



## Asquith Nursery - Bush Hill Park

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | EY286582  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 27 February 2006  |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Julia Louise Crowley  |
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| <b>Registered person</b>       | Asquith Court Nurseries Limited                                   |
| <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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Asquith Nursery is one of 114 nurseries run by Asquith Nurseries Ltd. It received registration in 2004 and is situated in Bush Hill Park in the London Borough of Enfield. It operates from three base rooms on two floors in a converted end of terrace listed building. There is a small secure court yard for outside play. Also available is an off site secure play area (leased by the company), located across the road adjacent to the building. The nursery is situated in a mainly residential area and is in

close proximity to local transport facilities, schools and shops. It serves the local area.

There are currently 103 children aged from 15 months to 5 years on roll. Of these, 50 children receive funding for nursery education. Opening hours are from 08:00 until 18:00, Monday to Friday, 51 weeks per year. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs.

The nursery employs 19 staff, 13 of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Four members of staff are unqualified, one of whom is working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children have a broad range of opportunities to engage in daily physical activities, recognise the benefits of participating in regular exercise and know that it contributes to ensuring a healthy lifestyle. They benefit from a wide range of varied activities and show confidence as they balance on soft play structures, crawl through tunnels and dance to music. Children and young toddlers frequently take part in organised walks outside the nursery, they enjoy opportunities to negotiate space and develop increasing control and co-ordination. They talk about why they must wear their hats and scarves in the cold weather and enthusiastically dress in preparation for the outdoors.

Practitioners make effective use of the Birth to Three Matters framework to plan a varied range of physical play experiences for young babies and toddlers. They encourage babies to reach out for toys developing their crawling skills whilst toddlers practise walking holding hands and learn to use soft play apparatus and large moving toys unaided. Babies physical needs are well met, for example consistent routines with regards to feeding, changing and sleeping are implemented between home and nursery. Practitioners implement effective hygiene procedures, such as changing nappies and preparing tables for meals minimising risk of infection. Children learn about health and hygiene and how to look after themselves through personal routines, including hand washing before snack and after toileting. They automatically know that they wash their hands before snacks, and that it prevents the spread of infection.

Most staff have up-to-date first aid qualification, and clear policies and procedures are in place to enable sick or injured children to be cared for effectively. Staff maintain accurate records and work closely with parents to ensure that they have all the information they need to meet children's individual needs.

Children develop a very good understanding of healthy eating as they are offered healthy options of different fruits at the snack table. They benefit from three healthy and nutritious meals each day, including a two course cooked meal at lunchtime,

which increases their understanding of the importance of eating a healthy balanced diet. Practitioners are effective in supporting younger children to develop their independence, for example by learning to feed themselves; however, older children are not actively involved in setting tables and serving their own meals or snacks. Children independently access water throughout the session and talk about their favourite fruits.

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

The provision is good.

Children learn to keep themselves safe in a welcoming and stimulating setting, where they are able to freely move around the learning environment. Practitioners are vigilant about children's safety and ensure this by the effective implementation of thorough daily risk assessments and concise health and safety policies and procedures across the provision. Children talk about safe practice, for example they recognise they must hold on to the banister when walking down stairs. They talk about safety during a creative activity, recognising the need to be careful when using the scissors. Children discuss how the edges are sharp and talk about the dangers of cutting their fingers as they cut the paper.

Children are effectively protected because practitioners have a good knowledge of child protection issues, recognise their role and responsibilities and know how to implement nursery and local child protection procedures. The recording of all staff, children and visitors to and from the nursery, policies for the collection and non-collection of children and arrangements for recording injuries contribute to ensuring children are safeguarded from harm.

Children benefit from the generally organised environment and a good range of equipment and resources is available and suitable for the ages of children attending. Effective procedures are in place to ensure equipment is safe and well maintained. Children and babies access their own resources independently across the provision, which helps to develop independence.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies and young children build successful relationships with their key workers and peers and develop through a sufficient range of activities and experiences offered to them. They show imagination as they represent their ideas through the role-play, for example preparing to go to a party in the home corner. Children become competent learners as they explore making shapes in the shaving cream on the table top, using objects such as the toy tractors and their fingers. Babies are helped to explore their senses as they independently access a range of tactile toys, offering different textures and sounds. They enjoy creative activities such as playing with the foam, sand and water.

Younger children communicate well using words and gestures and increase in

confidence as practitioners respond to the noises they make. They babble as they share stories with practitioners and participate enthusiastically in singing sessions, which contributes to developing their communication skills. However, staff sometimes do not extend the younger children's chatter by using open ended questions. Therefore, children's communication skills and ideas are not always explored and extended. Practitioners working with the children under three years have a sound knowledge and understanding of child development and make adequate use of the Birth to Three Matters framework to guide their planning and observations of children's progress. They provide a stimulating learning environment, in which babies and young children initiate much of their own learning, helping them to develop sound levels of independence and competence.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress because staff have sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Although staff record activities relating to the areas of learning, not all aspects are covered in sufficient detail. A comprehensive system of assessment is used to record children's developmental progress. These assessments are not used effectively to plan the next steps for children. The impact of this is that children do not obtain the most from the activities provided and often activities lack sufficient challenge. Staff do interact with children but their use of closed questioning means that children's communication skills and ideas are not always extended in their play.

Managers and staff are able to evaluate and recognise that they are currently in a period of transition from one way of working to another. As yet comprehensive planning and recording systems that correspond to the new way of working, have not been implemented. However, the new methods place the individuality of the child as the starting point, and from there the child will cover all of the areas of learning.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. They are interested and eager to learn. Children are friendly and show concern and care for others. They show sense of achievement and independence, for example when they try to tie up their own shoe laces. They are generally engaged when they play at the sand tray and when they select activities. However, opportunities to develop independence skills and to serve themselves at snack and meal times are less well fostered.

Children are confident to speak in groups and concentrate and listen to stories. They are beginning to use language to negotiate and to use marks to represent writing. However, staff do not use appropriate strategies or questioning techniques to encourage children to build on these skills. They can count confidently and they recognise different shapes, although less emphasis is placed on children learning simple calculation.

Children develop an initial sense of time and place and enjoy reflecting on what they have seen during walks in the local area. They are beginning to explore early scientific ideas, such as solids and liquids, when playing with substances like corn flour. However, staff do not use appropriate questions or interactions to encourage children to build on these early skills of observation and investigation. Children learn

about their own cultural beliefs and those of other people through planned activities. They regularly use everyday technology or programmable toys to support their learning in this area.

Children develop their hand and eye co-ordination well, they dance and play outside with confidence and control. They visit parks and outdoor spaces regularly to support their physical development. Children use their imagination in play and respond enthusiastically to musical activities.

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

The provision is good.

Children show a warm attitude towards one another and appear confident and self assured. They are settled in the nursery because they are well supported by practitioners who are nurturing and responsive. Children play well together learning to share and take turns and negotiate this with confidence. They show genuine concern for one another. For example, four children gather around the computer negotiating that each other could see and had a chair.

Children develop a secure sense of belonging and confidently take on responsibilities within the nursery, such as helping to gather cups. Children are generally well behaved and show strong levels of confidence and self-esteem as practitioners praise and value their achievements. All children and their families, including those with special needs receive consistent support from practitioners and outside agencies, enabling them to develop and make individual progress. Children gain a well developed respect for themselves and others as they learn about their local community and the wider world and value and celebrate their differences and similarities.

This positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development

The partnerships with parents of children is strong. Practitioners place priority on establishing and securing the links between home and nursery, ensuring parents are actively involved in their child's learning. Parents receive information about topics and are encouraged to support their children in bringing in items from home linked to the topic of the week. Children's individual progress and achievements are discussed and shared through regular discussions with key workers and a written report each term. Children's learning is enhanced by the contributions parents make and the secure links in place between home and nursery. The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most practitioners have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the nursery and the deployment of staff is good, ensuring children are secure and

mostly engaged in activities. Practitioners work well as a team and children's learning is promoted through satisfactory leadership and management of nursery education. As a result, the needs of the range of children who attend are met.

Practitioners are supported by management through regular meetings and appraisals. They plan the curriculum together and discuss how activities went. However, systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the curriculum and the impact on children's individual progress are not yet developed.

Currently the nursery is implementing a new way of working where the activities are all child led. Generally children are still making progress through this interim stage, however, not all practitioners are clear on their current role. Resources are generally well used, however, practitioners do not utilise all of them to offer sufficient challenge to interest all children in the activities and enable them to make better than satisfactory progress. A well organised key worker system operates which secures the links between home and nursery and enables children's individual needs to be met. All practitioners working in the provision have a sound understanding of child development and those working with funded children have an adequate knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Staff performance is monitored and assessed both formally and informally and ongoing training identified to further enhance the expertise of practitioners and the rich experiences offered to children. Policies and procedures are consistently applied across the provision to promote acceptable outcomes for children.

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

Not applicable.

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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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 satisfactory.

## 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):

- develop communication skills through the use of open-ended questioning and the extension of ideas and language

### **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):

- increase staff knowledge of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals and how to plan activities with clear learning intentions that will enable children to work towards these; based on their individual needs
- continue to ensure that effective systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and interaction with children and the nursery education offered

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