

# Seahorse Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123161
<b>Inspection date</b>	07 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Patricia Ann Edward

<b>Setting Address</b>	55 Southdean Gardens, Wimbledon, London, SW19 6NT
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<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8788 3371
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**E-mail**

<b>Registered person</b>	Julia Wolfe
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
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<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care
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## 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?

The Seahorse Nursery School opened in 1977. It operates from three rooms on domestic premises. It is situated in the London borough of Wandsworth.

A maximum of 18 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each Monday, Thursday and Friday from 09.30 to 12.30, and each Tuesday and Wednesday from 09.30 to 15.00 term time only. Two further afternoon sessions are offered to existing older children. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 22 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these 18 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery school employs four staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are two students in addition to staffing levels.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

The environment is clean and well maintained, as practitioners follow rigorous cleaning regimes. Antibacterial spray is used to clean tables at snack and meal times. Children are effectively supported in developing suitable hygiene routines. For example, they are encouraged in routines for hand washing and know this must be done before eating and after using the toilet. Parents are given a clear written policy regarding sick children as well as information on communicable diseases, which ensures children are protected from cross-infection and cared for appropriately should they become ill. There are appropriate procedures in place to deal with accidents and administer medication. Parents provide written consent for emergency medical treatment and a number of practitioners are first aid trained.

Children's physical development and enjoyment of exercise is promoted well through a variety of activities. They have access to excellent physical activities both inside and in the outdoor area. The nursery plans activities to help promote children's physical development and help them gain increasing control over their bodies. Children learn about the importance of activity in a healthy lifestyle as they join in free-play and organised activities, such as team games, ball games and use the equipment in the nursery garden. Children understand the importance of taking regular drinks as a way to maintain their health and confidently help themselves to water from their own sports bottles when they are thirsty.

Snack and meal times are social occasions when children talk and laugh with their friends and staff.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment, their work is displayed attractively. They use a variety of good quality toys and play materials appropriate to their age and stage of development. They can reach a large amount of toys and resources easily, as they are organised in low level storage units.

Their safety in regards to intruders is protected because of the systems for the vetting of all persons who visit the premises. Regular risk assessments, indoors and outdoors, generally ensure children's safety by ensuring hazards are identified and minimised. However, the hot water in the children's bathroom poses a scolding hazard to children and the storage of the climbing frame in the play room also poses a risk to children. Emergency evacuation procedures are in place and are displayed throughout the premises and are practised with the children at regular intervals throughout the year. This ensures that children are aware of the procedure and of what to do in a real life situation.

Children are safeguarded through practitioners' very good knowledge of the child protection procedures and they are clear what action to take in the event of a concern. Contact details for child protection are prominently displayed in the entrance and the nursery office for speed of reference. There is a clear child protection policy and procedure, and practitioners update their knowledge through regular training.

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

The provision is good.

Children are extremely content and happy in the nursery school. They enter the setting with enthusiasm and eagerly settle to play with a variety of interesting and imaginative toys and resources. Staff are very caring and children respond confidently, talking together easily about their interests. Children achieve well because practitioners are skilled and use their understanding of early years guidance, such as Birth to three matters and the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, to provide good quality care and education. Children busily move around their play area with confidence, helping themselves to activities and toys on offer and are actively engaged in their learning showing confidence in their surroundings. Children enjoy well read stories and poems that encourage their love of books and this increases their understanding of sounds. This prepares them for future work learning the sounds of the alphabet and forming words from sounds.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy a wide range of first hand experiences which enable them to make good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas. Practitioners have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and they know how young children learn. Resources and space are used well to support children's play and encourage them to learn new skills. Practitioners make good use of spontaneous opportunities to encourage children's learning in all areas and they build upon children's conversations and interests. The staff are perceptive to the children's interests during self-initiated play and use questions successfully to encourage the children's thinking and language skills. There are planned occasions during the day, when the staff undertake focused activities with individuals or small groups of children, where there are clear learning intentions to help the children make progress. There are sound systems in place for planning observations and monitoring the children's achievements. However, they do not include children's next steps and do not inform planning. This does not ensure that children's individual learning is fully challenged. The staff plan a range of experiences across all areas of learning on a daily basis. The staff are successful at tailoring activities, so that more able children receive more challenge.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly good. They are involved in making simple decisions and they enjoy being responsible for small tasks, such as giving the beakers out at snack time or holding the wipe board. Children are very confident and sociable, they enter the setting with no support required from practitioners. They have built excellent relationships with their peers and with adults.

Children are developing well in communication, language and literacy. They speak clearly using very good vocabulary, which is promoted well by practitioners. Children thoroughly enjoy books and access the book area independently to access books. A large number of children are very skilled at recognising their own names and some children ask for help when writing their friends names during schemers small group activities. Children are able to write recognisable letters, and this is further encouraged through the presentation of mark making areas both inside and outside in the garden. They enjoy making marks to represent their ideas, some children are confident using phonics and able to read and spell simple words such as cat, mat and sat. The staff take advantage of every day opportunities to encourage the children to sound out and recognise the first letter of familiar words.

Children demonstrate their mathematical knowledge through planned and spontaneous opportunities. They are confident in using numbers in their play and communication, they use their fingers to represent the numbers they are discussing, for example "I am three and when I am four I will be going to school". Children's recognition of numbers is reinforced and developed with sand paper numerals. The staff use everyday opportunities to extend their mathematical skills. They enjoy counting in everyday practical ways, such as checking how many children are present.

Children are curious about why things happen and how things work and they understand how to use simple everyday equipment, such as telephones, tills and audio cassette recorder. They talk about time; past, present and future and can describe significant events in their lives and of those they know. The nursery school routines provide children with opportunities to engage in daily physical activities and explore creativity using a range of media such as sand, glue and paint. They learn about themselves and the wider community through planned visits in their local area, discussion and topic work.

Children are eager to participate in creative play and opportunities ensure they make good progress. Children enjoy the role play area and become engrossed in imaginary situations that involve dressing up, feeding babies and going shopping. They enjoy a wide range of art and craft activities and they select their own resources, which are stored to provide children with ease of access. They are beginning to understand about mixing colours to make a new colour. Children especially enjoy singing and have regular opportunities to make a range of sounds with the musical instruments. As part of Chinese New Year celebration, children made a Chinese dragon and moved around the room, using instruments to recreate oriental sounds.

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

The provision is good.

Children are greeted warmly by practitioners who ask how they are and what they have been doing at home. This helps them feel secure and develop a sense of belonging. Children on a daily basis are encouraged to select their own activities and are learning to make their own decisions. Practitioners have a positive attitude towards diversity and celebrate a good range of Christian and non Christian festivals throughout the year. For example, Christmas, Harvest festivals, Chinese New Year and Diwali. Children's awareness of their own and other cultures is further developed through a range of resources, that form part of integral play resources, these include puzzles, books, dolls, dressing up clothes and wheelchair. All of which reflect positive images of culture, religion, race, disabilities and gender. Practitioners have a positive attitude to working with children identified with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and their families. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children fundraise for Marie Curie cancer care so are learning about helping others.

Children's behaviour is generally good. They are confident, polite and can work and play well on their own or with others. Children know the rules and boundaries within the group, and are considerate and thoughtful in their play. For example, they successfully negotiate the sharing of the equipment outside between themselves, and they go and find a member of practitioners for assistance when they notice another child is not sharing.

Practitioners are accomplished and sensitive in their management of children and their behaviour. They continually praise and encourage the children, which makes them feel good about themselves and develop high levels of self-esteem. Staff encourage children to treat others

and their environment with respect. For example, they remind the children of the importance of walking when in the play room, instead of running.

The partnership with parents and carers in respect of nursery education is good. Parents are informed about the educational provision and what their children will be doing through written information contained in the nursery welcome pack and the display of captioned photographs relating to each area of learning. Parents also have access to informative newsletters. Staff record information about the different activities children have taken part in on a white board and display this outside each building on a daily basis at the end of the session. Some children are involved in the completion of this as they are encouraged to recall what they have done and their comments are included.

Parents are encouraged to share information about their children's learning at home and are asked to complete activity slips and share their observations. They also receive yearly written progress reports, however, these do not detail children's next steps, to enable parents to extend children's learning in the home. Parents are also provided with scrapbooks which contain their children's artwork and photographs, that inform them about the different experiences their children have had. Practitioners welcome parents into the nursery to complete activities with children, such as cooking and painting, that link into the current topic or theme. Parents spoken with at the time of inspection indicated that they are very pleased with the nursery and feel that their children are very happy.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are safe as the nursery has excellent systems in place to ensure adults working with the children are suitable. Effective recruitment procedures ensure practitioners are suitable and regular appraisal systems ensure that they receive ongoing support, and training. Adult to child ratios are maintained at all times, which ensures the children are well supervised. Practitioners work well together as a motivated and effective team. They provide well-organised sessions, with clear routines which help children settle, become confident and feel supported. Children's welfare is promoted through well organised documentation. Policies, procedures and records are well organised and all required records are up to date.

Leadership and management are good. Practitioners work well as a team and participate in regular meetings to meet children's needs. They have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and continually go on courses to keep abreast of developments and to increase their skills. All aspects of the children's care and learning are discussed with the parents, who are kept well informed of their child's achievements. However, their children's next steps are not clearly identified and shared with parents.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the group were asked to revise their documentation. The setting have now revised the system for recording incidents to ensure confidentiality.

## **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 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 hot water in children's bathroom does not pose a risk to children
- make climbing frame safe when not in use
- improve the system for observations to ensure children's assessments identify the next steps of learning, which then inform planning

#### **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 the system for observations to ensure children's assessments and identify the next steps of learning, which then inform planning

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