

# The Cornerstone Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	155085
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jennifer Liverpool
<b>Setting Address</b>	149 Canterbury Road, Leyton, London, E10 6EH
<b>Telephone number</b>	02085568585
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Cornerstone Under Fives
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Corner Stone Pre-School opened in 1998 and is run by a voluntary management committee. It operates from a main hall and three smaller rooms in Cornerstone Church and community centre in the Leyton area within the London borough of Waltham Forest. A maximum of 30 children may attend at the provision at any one time. The provision is open each week day from 09.00 to 15.00 for 48 weeks of the year.

There are currently 43 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these 40 receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs eight members of staff. All of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from Pre-School Learning Alliance and from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted by effective daily routines and staff's own good practice to prevent the spread of infection. For example, table tops are wiped down and covered with suitable table cloths for snack and lunch times; there are procedures in place to mop up body fluids and dispose soiled materials safely and the cleaning rota leads to the premises and equipment being maintained in a suitably hygienic manner. Children know to wash their hands after toileting, before meals and at other times. They readily put on their aprons when participating in painting or water play. Children can receive appropriate care in the event of minor accidents because staff are qualified to administer first aid and all first aid boxes are kept fully stocked. The implementation of medication and sickness policies and the required health consents from parents ensures that children's health is well maintained.

Children's individual dietary requirements are known and adhered to at meal times and when they participate in cooking activities. They are well nourished as ready made meals and sandwiches are brought in from home. At present, there are insufficient storage facilities to maintain food brought in from home at an appropriate temperature to prevent spoiling. Children are provided with balanced, varied and nutritious snacks during morning and afternoon sessions, which include pitta and whole meal breads, hummus, butter and dips and a selection of fresh fruits. They are also given opportunities to experience different and wider tastes of foods as they are offered slices of green and yellow capsicum peppers as sandwich fillings. Children are learning the importance of eating healthily as they are involved in making sandwiches and fresh fruit salads for snacks. Fresh drinking water is available at all times and children confidently help themselves from the water cooler machine.

Children enjoy daily physical activities that contribute to their health and physical development. For example, they use a range of equipment such as climbing frames, tricycles, trampoline, see saw and balls. They respond and move enthusiastically during music and movement sessions. Children are developing good manipulative skills through the wide range of small equipment such as pencils, scissors, knives for cutting fruits and materials and when practising threading materials around the drawings of animals; creating attractive designs.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment that is secure, welcoming and child-centred with attractive wall displays of children's artwork around the premises. Effective security systems from the main reception area to the children's suite prevent unwanted visitors gaining access; ensures that children are not able to leave the premises without a suitable adult. Children play in a well organised environment that allows them to move freely from indoors to the outside play space throughout the session. This encourages them to develop their independence, make decisions for themselves and take responsibilities for their learning.

Children are kept safe because adult to child ratios are maintained; risk assessments are a daily feature with prompt actions taken when hazards are identified and staff monitor the accident books to identify any patterns of accidents. Children learn to take responsibilities for keeping themselves safe as they practise fire evacuation procedures. Children access a wide range of good quality play equipment and resources that conform to safety standards and are

developmentally appropriate. They have safe and easy access to toys that are stimulating and suitable.

Children are well protected by staff's good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care. This means that children's welfare is safeguarded.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and feel secure. All children are settled because staff work with parents to help their child to feel relaxed and enable them to develop confidence when they are placed at the pre-school. The key worker system is effective in ensuring that staff have good knowledge of the individual needs of an identified group of children for the purpose of monitoring their all round development and helping them to progress through the wide range of planned activities and spontaneous play. Children are familiar with the daily routine; they sit patiently when the register is taken at the beginning of the session; wash their hands before making sandwiches for snacks and help to tidy before a change of activities.

Staff encourage children to express their thoughts and feelings through small and whole group discussions, story telling, role-play and good questioning techniques. Children are able to express their own creative ideas when painting freely, using shape roller paint brushes to make patterns and when selecting a variety of fresh fruit pieces to make their own fruit salad. Children enjoy making and feeling a shiny smooth snake and a furry monkey using a range of materials. They are provided with musical instruments and are given good support to tap out rhythms. This means that children have many opportunities to respond to all of their senses of touch, taste, smell and sound. Children benefit from local and further a field outings and visitors such as the dentist and road safety officer to the pre-school.

### **Nursery Education**

Children are making good progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. This is because staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage; know how children learn and regularly undertake training to update their knowledge and skills. Children are provided with a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences across the curriculum. Children have access to a good balance of adult led activities and those they initiate themselves throughout the day. The curriculum plans give regards to all aspects in each of the six areas of learning, although opportunities for older children to become aware of alphabet letter sounds is not regularly seen in plans. In spite of this, children's communication and language skills are well promoted. The effective use of resources such as the role-play equipment encourages children to play cooperatively; freely communicate with others in their play; and develop imaginative skills through first hand experiences.

Detailed written records of children's progress in each area of learning are based on staff's regular observations and the samples of children's work. Staff use their knowledge of children's abilities to identify the next steps in their development and although this information is used to inform each child's individual play plan it is not always clear how activities are adapted or extended on the main activity plans. In spite of this, staff's positive interaction with children ensures that they receive good support and assistance in their work and play.

Children participate in a range of activities and games; they are encouraged to work together and the older children share equipment and toys, for example in the role-play area. Children are beginning to show care and concern for others as they help pass around plates of fruits to their peers at snack time; feed the fish and participate in a 'toddle' walk fund raising event for charity. Staff actively promote independence as they encourage all children to make their own sandwiches, pour their own drinks and help with tidying up. Children learn to count through planned activities and in practical situations. For example, children are encouraged to count themselves at circle time and the number of fishes they made for a wall display. They use mathematical language as they play in the beach shop, talking about the cost of items and saying that lollies cost one pound, five pounds and one hundred pounds. Children are introduced to simple addition through songs such as 'five little ducks'. They are encouraged to problem solve in practical ways such as when working out how much play dough is needed to make the boat float or sink in water play.

Children are confident speakers; they are encouraged to share their own experiences in a group situation, in the role-play area and at snack and lunch times. Children listen attentively to discussions, stories and instructions given. Daily access to tapes, head phones and the computer help to further develop their listening skills. Children find their name cards when they arrive and good labelling around the room; including the 'open' and 'close' signs in the role-play area help to promote their early reading skills. They enjoy listening to stories and are encouraged to participate. All children take a book bag home. This enables them to learn how to care for books and to read with their parents. They are beginning to write for a purpose as they pretend to write shopping lists in the beach shop. There are good opportunities for children to make marks and practise writing through the availability of a well stocked writing area. Older children are beginning to write their names through appropriate activities such as copy writing.

Children have a good range of first hand experiences where they can explore and discover things for themselves. They use magnets to explore what items can be picked up; examine pattern and change as they learn about life cycle of Butterflies; talk about the weather and the clothes worn in hot weather. In addition, children discuss similarities and differences as they compare the colour and type of shoes they wear. Children receive appropriate support to help them learn how to look after the environment as they are encourage to put paper in a recycle box. Resources such as paint, play dough, water, sand and recycled materials provide children with valuable opportunities to explore colour, texture and shape. They sing together daily, move and dance to music freely and explore the sound of musical instruments. Children are encouraged to express their own ideas through imaginative play. They enjoy re-enacting the roles of shop keepers when in the beach shop.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the pre-school; treated as individual and their differences and preferences are acknowledged. Children begin to learn and value each others differences as they work, play and eat alongside each other. They gain opportunities within their play to explore diversity as they have a good range of activities and resources that reflect positive images of race, gender and disability. Staff offer good support to children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Their good knowledge of the code of practice and close liaison with parents and outside agencies means that they are able to meet and plan for children's individual needs. Parents are encouraged to share their views and make suggestions about the running of the pre-school; they are given handouts relating to children's early education and the nursery's policies are available to them at all times. As a result of this, children's welfare is well

promoted. All children are encouraged to participate in the activities provided. Children behave well and benefit from consistent praise and encouragement. As a result of this, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is actively promoted.

Partnership with the parents of children receiving nursery education is good. This is because parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning through the home link scheme; children are able to take a book home in order to look at books and share reading with their parents. Staff encourage parental involvement as they organise social occasions such as barbecue party, Christmas Bazaar and party. The parents' rota system enables parents to take an active part in the pre-school as they spend time with their children. This also provides opportunities for children to see their parents in a different role within the setting. Parents are kept well informed about their children's learning and progress through receiving copies of their children's assessments and being encouraged to give feedback; useful information such as curriculum plans; policies and community news.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment that is very secure; allows them to move around freely between the inside and outdoor play area; develop their independence and promote their learning. Effective risk assessments ensure all areas are safe for children to work, rest and play. Children are well grouped and the key worker system ensures valued support and care for all children. Consistent daily routines and staff's own good practice reduce the risk of cross infection and help to promote children's good health.

Children use a wide range of good quality toys and equipment that are appropriate to their age and development. They show interests and enjoy participating in a stimulating range of activities that are available to them each day. A good partnership with parents contributes immensely to children's well-being and learning at the nursery. Policies and procedures are in place and implemented and the pre-school has an effective operational plan that guarantees the safe and effective management of children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. Staff work well together as a team and they all have good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff receive regular supervision sessions and attend annual performance appraisals; clear communication and guidance allows them to provide a stimulating well-balanced programme for children. Staff are good role models and demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning by presenting activities in an interesting manner; enabling children to have fun. As a result of this children show lots of enthusiasm in their play.

The assessment system is very detailed and reflects each child's individual learning needs and information is appropriately used to inform planning. Although the adaptation of activities is not always clear in the main curriculum plans. There are effective systems in place for evaluating practices. For example, quality assurance schemes; training; parents feedback and regular team meetings. On the whole, the manager is aware of the pre-school's strengths and is constantly reviewing procedures to ensure continual improvement in the quality of care and education for children.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to ensure children's welfare is not compromised when visitors enter the nursery area; make sure parents have information of Ofsted contact details for in the event that they wish to make a formal complaint and keep incident records in a confidential manner.

Children are kept safe and secure because there are effective systems in place to prevent unwanted visitors. Parents are now fully informed of Ofsted contact details, as seen in the nursery's complaints policy. Records relating to children's health and safety are held in a confidential manner and kept securely.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### **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):

- remind parents of the procedures with regards to food safety taking into account storage facilities
- make sure all parents countersign their child's accident record.

#### **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):

- ensure planning clearly show how activities are adapted to meet the needs of children of various abilities; provide regular opportunities for more able children to learn the sounds of the alphabet letters.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)