

Little Herons Emergency Childcare Centre
Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY240394
Inspection date	28 August 2007
Inspector	Lisa-Marie Jones
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Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Herons Emergency Childcare Centre has been registered since March 2003. It operates from a converted retail unit on the ground floor of the Northern Trust building in Canary Wharf, which is within the London Borough of Tower Hamlets.

Little Herons provides emergency child care for children who live or whose parents work in Canary Wharf, and whose regular child care arrangements are not available for a short period. The setting cares for a total of 53 children in two separate areas. It has been agreed that they will offer places for children under three years to attend on a permanent full day care basis, and still offer places for emergency childcare.

The group opens five days a week from 08:00 until 18:00, excluding Bank Holidays and the week between Christmas and New Year. There is no outdoor play area, but the children attending are able to use the indoor play area and sensory room at Unicorn Day Nursery, which is a member of the same company. As the setting offers emergency child care only there are no children on role, however there are over a thousand children that are registered to use the facility. They offer support and care for children with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

There are nine employed members of staff who work directly with the children, more than half of whom have early years qualifications. The centre has support and mentoring from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff take positive steps to promote the good health of children to enable them to understand the importance of good personal hygiene and to be independent. Children are consistently protected from the risk of cross-infection because staff follow effective hygiene procedures during meal times and when changing nappies. The nursery environment is very clean and staff ensure that all parents and staff adhere to the no shoes policy throughout the setting. Staff are first aid trained, should a child require first aid treatment and all documentation for the recording of accidents and medicines are in place and clearly recorded.

Children have regular healthy and nutritious drinks and food which are adequate in quantities for their needs. Healthy snacks and drinks are provided by the setting and lunch is brought in by the parents. Children are sometimes taken out to lunch by their parents and parents also have the option of joining their children for lunch in the setting. Parents working close by are able to come in and nurse their young babies. There is a system in place to provide ready made meals if food has been forgotten. Children are encouraged to be independent during mealtimes, for example, young children are encouraged to feed themselves.

Children engage in a range of regular physical activities, which are successful in developing their physical development. They have access to the indoor soft play rooms and sensory rooms in the sister nursery that is within walking distance and take walks to local places of interests.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are very safe and secure. Children have ample space to play in a building that is suitable. They are divided into suitable age groups, ensuring that they are cared for in a welcoming environment where they feel a sense of belonging. They have access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

Children have access to an adequate amount of age appropriate resources and equipment, that are maintained well and conform to safety standards. However, resources especially within the younger age group are not well organised to create an accessible environment so that children are able to independently select toys and activities.

Children are kept safe on outings as positive steps are taken to promote safety and proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents. Children are able to move around safely, freely and independently as regular effective risk assessments take place and any actions highlighted are acted upon quickly.

Child protection procedures, approved by the local safeguarding children board, are complied with. Qualified and experienced staff have a good understanding and knowledge of the effective steps to protect children from abuse and neglect. Policies and procedures are in place for staff

to follow in the event of a child being lost or uncollected and with regards to the recording of any child protection issues. However, they do not hold information regarding contacting Ofsted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the setting and appear to be happy. They enter confidently and wander off to explore. They relate well to each other and socialise and make friends with other children and behaviour is good. Their welfare is promoted as staff plan a range of activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities, using the Birth to three matters framework. Although planning cannot relate to individual needs as staff do not know who will attend each day they make sure it is adapted for all age ranges and abilities and that all children have the opportunity to be involved in messy and sensory activities.

Staff respond well to the children they sit, talk and comfort them. They take part in activities and are seen to play and encourage children's communication and learning. Babies engage well with staff, lots of meaningful eye contact takes place and children are comfortable enough to explore their surroundings. Older babies are confident to come over to adults and initiate conversations and babble happily away. Older children happily break off into small groups and engage in meaningful play and appear to enjoy their time spent at the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children is actively promoted. Staff endeavour to ensure that they have detailed records of children's individual needs and adhere to them to ensure children feel settled and happy. Effective written procedures and policies are in place and children have opportunities to explore celebrations across the world, which are sometimes facilitated by visits to the local community. They have access to a meaningful range of resources on a day to day basis that promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity and understanding of others.

There are good systems in place to support children who have identified learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting, in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

Behaviour is good throughout the setting. Children are helped to understand responsible behaviour as staff reinforce consistent and appropriate strategies, according to the age and stage of development, to help children understand right from wrong. Children are treated with respect and are given lots of praise and encouragement to promote their self-esteem.

Children benefit from sound relationships between their parents and staff, helping them receive consistent care both individually and as a group. Information is shared through daily link sheets and planned activities are on display for all parents. Settling in programmes for children are done on an individual basis to suit the child and family needs.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are generally confident to initiate their own play, but they can not always readily access toys and equipment independently. Staff effectively use policies and procedures to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. Parents are kept informed about the service that is being provided and their child's daily activities. This contributes to continuity in the children's care. Children are cared for by suitably qualified and experienced staff who have an understanding of child development. Suitable recruitment procedures are in place to ensure staff are vetted appropriately.

All the required records, policies and procedures which contribute to children's health, safety and welfare are in place, however some do not include information regarding notifying Ofsted of significant events. Policies and procedures work effectively in practice, as the management carry out regular evaluations of the care that is on offer and divide and implement effective action plans to ensure that the nursery is effective in delivering good standards of care for all the children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection two recommendations were set to improve the care that is on offer; ensure details of the regulator are included in the complaints procedures and ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote those with special needs.

Documentation has been improved as the complaints log now has the regulator's contact details, should a parent need to contact them and anti-discriminatory practice for all children is now actively promoted as children have access to a range of resources that depict children and adults with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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

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.

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 that ofsted are informed of any significant events
- organise toys and equipment so they create an accessible environment

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