

Limehouse Arches Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	119581
Inspection date	05 February 2008
Inspector	Chris Banks
Setting Address	21-23 Trinidad Street, London, E14 8AA
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Registered person	Limehouse Arches Day Nursery Limited
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 satisfactory. 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?

Limehouse Arches Nursery was registered in 1992. It is privately run and located beneath arches of the Docklands Light Railway in Tower Hamlets E14.

The nursery is open 51 weeks a year between the hours of 07:00 and 19:00 and currently has 45 children on roll. Of these, 12 are in receipt of funded nursery education. The nursery is registered to care for maximum of 45 children aged under five years of age. Children may attend on a full or part time basis.

Children have access to four ground floor rooms and an outdoor play area. A team of 16 staff work with the children. Of these, 13 hold recognised qualifications in early years childcare.

The setting receives the support of a local authority advisory teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in clean and suitably maintained surroundings with adequate standards of hygiene throughout. Some improvement to bathroom and nappy changing facilities for toddlers is now required to ensure standards are consistently maintained. The overall cleanliness of the kitchen has improved and four staff have also received training in Food Hygiene. Children's food is hygienically prepared and there is a separate designated space for the preparation of babies' bottles and other drinks.

Children are familiar and comfortable with hygiene routines such as hand washing and receive sensitive support during toilet training. Risks to children from infectious illness are minimised because parents are clearly informed about the circumstances under which children cannot be cared for. Staff and carers act in their best interests if children become ill and closely follow written guidance about exclusion periods. In this way, children do not return to nursery until they are completely well. Four members of staff have recently updated their First Aid training, which means they are well prepared in the event of an emergency. Any children with severe allergies are also protected because three staff are trained in administering specialist medication. Staff follow a procedure for administering medication but records do not always include the parents' countersignature.

Children enjoy reasonably nutritious meals and snacks. Meals are freshly prepared each day and include vegetarian alternatives. Any cultural requirements are taken into good account and information is effectively shared if children are known to have allergies. Appropriate arrangements are made for parents who wish to provide their own food. Snacks always include fresh fruit and children enjoy a fairly sociable atmosphere during meal times.

Physical play and exercise form a part of children's daily routines. A small outdoor area is the focus of most activity where children of all ages enjoy using a suitable, if somewhat limited, range of outdoor play equipment. Staff ensure each group of children enjoys time with their own age group by agreeing a rota for use of the space. Children enjoy opportunities for more vigorous exercise from a specialist tutor who visits once a week.

Some older children are becoming quietly confident in developing their fine motor skills. They enjoy activities which involve cutting, threading and manipulating keyboards. They are also becoming adept at using child sized cutlery at meal times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are looked after in secure surroundings with suitable systems in place to ensure any potential safety risks are minimised. Good routine safety procedures such as regular fire drills help protect children and basic risk assessments of each area are carried out and recorded by staff.

The arrival and departure of children is closely monitored. The main front door is answered personally by staff who check the identity of all visitors. Children are well supervised but their arrival and departure times are not consistently recorded. Care is taken to ensure only named, known adults collect all children. If suitability is in any doubt, decisive action is taken to protect

them. Children are further protected because staff closely follow the required procedure in the unlikely event they are uncollected.

Children aged under two benefit from having a separate, comfortable sleeping area and are well supervised when they take their afternoon nap. Staff also stay in each of the other rooms to monitor sleeping children.

The overall safety of children is positively protected because staff are knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities in Child Protection. They are familiar with the process for monitoring, recording and reporting concerns and follow clear procedures. Senior staff effectively describe how they act in the best interest of children at all times and clearly demonstrate the action they take if there are any concerns about their welfare. Procedures, however, do not include the role of Ofsted and the process to follow should any allegations be made against a member of staff.

Children enjoy playing with a satisfactory range of safe and suitably maintained toys and equipment appropriate to their ages and stages of development. Some are well worn but do not pose any risks to children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children receive a warm welcome from staff and are comfortable and secure in the setting. They are familiar with their key worker and greet some staff with a welcoming and excited hug as they arrive to start their day.

Space is suitably prepared in advance and older children settle quite quickly into activities. They explore their play spaces in safety and babies show interest and curiosity in their comfortable surroundings. Babies avidly explore resources all of which are made easily accessible, and they enjoy some warm interaction with staff. As they learn to crawl and walk their progress is recorded. Activities for babies are changed regularly to help ensure their interest remains stimulated. At the end of each day, parents of younger children receive a diary sheet covering aspects of their child's eating, sleeping and changing routine.

Toddlers share and enjoy a range of activities. They benefit from having a separate area for messy play where they enjoy experimenting with paint, play dough, sand and sometimes water. In the main room they enjoy free play. They play in small groups on the floor or with staff in the home play area as they dress up, have imaginary tea parties and enjoy a cuddle while looking at books with staff. The few books, however, are not attractively displayed or made particularly accessible. Children of all ages enjoy their time in small groups when they join in a range of nursery rhymes and action songs with staff.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children attending the pre school group engage in a suitable range of activities which are helping them to make some steady progress towards reaching their early learning goals before they go to school. Staff demonstrate a suitable understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and this enables them to plan some worthwhile activities for the group who are lively and motivated to learn.

Systems for monitoring children's progress and planning for their future learning require improvement. Observation records vary in quality and often do not clearly evidence children's

progress. Neither do they clearly set out how staff intend to help them move on to their next steps. In some cases, however, when children leave to go to school, a more detailed account of their all round achievements is produced.

Children play happily and comfortably alongside their peers and are learning to co-operate well together. They are beginning to consider the feelings of others and make friends easily with new children. They are learning about what it means to share and are mostly patient when it comes to taking turns.

They are gradually learning how to listen to others and concentrate. After lunch they enjoy what they call a 'huggle' together and listen attentively to a story as they relax with staff in the comfortable book corner. Some are able to remember the storyline and predict its outcome, whilst others simply enjoy the closeness of the group and close their eyes for a while.

Children enjoy being part of a group especially when they sing songs and rhymes together. They are familiar with the words and actions of many and participate with enthusiasm.

Simple calculation is built into children's everyday activities and routines. Staff encourage children to think about numbers and sequencing as they talk with them about what they are doing and some good labelling around the room also helps children begin to recognise numbers. They confidently count the number of tentacles on an octopus model during water play and are also beginning to understand what types of fish and mammals live in the sea. Children learn about other aspects of the natural world when they plant bulbs and seedlings and help them grow. Paintings on the wall show children's images of the winter flower in blossom.

A few children are becoming aware about the world of technology and confidently use programmable toys such as keyboards and telephones. A few are also learning about technical creativity when they use a 'paint' software programme on the computer. They load the CD and are able to identify the simple colours and shapes they create. Children also explore their creativity through other very simple art activities such as painting and general mark making with pencils and felt tip pens. This is an area which needs to be improved if children are to be consistently challenged.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. A general information leaflet outlines in simple terms what it is hoped children will have learned by the time they leave the nursery. Children's progress is followed up by holding a parents' evening four times a year, where parents can formally meet staff to discuss their child's progress. Simple observational records are shared with them but these are not in a user friendly format.

All parents receive a friendly welcome from staff and receive clear information about how to make a complaint if they are unhappy about the service. This includes providing them with Ofsted contact details.

Staff guide behaviour in a way which is consistent but is also sensitive to individual children's circumstances. Children's efforts are praised and they are actively encouraged to be kind and considerate to each other. They are mostly well behaved and play happily together. The settling-in process for new children is suitably managed with a gradual introduction to the setting with key staff who liaise closely with parents during this time.

Children's growing awareness of difference is suitably fostered through a range of activities and resources. This includes the celebration of some different cultural festivals and the displays of children's photographs, different languages and countries on a world map. This helps foster children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

There are good systems of support for children with additional needs. Key staff have attended updated training and positively work on children's behalf to ensure they receive the appropriate professional intervention to support their ongoing learning and development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a suitably qualified and experienced staff team, some of whom have successfully upgraded their existing qualifications since the last inspection. A few have also undergone additional training in key areas such as special needs, safeguarding children and food hygiene. All staff have been checked for their suitability to work with children. The setting has also recently completed stage one of a quality assurance scheme.

There is an awareness of the strengths and weakness of the setting and a stated commitment from senior childcare staff to improve practice where necessary and further develop the service for all users. Policies and procedures relating to the health, safety and welfare of children are mostly effective in practice but some procedures and record keeping systems require strengthening to further protect children. Bathroom facilities and nappy changing arrangements for toddlers also need to be improved.

Leadership and management of the nursery education element of provision is satisfactory. There is a formal system in place to monitor the delivery of the Foundation Stage and nursery staff benefit from having the support of a qualified and experienced teacher to guide their work. The systems for recording observations, planning a child's next steps and keeping parents suitably informed require improvement.

All required documentation is made available for inspection and confidential information is stored securely.

There is sufficient space for the number of children the nursery is registered to care for. Some aspects of the premises and equipment are well worn and regular maintenance is necessary to ensure the building remains in a suitable condition for children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection, the provider was required to improve kitchen and food preparation hygiene. A requirement was also made to ensure premises are maintained in a suitable state of repair. Tiling has been repaired in the kitchen and four staff now hold Food Hygiene certificates. This helps ensure meals and snacks are hygienically prepared.

A recommendation to ensure parents are informed of children's nappy changing and sleep arrangements has been met. Information about sleeping arrangements are contained in the parents information leaflet and records are kept about the number of nappy changes.

Improvements to staff training and induction were also required. The number of qualified staff has increased in line with requirements and key staff have also undergone some additional training in two specialist areas.

At the last inspection, not all required documentation was made available for inspection. All required documentation is now kept on site and stored confidentially.

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 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.

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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 parents are asked to sign medication records each time any medicine is administered
- undertake repairs and improve the overall standard of hygiene in the toddlers bathroom and nappy changing areas
- ensure written children protection procedures include the role of Ofsted and the process to follow should any allegations be made against a member of staff.
- ensure books are made more easily accessible to children in the toddlers room
- ensure children's arrival and departure times are consistently recorded.

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):

- improve systems for recording observations so that they clearly evidence children's progress and next steps towards meeting their early learning goals
- further develop systems for keeping parents informed about their child's progress
- improve resources and further develop opportunities for children's creative play

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