

# The Beehive

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123074
<b>Inspection date</b>	05 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Linda Close
<b>Setting Address</b>	St. Margarets Church House, Putney Park Lane, London, SW15 5HU
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 7805333
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Lucy Lindsay
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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?

Bee Hive Day Nursery opened in January 1998. It operates from two large rooms in a church hall located in a residential road in the Roehampton area of southwest London. Children have access to a garden area within the church grounds. The local authority is Wandsworth. Most of the children who attend live locally.

There are currently 26 children on roll from two to under five years old. This includes 13 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The group supports several children who are learning English as an additional language. There are 19 children present at the time of this inspection. The group opens every weekday during term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 12:15, except on Tuesday and Thursday when sessions are from 09:15 until 15:00.

There are nine members of staff who work with the children for varying hours each week. More than half of the staff have early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification level 2 or 3. Visiting teachers attend weekly to lead sessions of dance, music and karate.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the good standards of hygiene that are maintained in the setting. Staff keep the table tops and the children's toilets clean. Nappy change procedures are good. The staff wear disposable gloves and aprons, they clean the changing mat with anti-bacterial spray and debris is put out in the bin straight away. Trained first-aiders are present at every session so that children are cared for appropriately if they have a minor accident. The nursery has parents written permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice if necessary which avoids delay. Children are protected from the unnecessary spread of infection because parents know they must keep children at home if they are unwell or infectious. A first aid kit is kept to hand although this contains anti-histamine cream that has not been provided by parents. Records for medication, accident and existing injuries are kept correctly and retained for inspection at any time.

Children have healthy snacks. They thoroughly enjoy sitting together eating pieces of fresh fruit and a plain biscuit each day. A covered water jug is set out on the piano with beakers so that children can ask for a drink whenever they are thirsty. Meals are not provided by the nursery. However, children bring a packed lunch if they wish to stay for the longer sessions that are held twice a week. Parents are asked to send food with ice packs to keep it in good condition and staff are happy to store perishable foods in the fridge if necessary. Staff are very well informed about children's allergies and special dietary needs, and they are careful to ensure that children only have food that parents approve of.

Children have daily outdoor play in the large garden area which is within the church grounds and accessed directly from the nursery. Staff set out an attractive range of toys and equipment, and they successfully encourage the children to engage in energetic play in the fresh air. The children are adept at using scooters and other wheeled toys. They scoot and glide along at speed and they steer their vehicles very competently. Children delight in taking their bikes to the top of a gentle slope in the garden then they whizz down the path with great enjoyment and commendable skill. Children climb and balance confidently on suitable equipment in the garden. Visiting teachers lead dance, music making and karate sessions and most children join in with pleasure, although grouping and staff deployment does not always enable the very youngest children to enjoy the karate sessions to the full.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure building which is kept locked when children are present. A member of staff remains by the outer door when children are arriving and departing to ensure their safety. Staff are vigilant when children are in the outdoor area. They position themselves by the exit paths to make sure that children are safe. There is ample space both indoors and outside for the children to move about freely. Staff take it in turns to arrive early to set up the equipment so that the children enter a well prepared nursery environment and can choose activities without delay. The rooms and facilities used by the children are clean, well lit and kept at a comfortable temperature.

Children have an extensive selection of interesting toys, books and resources which are maintained in good condition. Staff check and discard any toys that are broken or worn and

they clean the toys on a regular basis. Children's tables and chairs are the correct size for them to sit, play and eat in comfort. Equipment for use out in the garden is varied and stimulating.

Staff make safety checks every day when they are setting up the nursery before the children arrive. Children cannot access electric sockets and staff ensure that store cupboard doors are firmly closed so that no sharp or unsuitable objects are accessible to the children. Children and staff regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure and appropriate records are kept.

Children are safeguarded in relation to child protection issues because the staff are well informed. The manager and her deputy have attended training for named persons and staff have attended a relevant update course. Furthermore, the manager refers to child protection matters at staff meetings which helps the staff to maintain their awareness of child protection matters. Staff training and ongoing discussions contribute to children's safety.

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

The provision is good.

Children are greeted warmly by the staff who welcome them into the setting at the beginning of the session. The children are eager to hang up their coats and they hurry to choose a favourite activity. They benefit from entering a well prepared environment which staff make attractive and interesting. Toys and resources are set out at a low level so that the children can see what is available and they can make choices and decisions. The very youngest children gradually gain independence and self-confidence because staff nurture them and gently help them to part from their parents. Parents share valuable news from home about family matters and health issues which helps staff to offer children continuity of care and understanding.

Children enjoy the company of others. They are making friends in the nursery and learning to share and take turns with favourite toys. The water tray is a particularly popular activity. Children explore the properties of coloured water mixed with soap and they have great fun using hand whisks and rotary beaters to make large quantities of bubbles. Shredding paper with a hand operated shredder is another source of interest. Children gain increasing hand control in activities of this nature and they also increase their manipulative skills through cutting activities, construction play and mark-making. They thoroughly enjoy dressing up and, festooned with costume jewellery, they enter into imaginative scenarios in the home corner.

Staff plan activities for the whole group taking into account the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage for learning. They encourage the children to enter into the play at their own level and they ask more and less demanding questions to match each child's needs and stage of development. For the greater part of the sessions children aged two to four years play together or side by side in the same space, and some small group activities for older children in the second hall enable them to concentrate on more demanding tasks. This follows the Montessori principle of allowing younger children to learn from the older members of the group and the older children in turn to learn to be kind and caring towards the little ones. On most occasions older and younger children working and playing together is effective although a very small number of the activities are limited in value for the very youngest children because there are not enough staff to support them.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff ensure that all areas of learning are represented in their long term, medium term and short term planning. Plans identify which

children are to be the focus of observations each week. Observation notes are then made and transferred to children's individual files so that children's progress is tracked and pertinent reports can be written. Staff know the children well and in practical terms they challenge them appropriately. However, there is no clear link showing how the observations are used to plan activities to help children to make the next steps in their learning. Staff are aware of this gap in written planning and it is an area they are working on together.

Children settle into the nursery happily and they benefit from the calm, busy atmosphere that prevails in the group. Children get along very well together and they are well behaved. They respond very well to the staff who are very good role models. They treat each child with kindness and respect, and they praise the children for being helpful and co-operative which gives the children confidence and raises their self-esteem. Children enjoy books alone and with staff in a comfortable, well stocked reading area. They show good listening skills at story and circle time. During the inspection two, three and four-year-old children sat together and they all enjoyed the 'Fish Book' with its rhyming words. However, this grouping means that stories must appeal to all rather than offering challenge to the more mature children.

Children find their own name cards on arrival. Many of the older members of the group write their own names without assistance. They hold their pencils firmly and form their letters with growing confidence and accuracy. A letter of the alphabet is chosen each week and the children bring things from home associated with this letter. They eagerly show their elephant toys, eggs and other things beginning with 'e' and they confidently pick out the letter 'e'. Some of the more mature children are already making their first steps in reading. Staff support them sensitively and without pressure. They devise suitable activities for small group tasks to help children to make progress in their learning about letters and sounds. Many signs and notices around the room introduce familiar words and children access writing materials easily.

Children learn about mathematics in enjoyable ways. Staff demonstrate their understanding of the stepping stones and how children learn in the way in which they weave learning opportunities into play and practical activities. They ask children how many eggs will go into an egg box and they play number games with a giant dice and the children are making good progress. Children learn about shapes and size through tasks which include making elephant pictures with large, medium and small circles. They discuss more and less with understanding when applying glue and paint. Number recognition is gained through delightful games which include finding large numbers hidden around the garden.

Children take part in a range of worthwhile activities which help them to learn more about the world around them. Staff take them out to see the changes in the seasons to the park. Children plant flowers in pots in the garden and they also have a nursery allotment nearby where they can dig the soil and plant vegetables to find out how they grow. Children go out to feel the rain and the sun. They enjoy multi-cultural activities including finding out about celebrations and the special foods enjoyed at Chinese New Year. Children have battery operated toys and resources to enable them to press buttons and find out how things work. They experience using a laptop computer with a visitor who comes to the setting from time to time. Children enjoy visits to the theatre and other places of interest.

Children enjoy a stimulating and varied range of art and craft work. They have used glass paint on acrylic sheets to make colourful hanging decorations for their outdoor play area. Their gallery of self-portraits shows that they can already draw very well. They look in mirrors to see what colour their eyes, lips and hair are and they draw with increasing attention to detail. Children have folders full of examples of colourful art work which shows that they explore the properties

of paint, glue and a whole range of other materials and media. Children enjoy music and dance with visiting teachers. They are involved in a puppet play with staff which adds another dimension to their imaginative play. The development of children's small muscles is very well supported by many activities which involve them in handling objects and materials which require concentration and hand/eye co-ordination.

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

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are well known to the staff who listen carefully to what parents tell them when children join the nursery and they involve parents in daily discussions when children arrive each day. Staff ask parents to share important words from their home language so that they can communicate easily with individual children who are learning English as an additional language. Each child is nurtured according to his or her needs and together they form a very happy group. Staff are aware of health issues and dietary needs, and they ensure that children's needs are met.

Staff actively promote children's understanding and respect for diversity through multicultural activities which include eating noodles with chopsticks at Chinese New Year. Children take part in celebrations from around the world as well as traditional celebrations at Christmas, Easter and other special days. Children also learn about diversity through playing with a range of toys and books that reflect a wide range of people. Additionally the nursery has forged links with a local school for children with learning difficulties. None of the children currently attending the nursery has identified learning difficulties. However, the special needs co-ordinator is well informed about what steps to take if concerns about a child's development are noted. She is ready to confer with parents and other professionals to devise individual education plans that she plans to review and update on a regular basis if there is a need.

Behaviour management is an area of strength in the nursery. Children learn about the nursery rules which are all positive. They learn to share, listen to each other, use quiet voices, walk indoors and have kind hands. Staff are patient, polite and pleasant. They are particularly good role models and the children respond to them very well. Any minor disagreements that do occur such as two children wanting the same toy are dealt with swiftly and calmly. Children learn about acceptable and unacceptable behaviour from their gentle but firm explanations. The children are happy, busy and very well behaved. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents have easy access to a well organised handbook which includes a comprehensive set of policy and procedure documents that are currently being reviewed and updated. The aims and objectives of the setting are clearly described. The file also explains the planning system adopted by the nursery and gives information about the programme for Nursery Education for all children although limited reference is made to the Birth to three matters framework. A useful settling in form is completed by parents which helps staff to understand the individual children and their needs. A white board is prominently displayed with informative notes for parents to see at the end of each session. In this way they find out what activities their children are involved in and they find out how they can contribute. Newsletters give parents information about forthcoming activities and other important aspects of the day-to-day running of the setting. Parents are invited to look at their own child's records of achievement at formal events although they can look at the records at any time. Parents can also talk to their child's key worker as often as they wish.

Parents are welcome to share their skills and knowledge with the children. They accompany children on outings to the theatre, the park and other venues.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Staff are all checked for their suitability to work with children at the time of their employment and visiting staff also have suitability checks in place which contributes to children's safety. A thorough system of checking new applicants ensures that children are cared for by suitable staff. Staff work together well as a team to ensure that the children are safe from non-vetted persons at all times. The nursery environment, space and resources are well prepared before the children arrive. Grouping and staff deployment is effective for most activities.

The manager can bring in spare staff from the other three settings in the group if there is an unforeseen staff absence which ensures that there are always sufficient staff present to care for the children. More than half of the staff are appropriately qualified. The manager maintains her knowledge of current practice in early years care and education through attending numerous meetings and training courses. She actively encourages her staff to attend relevant training which helps them to provide good standards of care and education for the children. Several staff have attended relevant first aid courses which ensures that a first-aider is always present.

Records, policies and procedures are all in place to support the safe and efficient management of the setting. They are neatly kept, stored in a way which promotes confidentiality, retained for the required period and held ready for inspection at any time.

Leadership and management are good in relation to funded nursery education. The manager sets high standards in her nursery setting. She has clear aims for the children to learn through worthwhile play experiences and she monitors the provision to ensure that her aims are put into practice. She shares responsibilities with her staff, many of whom are very experienced practitioners. Staff are confident in their knowledge of the stepping stones which children cover on their way to the early learning goals and they recognise opportunities for learning as they arise. Staff observe the children and they note their progress. They keep a lovely collection of drawings, art work and photographs for each child to share with their parents which shows the good range of activities they enjoy at the nursery. However, the manager has not developed the planning as yet to clearly identify what the children need to learn next and link this information to planning. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the time of the last inspection one action and four recommendations for improvement were made. The provider agreed to ensure that the names and numbers of children present in the nursery are recorded and known at all times. The provider has put in place a system which ensures that the names and numbers of the children present are known to staff at all times which ensures their safety. The provider agreed to ensure children have access to books and play materials reflecting positive images of culture, disability and gender. The nursery has posters and pictures on display that show a good range of people. Play materials have been chosen to show diversity which helps children to accept and respect a range of people. The provider agreed to ensure that fire practices are carried out on a regular basis. Fire practices are now carried out twice each month and a record is kept which helps to keep children and staff safe. The provider agreed to ensure that the taps in the children's cloakrooms are

maintained in working order. Refurbishment work has been carried out at the setting and the taps are now in working order which promotes good hygiene for the children.

### **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, that 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 that the contents of the first aid kit is appropriate
- review and improve the deployment of staff and the organisation of children's groups so that the younger children in particular can enjoy and achieve as much as possible

#### **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):

- continue to develop the planning system making sure that the next steps in children's learning are clearly linked to activity plans.

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)