

Konstam Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	100599
Inspection date	26 March 2008
Inspector	Josephine Ann Northend
Setting Address	75 Chester Road, London, N19 5DH
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Registered person	London Borough of Camden
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 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?

Konstam Children's Centre is situated in the South Highgate area. It operates from a two storey building and comprises of five group rooms and a community room. Additional facilities include a soft play room, office, toilets, kitchen and large enclosed outdoor area. The centre serves the local community and nearby primary schools. Children attending reflect the diverse cultures of the community.

There are 68 children on roll aged between birth and five years. Of these there are 48 children who receive nursery education funding. There are also 15 children aged three to eight years on roll for the wrap-around after-school and holiday play scheme places. Children generally attend full time. There are 17 children who have physical disabilities or learning difficulties and 25 of the children attending speak English as an additional language.

The nursery centre is open five days a week for 48 weeks of the year. Opening times are 08.00 until 18.00 with a core day from 09.00 until 15.00. Nursery class children attend term time only with wrap-around care provided through early day and after school service. An after school group operates during term time from 15.00 until 18.00 and a holiday play scheme takes place

during all school holidays from 08.00 until 18.00. Children attend from the local and wider community. The centre is closed for the last two weeks of August.

There are 18 permanent members of staff working with the children. The manager and deputy are supernumerary. All but one member of staff has childcare qualifications and two of the permanent staff have qualified teacher status. One member of staff is working towards a childcare qualification and two are working towards further qualifications. There are currently five agency staff in place, two of these work directly supporting children with disabilities. There are five ancillary staff and an admin/finance worker.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's physical development is supported well, with free flow of play opportunities between indoors and outdoors each day. Children enjoy the out of doors and use a range of appropriate resources including wheeled toys and climbing equipment. They also plant and grow flowers in the garden. Children can rest or be active according to their individual needs. They are beginning to learn the importance of good hygiene through daily routines. Children are encouraged to wash their hands regularly before meals and snacks and after using the toilet, but they do not fully understand why they need to do so. Staff set a good example as they use protective gloves during nappy change procedures and use individual bedding for children to sleep on. This prevents the spread of cross infection.

Good standards of cleanliness are maintained to ensure children are cared for in a warm, clean environment and the effective use of a sick children's policy prevents the risk of spreading infection. Parents are aware of the policy in place. Procedures are in place for the recording of accidents and medication and consent is in place from parents for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment. First aid requirements are met well as most staff hold a relevant first aid qualification.

Children begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet through the promotion of healthy meals and snacks. Drinking water is available within the childcare rooms and staff work appropriately with parents to ensure they are aware of and meet any special dietary requirements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move around freely while easily accessing a good range of safe, developmentally appropriate furniture and equipment. The equipment is clean and checked regularly to ensure that it remains safe for children to use. Resources are suitably organised in child-height furniture to encourage independent access.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm and welcoming environment, however, the carpets within the first floor pre-school room are very worn and not sufficiently clean. There are clear lost and uncollected child policies in place and the security of the premises is good. The record of visitors is completed well and emergency evacuation procedures are displayed. A fire drill is practised with the children regularly. Risk assessments are completed and most safety hazards have been minimised.

Staff have completed safeguarding children training and are confident about the procedures to follow in the event of a concern. A child protection policy is in place which includes the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation against staff. The manager and staff demonstrate high understanding of the signs of abuse and their roles and responsibilities in the event of a concern. This means the welfare of children is protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery, they arrive happy and settle well. Close and caring relationships with staff increase the children's sense of trust. They are beginning to develop positive relationships with each other. Communication skills with children are well supported through good adult to child interactions. They encourage them to talk about what they are doing and sensitively support their language development.

Staff have a sound understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are using it well to plan an interesting and varied range of activities and for the assessment of children's progress. This means children's personal, social and intellectual development is well fostered and supported. There is a good range of interesting activities, set up for the children's arrival, and they are changed throughout the day. Activities and play opportunities are purposeful and developmentally appropriate resulting in children being motivated and interested and children make good progress. There is a good balance between child led and adult initiated activities. The care and support given to younger children is good. Children's self esteem is developing as a result of the staff encouraging and praising them and valuing what they have to offer.

Children who attend at the beginning and end of the school day are integrated well into the setting. They have snack when they arrive after school and then settle quickly to their chosen activities. Children are involved in the decision making, for example, as they choose what activities they wish to participate in. They talk positively about the out of school group and what they like to do. Activities for the out of school group during school holidays include outings to local places of interest.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They enjoy their time at nursery and achieve well because staff use their good understanding of the early years curriculum to provide appropriate challenge for all children. Two of the staff team have teacher status and staff have received Foundation Stage training. They are confident in the delivery of the curriculum. A broad and balanced range of activities are planned across all six areas of learning in order to meet children's individual learning needs. Planning takes into account children's individual learning needs and interests. Assessment records which link children's progress to the stepping stones are in place, and are dated to show children's progress. Assessment records are completed well and show the next steps for children's learning. Staff use good questioning skills to challenge children and further extend their thoughts and ideas. They involve themselves well in children's activities and offer good support and praise to them.

Children are confident in their play and learning. They are generally well behaved, respond well to requests from staff and are learning to share and take turns. They have good relationships with staff and are developing their relationships with each other. Children talk about their own families and are developing a good understanding of other cultures and beliefs. They learn

about the local community through the use of interesting resources, visits in the local community and visitors to the setting. Children know the days of the week and confidently describe features of the weather.

Children are developing their communication skills, speak confidently and clearly, ask simple questions and initiate conversations. They are encouraged to talk about what they are doing. Their communication skills are supported well by staff, who use good questioning to support children's learning. Children are beginning to develop their writing skills in the mark making area; they hold pencils correctly and form recognisable marks and letters. However, mark making is not always freely available in other activity areas. Children recognise their own name and use the self registration system well. They listen and participate well at both formal and informal story times. They enjoy books and handle them well, turning the pages correctly.

Children show curiosity and persist for extended periods of time at activities. They show good interest in their environment and living things, for example, they plant seeds and care for plants, animals and fish. They also investigate and care for large snails and frogs. Children use their senses to explore a variety of materials, for example, as they describe the texture of sand and dough. They construct well, often with a purpose in mind, building two and three dimensional structures. Children are developing some good self-care skills. For example, they learn to wash their own hands and put on their own coats, however, they do not have opportunities to pour their own drinks. They are developing some knowledge of health and bodily awareness, as they know they need to wash their hands before eating but they are not sure about why or the effects of exercise on their bodies.

Children move around safely and confidently, they use tricycles well and competently climb and descend stairs. They are developing good levels of hand and eye coordination as they handle small tools and equipment, such as paintbrushes and scissors. They are developing a good sense of space as they sit together on the mat at circle and story time and negotiate wheeled toys in the outdoor area. Children use programmable toys confidently and have regular access to information technology. They use the computer confidently, controlling the mouse and completing simple programs. Children are developing their understanding of number and count reliably up to 15 and beyond by rote. They recognise some numerals and use simple problem solving in everyday activities and number songs. For example, counting how many children are present. Children are beginning to recognise and name simple shapes and are using mathematical concepts in their play, for example, full and empty, big and small.

Children use their imagination well in their role play. They enjoy nursery rhymes and singing, often singing spontaneously at times throughout their play. They have regular access to musical instruments and use them rhythmically. Children recognise and name many colours and mix them to create other colours. They have good access to a varied range of creative resources.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the setting and participate fully in all activities because staff value and respect their individuality. The staff's good understanding of each child's needs is used well to encourage a sense of security and belonging. The nursery has excellent procedures in place to support children with physical disabilities and learning difficulties. The named coordinator has completed training and works closely with parents and other agencies to ensure all children are integrated well into the setting and their individual needs are met. Children access an excellent range of activities and resources which increases their awareness of diversity.

They develop a positive attitude to others and learn about the local community as they make visits in the locality. Children with English as an additional language are supported extremely well as staff work closely with parents to ensure children are fully included.

Children are generally well behaved and polite in response to the expectations of staff. There is a clear behaviour management policy in place which promotes the use of positive behaviour management strategies, however, it does not refer to bullying. Children are learning to share and take turns. Their understanding of right and wrong is increased through the gentle reminders they receive from staff. This means children's spiritual moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the two way sharing of information about their needs and daily routines. Parents' information is displayed on notice boards, they receive newsletters regularly and have access to the setting's policies and procedures. Parents are involved in the initial assessment of their child within the Foundation Stage curriculum. They receive written information about the Foundation Stage and are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning at home. Parents receive regular feedback about their child's progress, have access to their child's development records and have regular discussion with the key worker.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children initiate their own play and learning well as space is laid out to support their play. They are able to move around confidently and independently. This contributes to them being happy and settled. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Adult-to-child ratios are met and there is a key worker system in place. Robust staff recruitment, vetting and induction procedures ensures children's welfare is safeguarded.

Required documents are in place and are stored confidentially, however, the pre-school attendance register does not show if children have left early. The setting is working towards 'Celebrating Quality' a quality assurance scheme. There is a good range of policies and procedures in place, they are shared well with staff and made available to parents to appropriately promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. However, the behaviour management policy does not include bullying and the complaints policy does not show Ofsted's address and telephone number.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good and promotes the children's learning. Most of the staff have early years qualifications and all staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The manager is enthusiastic and a good role model to the staff team who work well together. Staff attendance at relevant training is promoted well and the knowledge gained by staff is used to enhance children's care and welfare. Staff appraisals are undertaken and regular staff meetings are held. This enables the manager to identify the strengths and weakness of the provision. The manager is fully committed to improving care and education for all children and to promoting an inclusive environment in which every child matters. Consequently, children's progress towards the early learning goals is good. 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 manager was asked to conduct a risk assessment on the premises identifying actions to be taken to minimize identified risks to the outside play area, soft landing and the fire escape. A risk assessment has now been completed and reviewed. One part of the outside area has been resurfaced with a safety surface and plans are in place to complete the other part. An anti-slip surface was applied to the fire escape and soft landing and plans are in place to have this renewed. This promotes children's safety

In relation to nursery education the provider agreed to give consideration to improving opportunities for children to label their own work. Children do now have more opportunities to label their own work and they can easily access pens and pencils in order to do this.

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

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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):

- make sure registers are completed to show when children leave early
- make sure carpets are clean and well maintained
- makes sure polices are reviewed and updated, particularly the complaints and behaviour policies.

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 opportunities for children to develop health and bodily awareness, including the effects of exercise on their bodies and why they need to wash hands
- increase children's independence particularly with opportunities to pour their own drinks

- extend the mark making opportunities to other activity areas.

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