the nursery holds a 'say hello and goodbye meeting' whenever staff leave and new staff join the team. These are usually held during the late afternoon so that as many of the parents as possible can attend when they come to collect their child.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding.

Parents are extremely active in their children's learning. They have opportunities to attend a parent's training meeting whereby the manager explains about the early learning goals, stepping stones and how their children learn through purposeful exploratory play.

The parent's information pack informs them about the six areas of learning and the kind of activities the children will cover to address these areas of learning.

Parents are asked to provide feedback about the setting generally and about the training courses. These are used within the nursery initially and then within the wider organisation. Changes are implemented if they are felt to benefit the setting.

Parents are able to learn about their children's progress through a number of different ways. They are invited to regular parents' evenings, they can come into the setting during the day on an informal basis and they can request a specific meeting with their child's key worker.

The children's planning and then the staff's planning is effectively displayed on large notice boards in the entrance hall. The presentation is clear and simple and easy to understand. Parents can see clearly what their children have suggested and how staff are carrying their suggestions forward.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is very well-fostered. Children are encouraged to develop a sound, caring relationship with each other. They are reminded to consider each other's feelings and are able to articulate their thoughts on an individual basis

and also in large and small group sessions. When participating in groups times they hold an item such as a teddy bear which is the 'talking teddy'. They learn that this is the time they can talk and that when someone else is holding it they need to be quiet and show their friends respect.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are expertly cared for by a team of committed and caring staff team. The effective management structure within the organisation ensures that the setting operates to an extremely high standard. The good mix of mature and experienced staff alongside some more recently qualified staff provides an extremely productive balance of expertise. New staff who apply for posts within the organisation undergo a substantial interview process and follow the organisations recruitment procedures to ensure that they are the right person for the job. Robust checking procedures ensure that all staff working with children have been effectively cleared or are supervised by other staff.

Staff are well-deployed around the setting to provide children with extremely high quality care and interaction. Staff are actively encouraged to utilise their skills and expertise in their day to day work. Their interests are fostered through the proficient supervision system which is in place and through yearly appraisals. Staff are actively encouraged to pursue training and there is an expectation that they will continue to develop their skills and knowledge through training and by working with other professionals. The organisation is heavily involved in assisting with research projects which enables staff to be at the forefront of new initiatives and ideas.

The children's day is very effectively managed to provide them with both quiet and active times. They each have a key person who takes care of their personal needs and liaises effectively with their parents. In addition to their key person, they are also placed into focus groups for planned and specific activities. Children participate in a great deal of freely chosen activities and make excellent choices over their play and learning. Staff organise the children's play space to ensure that they spend their day in a stimulating and vibrant environment.

Meticulously high standards of records and documentation are available at all times for inspection and fully support the working practices within the nursery. Written policies effectively inform parents about the setting's day to day routines and practices. Records are extremely effectively stored for confidentiality.

The leadership and management is outstanding.

The setting is one of fourteen nurseries owned by Westminster Children's Society. A number of the settings are situated within very close proximity to this one. This provides good opportunities for staff to be efficiently re-deployed should they need to cover for sickness or emergencies.

Staff work very well as a team. They follow the clear and effective directions of the manager and take full responsibility for their role within the setting. Staff have clear responsibilities, for example for child protection, or equal opportunities. They make it their responsibility to pursue current guidelines and information about their chosen role and to update other staff on new initiatives.

The organisation carries out regular audits on its staff to identify their previous training, skills and future training needs. Staff complete learning and development forms which are used to help identify any specific training which would be useful for the individual person. For example, three members of staff are currently attending a computer skills course.

Staff communicate very effectively, they hold regular staff meetings both in small and large groups. Staff are encouraged to think of ways in which they can build upon and develop their team and often participate in social events such as attending the theatre for an evening.

Staff have excellent opportunities to progress within the organisation and also have the opportunity to work in one of the other settings for additional experience. The organisation encourages self evaluation and promotes the use of reflective journals as a means of identifying how staff feel about their practice. Staff provide each other with constructive criticism and feedback on their approach and practice. This is then used to give staff the opportunity to review the way they work and to learn from other people's expertise.

The organisation is extremely forward thinking. It encourages it's staff to think 'out of the box' and to try new ideas. All staff have opportunities to put forward ideas for change and the setting also listens carefully to parent's comments and suggestions.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the setting was asked to implement a system that ensures children's named key workers are known to all parents. They were also asked to ensure children have privacy in the toilets by installing doors to individual stalls and to ensure the main hallway is in appropriate state of repair and decoration. Children now play and learn in an improved environment. The toilets have doors to provide privacy and the hallway has been decorated and is in a good state of repair. Parents are effectively informed about the children's named key workers as they hold regular meetings with the parents and a list of the key workers and groups are displayed on the walls of the nursery.

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 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 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