

Ruskin House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	144706
Inspection date	11 February 2008
Inspector	Rebecca Hurst
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Registered person	FIRST STEPS (LONDON) 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?

Ruskin House Nursery School is a private nursery situated in a residential area in Herne Hill. It operates from a double fronted semi detached house which comprises of 3 play rooms on the ground floor and 4 open planned classrooms on the first floor. Each floor has their own toilet and washing facilities. The kitchen, office and staff room are on the second floor. There is a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 100 children aged from three months to five years on roll. this includes 19 funded three year olds and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday all year round excluding bank holidays and one weeks closure at Christmas. Sessions are from 07:00 until 19:00.

19 members of staff work with the children. Over half the staff have Early Years qualifications to Level 2 or 3. Five staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The nursery receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is protected as staff ensure they complete a daily cleaning checklist which keeps the environment safe from cross contamination. Staff clean tables before and after meals with anti bacterial spray, they also wear gloves and hats whilst serving food which further protects the children from cross contamination. However, there are inconsistencies when staff change nappies. Some staff wear plastic aprons and some wear tabards that they have on all day. This impacts on the health of the children and does not protect them from cross infection.

Children have regular healthy and nutritious drinks and food which are adequate in quantities for their needs. Food is brought in from outside caterers which complies to the children's special dietary and religious requirements. At meal times children are not given appropriate utensils which allows them to gain independence. Older children do not serve themselves their food or drinks and the two to three year olds are given baby beakers to have drinks out of. This hinders the children's acquisition of independence skills.

Children's health in the three to five year olds room is enhanced as they clean their teeth after lunch. This develops the children's awareness of the importance of personal hygiene. All documentation for the recording of accidents and medicines are in place and clearly recorded. However, when staff administer medication there is no place to record the dosage they have given the child. This leads to confusion when discussing with parents how much medication they have received during the day.

Children have daily access to a garden, which gives them opportunities for physical exercise. Children have a range of equipment which promotes their balance, co ordination and large muscle movements. Children also make regular trips to the local park. Children have further opportunities to develop their physical skills through an external company who come in once a week to carry out music and drama sessions.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept safe as the staff carry out daily safety check lists to ensure the environment is safe for them. The manager is currently up dating all of the settings risk assessments, which ensures they reflect current changes in the nursery. Children are protected from unauthorised visitors as the rooms off the entrance hall have keypad entry systems. However, on the day of the inspection the inspector was buzzed into the nursery, staff did not come to the door to find out who was there, nor did they check for any identification, consequently measures to protect the children are inconsistently carried out. The manager is looking into a system of having a secure entry system placed onto the door of the nursery and is making sure all staff are aware of the settings policy and procedures for visitors.

Children have ample space to play in a building that is suitable. They are divided into suitable age groups, ensuring that they are cared for in a environment where they feel a sense of belonging. They have access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development. Children have access to a range of age appropriate resources and equipment, and they are maintained well and conform to safety standards.

Children are kept safe on outings as steps are taken to promote safety and precautions are taken to prevent accidents. Children are able to move around safely, freely and independently whilst they attend the setting. Child protection procedures, approved by the local safeguarding children board, are complied with. Staff regularly practise fire drills with the children and ensure each one is evaluated to ensure the safety of the children is paramount. Staff have an understanding and knowledge of the effective steps to protect children from abuse and neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy attending the setting. Children relate well to each other and socialise and make friends with other children and behaviour is good. The children demonstrate very good communication skills and happily chat during activities to their peers and staff. Staff take time to talk and repeat words and use gestures with young babies to help develop their communication. Babies especially enjoy taking part in messy activities such as corn-flour play and painting. Staff are skilled in comforting babies and they will snuggle up on staffs laps until they feel ready to play again. Children enjoy taking part in all activities and are very keen to investigate what is on offer to them. Toddlers enjoy participating in circle time with the staff where they learn colours and early word recognition.

Some staff are not skilled in putting the children's observations into the correct area of learning. This hinders the children's learning as staff are not able to plan to move their development on. Children's observations do not give a clear indication of their next steps of development and are not used to plan for their individual needs. When staff plan they use the Birth to three matters Framework as a basis for their weekly planning. However, planning lacks learning intentions which lets the staff know what the children are learning from the activities they are setting out for them.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make steady progress towards the early learning goals with the support of staff who have a satisfactory understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how children develop and learn. However, short term planning does not show learning intentions for the activities the children are participating in. This hinders the children's acquisition of learning. Children's assessments are generally up to date and detailed, however, they do not have the next step of learning, and they are not used to aid planning for their individual needs. As a result, it is not always clear that teaching is successful in children's learning.

Children develop very good relationships with their peers and adults. Children listen and concentrate fairly well during activities. They speak very confidently and talk openly during activities and express their ideas and experiences. Craft and role play activities give the children opportunities to express themselves creatively. Children have lots of opportunities to access sand, water, play dough, and painting activities and enjoy doing so. Children enjoy a variety of mark making activities such as painting and drawing. Children are able to learn early word recognition as they have name plates to show where they are sitting at lunch times. Children enjoy weekly music and drama sessions which allows them to express their creative imagination. Children participate in weekly French lessons. This gives the children experience in learning a second language.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff are aware of strategies that are involved in behavioural management, however, there are inconsistencies in the way the staff actually talk to the children. Some staff do not use appropriate language when they talk to the children, and they do not explain to the children why they need to stop the undesired behaviour. This leads to confusion with the children as to why they need to stop. Staff build children's self esteem and their confidence by continually praising their good behaviour.

Equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children is actively promoted. Effective written procedures and policies are in place and children have opportunities to explore celebrations and festivals from across the world. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The Senco of the nursery has a good understanding of the needs of the children at the setting. The staff ensure they liaise with parents and involve outside agencies if needed. Staff ensure the best interests of the children are paramount.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from concrete relationships between their parents and staff, helping them receive consistent care both individually and as a group. Information is shared through daily verbal contact and through daily written sheets. Planned activities are on display for all parents. Settling in programmes for new children are done on an individual basis to suit the child and family needs.

Parents receive information about the Foundation Stage and how children learn. This ensures parents understand that play has an important role in developing children's skills. Staff involve parents in their child's learning; they are encouraged to spend time with their children during the nursery day, for instance, to assist on trips or promoting cultural awareness. Parents receive regular newsletters which keep them informed of their child's learning. Parents are invited to regular parents meetings with the staff and the senior management of the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are very confident to initiate their own play and learning in an environment where resources are organised well to promote independence. Staff effectively use policies and procedures to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. Parents are kept informed about the service that is being provided and their child's daily activities. This contributes to continuity in the children's care. Children benefit from being cared for by suitably qualified and experienced staff who have a good understanding of child development. They work exceptionally well as a team and support each other, everyone is aware of their responsibilities to ensure the smooth running of the day. Suitable recruitment procedures are in place to ensure staff are vetted appropriately.

All the required records, policies and procedures which contribute to children's health, safety and welfare are in place. The registered provider is well aware of the circumstances of when to notify the regulator or significant events or changes within the setting. Policies and procedures work effectively in practice, as staff are kept up-to-date through meetings and supervision sessions. Overall the setting meets the needs of the children in its care.

The quality of leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff regularly participate in staff meetings where the manager is able to up date the staff on any changes to legislation. The manager also ensures all staff receive regular training which benefits the development of the children. The manager has plans in place to implement new planning and observations. However, these have not been put into place. The manager plays an active daily role in the nursery to give support and advice, but the systems to monitor and evaluate the curriculum and care that is on offer, in order to identify strengths and promptly address areas for improvement are not effective. Equality of opportunity is promoted and discrimination tackled effectively so that all children make good progress. The provider is proactive in promoting an inclusive environment in which every child matters.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to carry out four recommendations. The first recommendation was to produce a written procedure detailing how swimming activity is managed and organised. The staff do not take the children swimming, so they do not have a procedure in place. The second recommendation was to obtain a copy of 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' and make sure the designated person responsible for child protection attends specialised training. The majority of staff at the setting have attended child protection training, and the setting have updated their safe guarding children policy to reflect current changes in legislation. The third recommendation was to make sure the uncollected child policy states action that might be taken if a child is not collected. The manager has ensured all policies and procedures have been updated to reflect regulations. The fourth recommendation was to make sure the procedure for dealing with allegations against staff includes action and procedure that may be followed. All staff receive copies of all policies and procedures and the child protection policy includes procedures to follow in an event of allegations made against staff.

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.

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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 children have the appropriate utensils at meal times

- ensure written assessments relate to the area of learning they are being assessed for and that the next steps are completed
- ensure dosage is recorded when medication is being administered
- ensure aprons are changed in between nappy changes

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 children are able to gain independence at meal times
- ensure learning intentions are completed on the medium and short term planning

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