

# Little Fingers Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	123166
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Stimson
<b>Setting Address</b>	St. Stephen's Church, Manfred Road, Putney, London, SW15 2RS
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 874 8649
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<b>Registered person</b>	St Stephen's Church
<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?

Little Fingers Community Nursery opened in April 1989. It is a Christian nursery which operates from premises within St Stephen's Church in East Putney. The premises include a large play room, the church hall, a kitchen and toilet facilities. The nursery is open Monday to Thursday for sessions from 09.30 to 15.00 during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and children may attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery serves children from the local area.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children at any one time and there are currently 20 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 13 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery is able to support children with learning and physical difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications; this includes the manager who works directly with the children.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's awareness of their own good health is encouraged well. For example, they learn about good foods by having healthy snacks such as fresh fruit, cucumber and raw carrot. They enjoy drinks at snack time served by children chosen as the day's helpers and make choices between milk or water. Jugs of water are kept on the side throughout sessions for children to help themselves if they are thirsty. Children staying for lunch during extended sessions bring their own packed lunch and sit with staff making it a social occasion, which they all enjoy. Lunch time is used well to prepare older children for the routine of when they start at primary school. Children's understanding of their own good health is reinforced by topics about foods that are good for us and by children visiting the local dentist as a group. Older children use the bathroom and wash their hands independently, whilst younger children are supervised and are helped with this task. This helps children develop good hygiene practice.

Children enjoy opportunities for planned outdoor play and exercise in the front part of the nursery, this encourages their good health and physical development. Physical play is divided into a four week rota enabling children to use balancing and climbing equipment one week, practise ball and hand eye co-ordination skills the next week, ride on pedal bikes and scooters the next week and use larger equipment during the fourth week. This enables children to really develop their skills and have fun at the same time. Children have weekly dance lessons where they move to music using their imaginations and developing co-ordination skills and good posture. Children's fine motor skills are encouraged very well, through daily use of equipment such as pencils, paint brushes, glue sticks and scissors.

The risk of infection to children is minimised by the nursery's policy of not caring for children who are unwell or infectious. Good practice such as having tissues available and encouraging children to use them, help children's understanding of health and hygiene. Written information relating to accidents and administration of medication are recorded appropriately. Records show staff implement basic first aid for minor accidents appropriately; two members of staff have current first aid qualifications.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. They are well supervised by staff who understand their roles and responsibilities regarding children's safety. For example, staff supervise the front door during children's arrival and collection times, providing opportunities for discussion with parents about their children.

Children have access to a well organised space that enables them to move around, use equipment and play safely. They are able to help themselves to a good range of equipment and play materials that are set out on tables, in drawers and on low shelving. Children enthusiastically help staff to tidy up before snack time, which reinforces their understanding of maintaining a safe environment. Children are able to play safely as play materials, equipment and furniture are well maintained.

Children are kept safe through effective health and safety procedures, for example, staff come in early each day to make sure all areas are clean, secure and safe for children to play. The

children are developing an awareness of what to do about fire safety as regular fire drills are conducted. There is a range of fire fighting equipment on site and an annual check on gas appliances ensures they are hazard free. However, there have been no tests on the electrical appliances used in the nursery, which compromises children's safety.

Children's welfare is protected by staff's clear understanding of child protection issues and the procedures they and manager need to follow if they have concerns.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at nursery. They separate easily from their parents and carers and are soon involved with the activities set out by staff for their arrival. Children are happy to see staff and each other and many children link up together to play. The daily routine is well planned, providing a range of activities, experiences and play materials for children that encourage their interest and involvement. Staff interact well with children, they are calm and consistent and use questions and explanations to encourage children's language. Lots of photos are taken of children's achievements and these are kept in scrap books for parents and children to look at. This, together with children's art work on the wall of the nursery shows children that staff value their work; this helps boost their self-esteem.

Children aged from two years to five years all play well together and younger children enjoy wandering from one activity to another, supported by staff who are always close at hand to encourage them. Each day children have painting, sticking, puzzles, art and craft materials, water and sand activities, books to read and construction materials to choose from. The routine of the day enables children to play outside, have music and dance sessions, read stories, sing familiar songs together as well as be involved in the planned focussed activities.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are well organised and committed to providing a good service to children and parents and they work well as a team. All staff are involved in planning activities for children and the written long term plans show the topics to be covered throughout the year. The medium term planning is well thought out and shows the activities children will participate in linked to the six areas of learning. However, short term weekly plans are not always consistent in their content. For example, there are some that are completed well, showing learning intentions, resources to be used and evaluations of how things went, whilst others show the activity and a few resources, but no learning intentions or evaluations. The form used allows staff to target individual age groups of children, but this is always completed to show all children will take part in an activity. As the group take children from two years to five years this is not always appropriate. Staff undertake written observations of children's achievements and use these to make up their annual reports. However, the observations are not used to plan for children's next step of development and are not used to target individual children in the weekly planning.

Children's self-esteem and confidence are encouraged well. They receive praise and encouragement from staff and positive behaviour is valued and encouraged. Children are confident to speak up in a familiar group and often call out their thoughts as stories are being read. Children socialise well with each other and are learning to work in large and small groups and to take turns and share.

There are good opportunities for children to see and recognise print in the nursery as areas are labelled and children choose their names from a table as they come into the group in the morning. Children love looking at books and do this in small groups as well as on their own. There is a wide selection to choose from and staff take time to read to individual children, making it a cosy experience for both of them.

Children use numbers confidently in their play and learning. They know how many children are in each day as they count heads with staff at circle time and then call out the numbers as they are shown to them in print form. Some children are able to count confidently to 16. Imaginative ways to recognise shapes are planned by staff, with children going out into the local area to find items that are circular or oval shaped. Photos are taken as they are spotted and these are put in a scrap book for children to refer to.

Children really enjoy their dance lessons and move with co-ordination and control, imaginatively following the teacher's lead, marching around the hall taking big and small steps in time to music. Children stretch on command and use their imaginations as they pretend they are going through the jungle lifting their legs high to avoid mud and using their arms to clear away branches that are in their way.

Children are learning about the world through a nursery bear called Travel Bear or TB for short. He has his own passport and children take him on weekend outings, to birthday parties, on holiday and he sometimes goes on business trips with parents. Photos of his adventures spark conversations about his travels and children are beginning to learn about the world they live in. Children have opportunities to use programmable items and have made ice cream and bread using machines for this purpose. They observe the changes in the ingredients and experience the changes in texture as they tuck into the results.

Work on the walls shows children have mixed paints to make other colours. Children used red, yellow and blue to make green, orange and purple. Children use recyclable materials to create models from their imaginations and join these together with tape and glue before painting them bright colours to take home. Children play in sand and water trays using funnels, tubes, buckets, spoons, jugs and empty plastic washing up bottles to explore volume. They use their imaginations as they re-enact stories such as the nativity and regularly use dressing up clothes as part of their role play. The home corner area is often transformed by staff into a vets, a travel agents and an office and here children lose themselves in their imaginations as they play together.

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

The provision is good.

Children arrive at the nursery and feel a sense of belonging as they are greeted warmly and with affection by familiar staff. They are confident to talk of their experiences outside of nursery, for example, talking to staff and other children about their home life and siblings whilst having a break at the snack table. There are good opportunities for children to learn about the different cultures and traditions of people as they have done a topic that explored the lives of some of their relatives who come from other countries. Activities included inviting relatives into nursery to cook Italian food, dress children in saris and learn about France, America and Jamaica. The setting has a range of resources that children access to enable them to develop a positive awareness of other races and cultures. Books show characters from around the world and there are a variety of dolls and play figures used as a part of children's integral play. The setting is less well equipped for depicting people with disabilities, which inhibits children's

understanding of diversity. All children are welcomed into the nursery and staff have experience of caring for children with learning or physical difficulties or those with English as an additional language.

Children are well behaved, occupied, polite and are beginning to understand right from wrong through consistent boundaries, praise and appropriate strategies used by staff to manage behaviour. Children are beginning to share and take turns and they show interest in each other by listening as others talk about their experiences during snack time. Children question staff as they read to them and they are given responsibilities within the nursery. For example, there is a rota system of helpers at snack time, children are given time to put on their own outdoor clothing and they help staff to tidy up the toys. All of this goes towards ensuring children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development are fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the effective communication by newsletters, a prospectus and daily verbal feedback from staff about their children's progress. Information about the curriculum is available to parents in the prospectus and they are encouraged to comment about the care their children receive. Staff find out from parents what children can already do when they arrive at nursery and then undertake observations to ensure staff build on what children already know.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by a consistent staff team who are experienced and have a sound knowledge of children's development. Staff are able to provide a range of stimulating activities to ensure children in the nursery progress well. There are a comprehensive range of policies and procedures which guide staff in their care of the children and the organisation of the setting. The nursery is a generally safe place for children to play, but attention needs to be given to electrical appliances to ensure they are safe.

The manager is vigilant about ensuring a good staff/child ratio is maintained and this adult support helps children gain confidence within the setting. The staff embrace training opportunities to increase their knowledge and bring fresh ideas to the nursery. The nursery is well resourced with a good range of equipment and play materials and this, together with planned activities, helps provide children with a variety of play experiences. All required regulatory documentation is in place, but staff registers do not consistently show staff's time of arrival and departure.

Leadership and management are good. There is a commitment to the professional development of staff, who are valued for their contribution. The manager ensures staff are aware of their role and responsibilities and this is discussed daily at informal meetings before children arrive. Staff work well as a team, they are committed to ensuring children are well cared for in a learning environment. Staff know the children well and they are deployed effectively to ensure children's individual needs are met. The manager has developed professional and friendly relationships with parents and keeps their notice board updated with relevant information. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection two recommendations were made to improve the care for children relating to safety and staffing. Since then good progress has been made and children's safety is now

supported as staff record children's time of arrival and departure each day. The manager has now devised a staff application form and put a staff appraisal system in place.

At the last nursery education inspection two points of consideration were made relating to linking sounds to letters and partnership with parents. Since then good progress has been made. Children now have regular opportunities to link sounds to letters in everyday play. Time is set aside by the manager each week for parents to make appointments with her to discuss their children's development records and monitor their children's progress.

### **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 electrical appliances and fittings conform to safety requirements and do not pose a risk to children
- ensure attendance registers consistently detail staff's time of arrival and departure

#### **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):

- develop the short term planning to include regular evaluations of activities and make sure some of the activities are organised to challenge children of different ages and abilities
- make sure written observations of children's achievements are used to plan for each child's next step of development

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