

Hampden Nursery Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	100570
Inspection date	12 September 2007
Inspector	Tom Radcliffe
Setting Address	80 Polygon Road, London, NW1 1HQ
Telephone number	020 7387 1822
E-mail	
Registered person	Camden Council
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hampden Nursery is part of Camden Local Authority Early Years Sector Education Dept.

It is situated in the Somers Town area and serves the community of South Camden. The nursery is situated on two floors; the ground and lower ground floor. The ground floor has two group rooms for children aged 0 to under three years. The lower ground floor houses two nursery classes for children aged three to five years. All rooms have access to outside play area which is equipped with large fixed play equipment with safety surfaces and plant growing areas.

There are currently 63 children on roll. This includes 30 funded three year olds and 11 funded four year olds. The setting supports a number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

Children attend a variety of sessions between 08:00hrs to 18:00hrs. This includes two x full day nursery groups, two x core term-time nursery classes operating from 09:30 to 15:30 hrs, a holiday play scheme and wrap-around service before and after school for nursery class children, which is also accessed by children from neighbouring schools; Edith Neville and St. Mary's

The nursery opens five days a week for 48 weeks a year. Twenty-two members of staff work directly with the children. Over half the staff have early years teaching and child care qualifications and the rest of the staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and childcare partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children attending the nursery have access to a very well organised and clean environment. Procedures are in place to ensure that medicines are administered correctly and that the risks of accidents are minimised and dealt with effectively. Staff at the nursery record all details correctly thus ensuring that the setting is safe for the children. A sufficient number of staff are trained in first aid and first aid kits are available throughout the setting. As a result children are well cared for if they sustain a minor injury. The nursery excludes children who may be infectious; this policy helps reduce the spread of infection within the setting. In addition to this staff use effective hygienic practice during the day; for example, when changing nappies or handling food and children wash their hands at regular intervals during the day. The nursery has in place effective practice if children require emergency medical treatment, helping to ensure that children's good health is promoted.

Physical development is good. The children have regular opportunities to take part in vigorous exercise, both indoors and outdoors. Most of the children have free access to a very good outdoor play area. Staff prepare this area daily so that children can undertake a range of physical activities that includes; climbing, running and balancing. Children use this equipment enthusiastically and imaginatively. Staff ensure that they support the children during these activities to enhance their learning experiences and enable the children to become more confident and competent. In addition the children have access to a good soft play area which provides more opportunities for exercise and play. Resources are available in all areas of the nursery for the children to develop their fine motor skills. These include painting, printing, mark making and playing with sand, water and modelling clay. Children in the baby and toddler rooms are able to sleep when they want to; this helps to ensure that their needs are met. All the children's meals and snacks provided are freshly prepared, cooked and healthy; for example, the menu available included vegetables, fruit, chicken or rice. Children can choose from a range of fruit or vegetables as snacks. Children are encouraged to make healthy choices in their food and the setting ensures that water is also readily available for the children to freely access. The nursery kitchen also prepares healthy food for children in the baby room where supplementary bottles are also prepared in accordance to strict health guidelines. Children have choice from a wide menu which is regularly rotated. All children's dietary needs and requirements are met very well.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises in use by the nursery are very secure and safe for children. Access is controlled by authorised staff who carefully monitor visitors to the nursery. All doors to rooms in use within the nursery are child proof and where necessary gates are used to provide extra safety. Children are also kept safe by effective procedures for the arrival and collection of children. All staff have a good working knowledge of how to safeguard children's welfare, the setting

has an effective policy in place and senior staff ensure that it is implemented at all times. Staff in the baby room, for example, valued the role played by the nursery manager and deputy in ensuring that children's welfare is of paramount importance. All adults in the nursery are aware of the procedures to follow if any allegations are made against members of staff. Emergency evacuation procedures are carried out regularly to ensure that children are aware of what to do to keep safe in an emergency. The nursery ensures that all children can be safely evacuated and accounted for even the very youngest and least mobile members of the setting. The setting has good fire detection and control equipment which is regularly maintained. There is a very good range of toys and resources available to the children throughout the setting. Staff work very effectively to ensure that they are made accessible to children and that they are interesting, well maintained and clean. The range of equipment and the way that the nursery plans for its use ensures that children's development is good. The nursery premises are spacious, well organised and enjoy good levels of natural light and ventilation. Play areas are well resourced and their use carefully planned to meet the needs of all the children. The baby room, for example, has equipment to promote the children's mobility and confidence when standing. In the toddler room equipment available to enhance physical, development such as sand or water areas, are arranged well to allow free movement around the room and between activities. The nursery has very effective procedures in place to ensure that children are kept safe when on outings and the manager and deputy ensure that regular risk assessments form part of the daily work of the setting. The nursery is an attractive environment in which children's work is displayed regularly and which the children to feel valued.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are grouped in the nursery according to their ages and stages of development. There are two large multi-use areas for the oldest children aged three and four years, an area used by toddlers aged two and three and a smaller baby room for the youngest children. All areas of the nursery are attractively maintained, well resourced and equipped. Staff have a clear idea of what they want children to do and planned activities provide the children with challenge and stimulation which is age and developmentally appropriate. In the baby room staff have a very caring relationship with the children and the key worker system that is in use throughout the nursery results in trusting relationships which underpins children's development. The baby room provides a secure and stimulating environment where children are well cared for and where effective learning takes place. The babies' needs are very well met as they sleep and have food according to individual requirements. Children in the baby room respond to the conversations that staff have with them as they gradually learn about themselves and others in the room. Staff also promote children's mobility very well and expose children to the stimulating effect of music and the spoken word. The babies also become increasingly dexterous as they handle objects and explore their environment. In the toddler room resources are thoughtfully arranged so that children can independently access them and follow their own interests and imaginations. The range of resources that are available to children in this room is good. Children are able to use the outdoor play equipment, be involved in role play activities, use art and mark making resources and share books with adults or between themselves. Though staff are well deployed in the toddler room children sometimes lack direction and change activities too readily. The nursery deploys its staff very well, they work very effectively with the children and all care that children are happy and that they develop appropriately. Staff make constant observations on children in the setting, for example on language acquisition in the baby room or mathematical understanding in the toddler room, which are recorded so that an understanding of children's development is available for both parents and staff. This

information is then used when activities are planned to ensure that children's needs are at the basis of the activities that they take part in. The nursery makes good use in its planning of the Birth to three matters framework and children's achievements and developments are recorded as children move into the Foundation Stage.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is very good. Staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn and make good use of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children progress well from the toddler room and continue their development and learning. The staff in the nursery are very committed to all children making appropriate progress; the planning is excellent and allows children to be central to the process by starting from their interests and needs. Careful observations and monitoring by the staff ensures that the planned activities are well resourced and have the desired impact upon the children's learning and development. Children have access to a very good range of activities in their own directed time, these include; outdoor activities, water and sand play, early writing activities, number work and language activities based on books and reading. All staff plan together in the nursery classes and a good balance is reached between child led activities and those with a greater adult input. Recent work has been undertaken to make the children more competent fasteners and dressers. Staff have excellent processes of monitoring that skilfully assess what children have achieved and what they still have to do. This information fuels the planning process and is recorded in very good portfolios of achievement which are also used as the basis of reporting to parents and other Foundation Stage records to be used in the last year of the Foundation Stage. Children apply themselves very well in the nursery classes and concentrate for appropriate periods of time, for example, when role playing in the creative part of the outdoor area, when undertaking printing and when listening to stories. The nursery made very good use of differentiated groups during story time so that all children could make appropriate progress and be able to contribute to discussions or question and answer sessions. This is a very good example of how the nursery classes use the key worker system to ensure that children are given proper support and have developmentally appropriate learning experiences. Children respond well to the teaching in the nursery classes and answer questions readily about their work, for example, when printing a child was able to explain why they had used certain colours instead of others that were available. The children also showed good levels of independence as they self selected activities or designed their own games outdoors. Children recognise their names as activities are designed for them to use them, for example as they register themselves at the start of the day or use other labels in the rooms. Mark making is evident, children use a variety of equipment undertaking this activity. Children concentrated very well when they listened to stories. Practical activities are provided to consolidate the children's understanding and use of number, for example, when counting pieces of fruit at snack time or using a number trail in the outdoor play area. Simple problems were introduced to the children as they undertook activities, for example, when children were counting the number of steps they tried to work out where they would be if they went one or two steps back or forward. The children are also able to explore simple technology through resources such as DVD players and the nursery intends to make greater use of a computer. The children have access to a very good range of art and construction material which enables them to develop their fine motor skills. The nursery classes support children's learning very well in the Foundation Stage.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The nursery maintains a very good relationship with its parents, there are valuable exchanges of information in place which enables the nursery to meet the needs of the children and gives parents a clear understanding of the work of the nursery and how their children are developing. Staff in the nursery know their children very well and are therefore well placed to meet a range of their needs, for example, the setting has a very good understanding of children's dietary needs, medical background and any factors that may impact upon learning. A good knowledge of the children's background also helps the nursery to meet individual needs, for example, the nursery is aware of children who come from homes that do not have English as a first language. The nursery is very experienced and effective in caring for and working with children who may have learning difficulties. Experienced staff, who are well led by senior staff, ensure that all children are able to develop in the nursery by the planning of appropriate activities and the provision of adequate levels of support. The key worker system impacts positively in this area of the nursery's work. The staff and the children of the nursery work well together to create and maintain a good working environment. This is achieved through the staff being positive role models with a consistent expectation of how everyone should behave while in the nursery. Staff take every opportunity to talk to all children about their work and conduct in a very positive and supportive way. They encourage children to think about what they could do rather than telling them what they shouldn't do. As a result children show a good understanding about the difference between right and wrong and are able to manage their behaviour well. In addition children take turns and share resources very well, for example, in the outdoor play area or when using the soft play area. The nursery has many resources reflecting positive images of the differences in people's lives, for example books and posters, which support children's learning and further extend their understanding. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. The nursery values its contact with parents so that it can provide the best possible care for the children. Parents are very happy about the service that the nursery provides, for example a parent valued the support given to their child who had a long term medical condition. Parents feel that they have a good knowledge of how children spend their time in the nursery and they greatly value the written development records as well as the informal contacts that they have with the nursery. Parents particularly valued the nursery's approach to behaviour management and the portfolios which demonstrate to parents how children are progressing and what they have achieved in both Birth to three matters and the Foundation Stage.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provider has established robust recruitment procedures which have helped to ensure that staff employed at the nursery are very suitable to work with children. The staff at the nursery are very experienced and many have worked at the nursery for a long period of time. All staff have a very good understanding of how young children learn as a result of their qualifications and the on-training and support that is made available to them. Though the attendance registers generally are compliant with National Standards and staff in the nursery classes have given children and parents an opportunity to contribute to self registering, there are some occasions when registers do not contain accurate information. The nursery has very effective and well understood policies and procedures in place for the effective and safe management of the nursery. The setting also has a very effective staffing structure in place which enables all staff

to contribute to the operation of important aspects of the nursery's work, for example, when it plans activities for children and monitors their effectiveness. Staff are well deployed within the setting and respond very well to children's needs. Children's care and well-being is given good attention. However children in the toddler room did not always use their time as constructively as possible and opportunities to develop greater concentration skills were missed.

The leadership and management is good. The manager and deputy are an experienced team who have had a major positive influence on the development of the setting for a number of years. The staff and parents of the nursery value the leadership which encourages participation and sets clear expectations that children should be given every opportunity to thrive and develop in a supportive and caring environment. Under this leadership and management style staff work very well as a team with a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities. Staff are well supported by management and their personal development is well managed. The manager and deputy work very well with the local authority and other external agencies to ensure that the nursery's strengths are developed and any weaknesses in provision effectively tackled. Planning is a strength of the nursery as it covers all areas of learning and is informed by rigorous assessments made on 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 nursery was asked to ensure that the operational plan was updated. Since that time the setting has ensured that all aspects of its organisational planning are of a high standard and make a significant contribution to the good management 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 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):

- ensure that children in the toddler room are purposefully engaged in challenging activities for longer periods of time.

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 that all registers of attendance contain accurate information at all times.

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