

# Bluebells Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 100627           |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 28 February 2008 |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Catherine Greene |

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| <b>Registered person</b>  | Anita Pearson  |
| <b>Type of inspection</b> | Integrated   |
| <b>Type of care</b>       | Sessional 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](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?

Bluebells Nursery opened in 1995 and operates from a church hall in Kentish Town. A maximum of 16 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:30 to 13:30, term time only. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 19 children from two years, six months to under five years on roll. Of these 11 children receive funding for nursery education. Systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the nursery currently supports a number of children with English as an additional language.

The nursery employs three staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives the support of the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. They gain good awareness of their own personal hygiene through practices within their daily routine. Children learn the importance of washing their hands before eating or after using the toilet, and staff use effective procedures when cleaning tables and preparing snacks. Children can help themselves to water, which is always within their reach, if they are thirsty. Their lunch boxes, which parents provide, are suitably stored. Children's awareness of healthy eating is encouraged well through healthy snacks of fresh fruit and regular drinks being provided. Snack time is very well planned and children are supported by staff in gaining independence. Staff liaise closely with parents, ensuring that any children's special dietary requirements are appropriately met.

The nursery's policy of not caring for children when they are unwell limits the spread of infectious diseases. Staff have current first aid certificates and records show that basic first aid is administered appropriately for minor accidents.

Through topic work and daily discussion children learn about healthy living and the importance of exercise. They have good opportunities for daily exercise and outdoor play which encourages their physical development and good health. They enjoy their time in the outdoor space riding bikes, and climbing and balancing on equipment. Children take part in dance and mime and Irish dancing, during which they move their bodies, stretch and learn new steps. Children can rest according to their needs as the setting provides comfortable seating in the book corner.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, welcoming and secure environment. The hall used is spacious, allowing children to move and play freely. There are plans for new displays of children's work and photographs of their activities are presented and available for parents, this makes the environment friendly and welcoming to children and their families. Staff are aware of any hazards outdoors and in the setting, and take appropriate measures, including regular risk assessments, to ensure children's safety and wellbeing. Children are well supervised by staff when negotiating the stairs on route to the enclosed outdoor play area.

Children have access to an extensive range of equipment, resources and materials which are safe and suitable for their use. The furniture and storage units are of child height and size. The resources are organised so children can access them easily and develop independence in their play and daily activities. Children are well protected through staff's secure knowledge and understanding of health and safety issues. The staff group regularly attend child protection training to update their skills and knowledge. In conjunction with this the setting will update their procedure to include details of what to do if an allegation is made about a member of staff.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, secure and interested in their play and learning and clearly enjoy their time spent at the nursery. The stimulating environment inspires their learning and they spend their

time purposefully. The activities are well planned and include strategies designed to help all age groups learn and progress. Staff relate very well with the children. Children choose from a good range of activities and play equipment, that are set out on tables and the floor. They take great delight in mixing ingredients for a cooking activity and have fun pouring their mixture into fairy cake cases. Children are gently encouraged to try different activities with a member of staff close by.

## Nursery Education

The setting has devised a good system based on the Foundation Stage of learning to record the progress of the children attending. Staff are given key roles in the group, they are given time to observe and comment on children's progress and they work closely with the children. This ensures children's progress is monitored and their learning is encouraged on an individual basis. All staff are involved in planning as a team, to provide a thorough curriculum. This will be further enhanced by the organisation and presentation of assessment records to chart children's progress across all areas of learning.

Children take part in a wide range of interesting and worthwhile activities that engage their attention. Planning and observation shows what children should learn through their activities and includes how to challenge children appropriately according to their stage of development. This planning is shared with parents so they can be involved in their children's learning. Children are encouraged to think and put their thoughts into words through the adult's good use of questioning.

Children are confident in the setting and understand when they should concentrate and listen. They are very attentive at story times and enjoy books and rhymes. They participate and contribute well in group activities such as circle time and during focused activities. Staff plan interesting activities often in small group work, they encourage children's language, communication skills and mathematical development. In their daily play and routines children practise counting and use numbers, for example, they enjoy recognising numerals displayed in the room, during counting and memory games.

Children have many opportunities to develop their creativity, they can paint and draw freely and have access to a variety of tools and craft materials, which also help to develop their small muscle control. The children enjoy performing and gain valuable skills during the dance and mime session and music lesson, they look forward to performing their Irish dance for staff and parents.

Children learn about their lives, the environment and about others lives through interesting topic work and themes. There are many resources that help children to begin to learn about their own and others different cultures and beliefs. Children with English as an additional language are supported very well. Children's home languages are promoted by staff who make learning language fun. Staff use the opportunity to involve parents by asking them to provide words in their own languages for use in the nursery.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good individual progress, staff understand how children learn effectively and use their self-chosen play to extend their learning. They adapt their questioning techniques, according to the age and ability of the child, and implement various methods to introduce an exciting range of activities and experiences to all children. Staff encourage children to lead their own learning and this is successfully achieved by a well developed routine, with a good balance of child and adult initiated activities. Staff

have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum as they have attended training to update their knowledge and skills. As a result, children are involved in activities that cover all areas of learning. Planning and assessments are in place but observations and assessments are yet to be completed consistently across all six areas of learning.

Children are eager to learn and concentrate well showing good perseverance with activities. They co-operate and negotiate roles, they act out their imagined ideas in role-play and value one another's ideas. Children listen with great excitement to stories and suggest their own endings. Children independently use a range of tools and materials and freely access a variety of resources from the different presentations being worked on in the room.

Effective use is made of time and resources to provide children with opportunities to engage in physical activities. The outdoor space is well utilised and there are exciting plans to further improve the area to include areas of learning. Opportunities are provided for the children to plant in pots inside the nursery. They learn about themselves and their families through discussion and topic work and talk about their local community and the wider world. Children have some opportunities to experience new technology and staff are keen to further develop this area.

Staff observe and monitor children's progress regularly in a variety of different ways and this is used to identify individual targets for children to work towards each term. Realistic expectations of children and good individual knowledge helps them to consolidate their learning before moving onto the next stage. As a result, the curriculum is tailored to individual children's needs and abilities, which ensures effective support and sufficient challenges are provided to help children achieve their individual potential.

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

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed and play a full part in the nursery because staff value each child as an individual. Children are confident and show good self-esteem responding well to continual praise and encouragement. Children work well together, they co-operate and take turns with the activities and during circle and lunch time. They take turns to hand out lunch boxes and help their friends find their coats. They understand the rules and routines of the setting. Children interact very well with each other, and with the adults present. They have made firm friendships and enjoy each other's company. Children learn to be independent, they have good opportunities to choose what they do and to select their own resources, they are always busy and purposefully occupied.

Children behave very well, their positive behaviour is encouraged by the staff, who offer continuous encouragement, praise and rewards and act as good role models.

Children learn about themselves and the wider world through planned activities and discussions when celebrating a variety of cultural festivals, this helps them to understand and value the similarities and differences between themselves and others. Good methods of communication are fundamental for children and staff are skilled at ensuring appropriate measures are in place. Children learn that others have different needs and have good relationships with each other. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are involved in the activities of the nursery and are welcomed into the setting. They help on occasions, contribute to topic work

and share their skills. Staff and children have recently thoroughly enjoyed a Passover meal presented by one of the Dad's. Children benefit from this open and close partnership. Their individual needs are documented well and the successful implementation of the key person system ensures information is continually exchanged and shared. Parents are informed and they receive regular written updates. The manager and staff are always available to talk to parents ensuring children's individual needs are met. There is information about the curriculum displayed, keeping parents informed about the topics for the term and the planned learning objectives. Parents receive an annual report on their children's progress. Although there is a complaints procedure, it is not yet in line with current legislation.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a well organised and efficiently run provision. Staff are well deployed and are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. As a result of this the children are secure and settled. Staff are experienced in childcare, they receive good induction when joining the setting and are encouraged to train and attend short courses to develop and enhance their knowledge and understanding of childcare and education. The manager has taken the opportunity to join the Effective Early Learning programme (EEL). This will give the setting access to essential information, services and the benefit of accredited training and regular professional support.

Un-vetted adults who may visit the setting do not have unsupervised contact with the children. The manager has developed an operational plan, and a range of policies and procedures, which are relevant to the setting and are used to ensure children's wellbeing. However, some policies and procedures need updating to ensure they are in line with changes to legislation and new guidance.

The daily registration systems used are suitable with the times of adults and children's attendance adequately recorded for overall safety. The setting ensures high adult to child ratios are always maintained, this allows staff to continuously support children's play and activities and provide individual care and attention.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The manager and staff have a good understanding of the foundation stage and early learning goals. They have a strong vision for the future and on going development of the nursery. Weekly staff meetings are used to help build a strong team where each member of staff is valued and encouraged to contribute. Staff meetings are used for staff training, to evaluate the provision offered, to plan activities and to discuss children's progress and individual needs.

The nursery has fostered strong links with the local community and have received very good support from Camden's Early Years team. They make good use of local resources and the outdoor area for physical activities. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection it was recommended that the nursery share information with parents about their role in the protection of children and to generally improve the quality of toys, equipment and furnishings. The nursery has updated their child protection procedure and added

details to parents information. In addition they continue to add new and improved resources and furniture.

### **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):

- update the complaints procedure to reflect the changes in line with legislation
- continue to ensure that documents, policies and procedures reflect current practice and any changes to requirements or legislation
- extend the Child Protection policy to include procedures to follow in the event of allegations made against staff members.

#### **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):

- enhance the systems in place for the recording of children's assessments, so that observations are completed consistently across all six areas of learning.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)