

Mary Sambrook Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 119587

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Inspector Anne Mitchell

Setting Address Mary Sambrook Childrens Centre, 125 The Highway, London, E1 9BP

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Registered person London Borough of Tower Hamlets

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mary Sambrook Centre opened in 1971. It operates from three playrooms in a single story purpose built building. It is situated in the Wapping area of East London. The Early Years Service within the Education Directorate manages the centre. The nursery provides care for children living within the local community aged from 18 months to five years.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round. It is open from 08:00 to 17:30, sessions operate from 09:30 to 12:30 and 12:30 to 15:30.

There are currently 30 children on roll. Of these, five are in receipt of nursery funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and children for whom English is an additional language.

The manager and deputy are supernumerary. There are nine full time and one part time staff who work directly with the children. Of these, eight have early years qualifications equivalent to NVQ level 3. The setting receives support from the Early Years Service, the Early Years Inclusion

Co-ordinator and other professional agencies.

The nursery has been awarded Quality Counts accreditation (level 3) through the National Day Nursery Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children follow rigorous hygiene procedures to promote their good health from a very early age. They are highly independent in their own personal care, selecting tissues to wipe their noses and disposing of the tissues in a bin. They are encouraged to follow excellent practice, washing their hands after using the toilet and even after their nappy has been changed. Bright posters positioned in the toilet area remind children about good practice and they have a very good understanding of the importance of hand hygiene routines. A child tells the adult 'I need to wash my hands to make sure they're clean for snack. Are you going to wash yours?' This demonstrates that children have an excellent awareness of health matters. There are secure systems in place to ensure toys and equipment are clean and well maintained to limit the spread of infection, and these systems are regularly monitored to ensure they continue to be effective.

Clear and comprehensive documentation is maintained to support children's health and wellbeing throughout the setting. Children who are ill or infectious are not accepted into the setting to protect the health of others. Clear procedures for recording minor accidents and giving medication are in place to ensure children's health is safeguarded. Several members of staff hold a current first aid certificate so children can be treated promptly in the event of an accident.

Children's emotional wellbeing is significantly enhanced through the staff's caring and warm approach. They value each child and make them feel secure and loved. During nappy changes, staff engage children in good eye contact and verbal interaction to help them feel comfortable and happy.

Children are very well nourished and they enjoy a varied, balanced diet provided by the borough. Meals are prepared from carefully planned menus and thorough consideration is given to ensure all children's dietary needs are met. There are vegetarian choices and cultural requirements are effectively met. They have a choice of food, such as salad, vegetarian pasta, roast chicken and a variety of vegetables. Children choose what they would like to eat and enjoy their meals with relish. Mealtimes are very social occasions with staff and children eating together, sharing food and conversation in a relaxed and unhurried way. Young children are given appropriate support and assistance, and encouraged to enjoy their meal at their own pace and food is offered in suitable quantities for children's needs. Snacks are healthy and comprise of fresh or dried fruit with milk or water. Drinking water is available in individual bottles so children are well hydrated throughout the day.

Children have excellent opportunities to enjoy outdoor play. They can choose to play indoor and out in the secure and safe outdoor environment. Children select from the broad and varied range of play activities provided outside, such as role play, painting and construction. Children have regular opportunities to play in the stimulating and very well resourced garden and play area where they enjoy climbing, hiding, balancing and jumping making full use of the outdoor space and fresh air. They pedal around the marked 'roadway' with confidence, stopping at the 'bus stop' to pick up their passengers. They know they need to pedal with more effort when

they have a passenger on board. All children become skilful in a range of movements and co-ordination through the enabling environment and encouragement from practitioners.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children safety is paramount. A closed-circuit camera and intercom system provides added security at the main gate. Staff, children and visitors attendance is effectively recorded. Comprehensive and detailed risk assessments are completed for all areas of the nursery including outings. Staff follow well practised procedures to check toys and equipment are safe, good checks are completed in the outdoor area before the children arrive.

Low level storage and child sized furniture ensures children have excellent opportunities to choose resources safely and use them without risk. Children learn about their own personal safety through clear explanation, discussion and reinforcement by staff. They remind children to sit carefully at lunch time so they do not fall off their chair, for example. Children are very aware of each other and older children look out for the younger ones. One child builds a tower and the older child warns 'Careful, it might fall on you'. Excellent procedures for outings ensure that children are safe in the community.

Children are effectively protected from harm and neglect. All staff have completed training in safeguarding children. They demonstrate confident and consistent knowledge and understanding of signs and symptoms, and procedures to follow. A safeguarding policy is detailed and illustrates clearly what to do. All staff have skills to put procedure into practice if necessary and the manager is very secure in her responsibility to keep children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in this stimulating and inclusive environment. They arrive at the setting with enthusiasm and joy, and are eager to start the days. A broad and varied range of activities and play experiences are available for children to choose from the outset. Staff set out creative play and specific resources to make the base rooms look inviting and attractive but children are free to choose from low level storage through the day.

Children are very happy and settled and relate to the staff and to each other with affection. As the children put their coats on to play outside, one child asks the member of staff 'What colour is your coat? I like it!' They are confident and sociable. Children approach an adult to show them what they are doing. A child explores the glittery sand and gasps with amazement as they find tiny stars. They show the adult saying 'Look stars!' Practitioners are calm and patient in their approach and demonstrate a secure understanding of child development, and give children time and space to play independently, but support when needed.

Children have excellent opportunities to play inside or out where a broad range of activities and resources are available. Children use all their senses to learn, squeezing foam between their fingers, and using their fingers to draw shapes in it, for example. They spend time in the sensory room listening to the calming sounds and music, and watching the light patterns on the wall and ceiling.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Teaching is consistently inspiring and challenging for all children and is rooted in expert knowledge of the Foundation Stage, with full understanding of how young children learn. Teaching highly motivates children and they quickly become absorbed in purposeful play in a secure atmosphere where they develop good attitudes and dispositions to learning. Children initiate their play and they are active learners, making excellent progress through the stepping stones given their capability and starting points.

Written observations are completed on children throughout the day and collated by the key worker, who integrates individual children's enthusiasms and interests into the planning. Additional planned observations enable staff to determine children's attitudes, behaviour and relationships so activities and key grouping will support children further in their learning and development. Planning is effective in covering all areas of learning. Staff are highly skilled in providing additional challenges for more able children or support for those who need it.

There are excellent systems in place to continually monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the planning and planned activities. Staff include children in this process to determine if and how activities could be adapted, extended or developed to promote their learning in the most effective way. The successful use of space, resources and staff deployment ensures children are independent learners, who are provided with a high level of support as necessary.

Children with additional needs are provided with an excellent level of support and all children are fully included in the nursery environment. The setting has developed strong relationships with parents and carers, as well as professionals who visit the setting to provide support sessions for the children or to liaise with staff who also provide therapy.

Children for whom English is an additional language are very well supported. Dual language labelling and books are available, key words are used by staff in liaison with parents to help children's understanding and promote their self esteem, staff show interest and are very respectful of children's cultural background. Staff speak Bengali, Ghanaian, Nigerian and this provides additional support for parents and children.

Children demonstrate high levels of confidence and arrive happily at the setting, separating from their parents and carers with ease, as families receive a warm and friendly welcome from staff. They quickly settle to play with a chosen activity and display high levels of involvement. A child pushes blocks into a container to determine how many blocks it will hold. He is totally transfixed and when the blocks have gone, he searches to find more. When the container is full, he leaves the table to find another activity. Children have developed warm and caring relationships with staff and with each other. A child helps another tidy up the play food together, and when they have finished the first child thanks her friend for helping. An older child sees a toddler getting upset and comforts him by gently rubbing his back. Children are very independent in their play and personal care. They put on outdoor clothes very capably and select resources. They are keen to help tidy up, or get ready for lunch.

Children have excellent opportunities to make marks with a range of writing materials, such as felt pens, pencils, chalks and charcoal both indoors and outside. They use their fingers to write in foam. Children are developing very good listening skills and staff provide opportunities to listen and communicate in small groups to extend children's language development. They enjoy stories and participate with clear enthusiasm. Staff show children the title of the book and the authors name and this helps children understand that words carry meaning. The text rich environment promotes children's enthusiasm for early reading. Books are available indoors and

outside, and children enjoy looking at them in small groups or independently, and do so from an early age. Children's love of books and reading is further extended and encouraged through the setting's home reading scheme, where children borrow books to take home, and through family learning sessions where children design and make their own books with their parents. Children's language and vocabulary is developing extensively as they discuss the feel of the textured pictures in a book. Children identify the animals as being 'soft' 'furry' 'smooth' and 'slippery'.

Children are gaining an excellent understanding of mathematical concepts. They count the ducks in the story and calculate how many are missing. Children help staff to count how many more plates or cups are needed at lunch time, for example. They use play tills during role play and show an adult the numbers that are displayed as they press the keys. 'That's a three. I'm three!' Children's understanding of shape and size is enhanced through meaningful and relevant activities. They look in a bag to find different three-dimensional shapes. They each hold a shape and feel it, saying 'This one's got pointy corners'. Parents look forward to joining their children to explore the local environment to look at shapes in the community, where children can identify the shapes of road signs, shop fronts and other objects. Children's use of mathematical language is enhanced through reinforcement by staff. As children try to fit the play food into the box a member of staff says 'Is the box too small? Do you need a bigger box?'

Children have excellent opportunities to learn about their local environment and the wider world through practical and meaningful activities. They visit local markets, post offices and shops to buy produce, post letters they have written and to look at local transport, the docks and parks. Many books and labels are dual language and resources reflect the diverse community in positive and relevant ways. Children enjoy visits to the local Mosque and Church, and photos show a recent visit from the community police officer. Children have opportunities to use programmable toys, and information and communication technology. Children enjoy experimenting and exploring using a broad range of resources, such as magnets, torches and mirrors and remote control toys.

Children demonstrate excellent imaginative skills; two play opposite each other with the toy tills and money., one of the children notices that the other has no money in his till and gives him some saying, 'You will need that for your customers!' Children make 'tea' and take it to staff members who participate willingly in their play and extend it further saying 'Can you make me something to eat, I'm so hungry'. Children have a varied range of creative play materials to explore, such as dough, glittery paint, water, sand and collage materials. Children are free to create paintings and models using their own imaginations and by selecting their own resources. Through regular visits from a local theatre group, children's opportunities to explore drama and dance are greatly enhanced.

Children explore the well resourced outdoor areas throughout the day. Access to the adjacent outdoor play area provides children with opportunities to draw, complete puzzles, enjoy books and construction in the fresh air. Children's physical skills develop successfully as they climb and balance on the climbing frame. They use bikes and scooters with increasing confidence and are able to stop, go and steer with competence. The setting is involved in a 'Top Start' physical programme to extend children's opportunities for physical activity to promote their health. Children enjoy regular opportunities for creative music and dance. Their small muscle control and their hand/eye co-ordination is successfully promoted from an early age. Children have access to a broad range of tools and activities that promote their dexterity, such as writing implements, threading large and small beads and the use of scissors.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children flourish in this inclusive and exciting environment. Families are greeted warmly by staff, and children enter child orientated and inviting base rooms to start their day. Staff engage with children from the outset asking about their journey to the nursery, and are genuinely interested in what the children have to tell them. Parents are given as much time and space to settle children as needed and are effectively supported by staff who enable their leaving with ease, saying 'See you later mummy! Let's wave together!' Children demonstrate a secure sense of belonging to the setting and staff know them well. This enables staff to meet children's individual needs very effectively. The setting follows comprehensive equal opportunities and inclusion policies and these are available for parents to see at any time.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. They follow positive and enthusiastic role models as the staff talk to them and to each other with respect. Staff are consistent throughout the setting in managing children's behaviour in a positive way and children are polite and well mannered, and quick to help one another to tidy up or share their toys. They have high expectations for children's behaviour and children are awarded 'Well done!' certificates for their first day at the nursery and 'Rainbow Awards' for 'being brilliant'. This successfully promotes children's self esteem and encourages good behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff at the setting genuinely value and respect them as the children's prime carers and involve them in all aspects of their children's play and development at the setting. Parent activity sessions are run every three weeks when they come to the setting to participate in play activities with their children. There are successful schemes, such as the toy library, home reading scheme and family learning sessions that promote the strong and vital link between the child's home and setting. Parents and carers participate enthusiastically. Parents are kept well informed about their children's progress through termly meetings with their child's key worker. They are actively involved in contributing to their children's observations and developmental records to gain a clear and comprehensive picture of children's all round progress. In discussion with parents they state that their children are happy and settled and have progressed well at the setting. Parents state that they are extremely well informed and involved in the setting, and feel staff are friendly and approachable. Parents feel the nursery is successful and well run. As one parent said 'This is the way it should be done'.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care. Children benefit from the exceptional quality of this well organised provision. Dedicated and well qualified staff are committed to providing positive outcomes for children. Staff undertake regular training and attend workshops to keep themselves up-to-date with all child care issues. They work effectively as a team and are consistent in their approach to behaviour management, children's care and learning, and promoting children's confidence and self esteem. There are rigorous and secure systems in place to recruit and check staff so children are cared for by suitable adults. A comprehensive induction process ensures newly appointed staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and are familiar with the setting's policies and procedures.

Leadership and management is outstanding. The manager and deputy have developed excellent systems to monitor and evaluate the level of care and nursery education. They complete regular observations on staff and children, and share points of good practice at staff meetings to boost morale and recognise areas of effective interaction, relationships and behaviour within the setting. Staff take responsibility for specific areas of development within the nursery, such as children's transition to school, communication and language, and children's physical development. Performance targets for individual members of staff ensures they continuously develop effective practice and improve outcomes for children.

All required documentation is very effectively maintained and is well organised. Personal records are kept securely to protect the confidentiality of the families who use the setting, and policies and procedures are comprehensive and support the excellent practice the nursery provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last education inspection there were no significant weaknesses to report, but the setting agreed to consider how to further develop systems to involve parents in the children's learning. The setting has made excellent progress in this area and involve parents in all aspects of their children's play and development through the toy library, home reading scheme and family learning sessions. This successfully promotes the strong and vital link between the child's home and the setting.

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 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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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