

The Grove

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131691
Inspection date	29 November 2007
Inspector	Tom Radcliffe
Setting Address	Shepperton House, 83-93 Shepperton Road, Islington, London, N1 3DF
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Registered person	Elaine Catchpole
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?

The Grove Day Nursery is a nursery run by two private individuals. It opened in 2000 and operates from a two storey premises in a renovated factory building. It is situated in a residential area in Canonbury in the London borough of Islington. A maximum of 78 children may attend the nursery at any one time and a maximum of 16 children may attend the out of school provision at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.30 for 50 weeks of the year. The out of school care provision is open each weekday in term time from 15.30 to 18.30 and during holidays from 09.00 to 18.30. All children have access to a small secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 77 children aged from under two to under five years on roll. Of these, 16 receive funding for early years education. The nursery mainly provides for children in the local area. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 26 members of staff. Of these, the majority hold appropriate early years qualifications and a number of staff are working towards a qualification. Teaching methods

are based on the philosophy of Froebel Montessori and Reggio Emilia. The setting 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 good.

Children attending the nursery are able to play and develop in a very clean and attractive environment. Staff in the setting work very effectively to ensure that all facilities are ready for children as they arrive with very high standards of cleanliness and hygiene in evidence throughout the nursery. The setting has effective and safe procedures in place to ensure that medication is administered correctly and accidents are minimised. Staff take care to maintain written records to support these procedures which are shared with parents and inform risk assessments. All staff are qualified in first aid and appropriate first aid equipment is readily available thus ensuring that children can be very well cared for if they were to sustain a minor injury. The setting works with parents to ensure that children who may be infectious remain at home thus reducing the spread of infection amongst the children. The nursery also promotes effective hygienic practice during the day; for example, children wash their hands at appropriate times during the day, staff follow strict nappy changing guidelines, there are no outdoor shoes worn by anyone in the activity rooms and all surfaces are maintained in a suitable hygienic condition by cleaning between activities. The children in the nursery are also made aware of healthy lifestyles and the part they can play in keeping themselves healthy. As a result children are starting to have clear ideas about the importance of being clean and about decisions about what they eat and the exercise they take; for example, some children had a conversation about why it was healthy to walk to the nursery. The nursery also further promotes the good health of children as it has obtained parental permission to obtain emergency medical treatment or advice, should it be required.

Physical development is good. Children are given a range of opportunities to enhance their physical development in interesting and stimulating ways. The nursery provides for activities indoors that develop large and fine motor skills. Children can access climbing frames, slides and equipment to promote mobility in their activity rooms. Children spontaneously use this equipment, under careful supervision of staff, and enjoy taking exercise. Children's fine motor skills are developed throughout the nursery with activities that include painting, mark making and the use of shape games and puzzles. Staff support the children very effectively as they undertake these activities which helps the children make steady progress. The nursery organises one to one or small group activities for children, with a member of staff who follows the setting's Montessori philosophy and methods. In these sessions the children undertake many purposeful activities, under the skilful direction of the adult, that include a range of work to develop physical skills. Children enjoy these opportunities that include threading, puzzles, matching and manipulating simple tools. The setting has limited outdoor space but children are given some opportunities to take part in activities outdoors with a range of equipment. The nursery augments its outdoor play experiences for the children by using facilities within the locality, these include, walks to parks, play areas and local libraries. Children are able to take rests, according to their needs, throughout the nursery as staff make facilities available at midday or at other appropriate times. All the children's meals and snacks are freshly prepared by the nursery's cook and are very nutritious, they include pasta, fruit, vegetables, soup and salads. Children are gaining a good understanding of healthy eating and of the value of making good choices when they select snacks. Meals are all prepared in a well equipped and well maintained kitchen. The setting makes its menu of all meals known to parents which is regularly changed

and meets all the dietary needs and requirements of the children. The setting ensures that all dietary requirements are always followed by displaying them on boards in each of the activity rooms. Children have free access to fresh drinking water which they can independently access at appropriate times during the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery operates in premises which are very secure and safe for children. Access to the building is controlled by an authorised member of staff in the nursery's spacious and welcoming reception area. Children are kept safe by the setting's effective procedures for the arrival and departure of children. Parents spend varying amounts of time in the setting as they settle their children into their day at the nursery; valuable information is exchanged at this point as all staff are available to talk to parents. Staff ensure that all visitors into the nursery are monitored to ensure children's safety. The setting has effective procedures in place to safeguard children, all staff have undertaken recent training to be able to protect children as they are able to detect potential signs and all are able to pass on any concerns to the relevant authorities. Children are kept safe in the event of an emergency as the setting has in place proper fire detection and control equipment, which is well maintained and tested. Children know how to evacuate the premises in the case of an emergency and plans are in place to ensure that even the youngest children are able to stay safe. In order to minimise the hazards that children face, the setting undertakes regular effective risk assessments. There are many examples of these that include the proper use of stair gates, locking storage areas and constantly monitoring the suitability of the premises and resources in use. The setting has very good toilet, washing and nappy changing facilities which are maintained to a high standard of cleanliness and hygiene. The setting enjoys spacious, light and stimulating accommodation throughout which is used very effectively to support a range of activities, meet children's individual needs and store resources safely. These factors impact very positively upon the play environment; for example, free movement within all the activity rooms is possible, independent access to resources is promoted and all areas are safe for children as a result of the space that is available to them. In addition staff deployment is very good as it ensures children's safety at all times by proper levels of supervision and support. As a result children are able to work in small groups, use large indoor play equipment and explore their environment very safely. The setting also has a very good range of furniture which allows children of all ages and sizes to be able to take part in range of developmentally appropriate activities. The range of toys and resources that are available to children is good, they are well maintained, safe, clean and stimulate children's development. The visual impact of the setting is very positive; children's displays are numerous, all nursery members have achievements celebrated and large amounts of important information is made available to all that use the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are grouped according to their age within the setting as they undertake a very good range of purposeful and stimulating activities in their own rooms. Each room is very well equipped and staff guide children through developmentally appropriate activities allowing a large amount of child initiated play with timely interventions to offer support and guidance. The momentum of play is maintained within the setting as staff ensure that children are engaged with their chosen activities and always have new directions to take their play in. Children's work is celebrated within the nursery and is often displayed; for example, children's work on fireworks

and on the festival of lights is prominently displayed. Children's self esteem is raised by this and staff engage children in conversations about their work and what they want to do, which helps children's confidence and language development. In the toddler room children played with a range of toys each supported by adults who ensured that these play opportunities led to exploration and discovery, for example, about sounds music, shapes or words. The younger children in the setting spend an appropriate amount of time on activities with a growing ability to concentrate and apply themselves. This is as a result of good supervision and a very well resourced play environment. Children become involved in role play, use indoor play equipment, share books or work with adults on painting activities or on their pre-writing skills. Staff are very skilful in ensuring that children spend their time well and will support individuals when necessary or encourage groups to move to other activities. This means that reluctant children can follow their individual interests, as in the case of a child who spent some time printing with sponges; groups are given a fresh impetus to move on, as a group of younger children did when they started to play with sand. There is a very pleasant, calm and purposeful atmosphere within the setting. Staff engage even the youngest children in conversations, ask questions, seek out opinions and provide children with opportunities to express opinions. During breakfast time with the youngest children in the setting staff ensure that children experience a language rich environment and become used to the conventions of language. Where the adults led activities children contributed well and participated with enthusiasm, for example, during circle time, singing together or when sharing books and stories. The nursery plans children's activities very well, giving a very good balance of activities with individual learning objectives promoting the development of all children. Children are assessed by staff throughout their time in the setting; their achievements are collated and then shared with parents. As a consequence of the nursery's good planning strategy children undertake activities that are carefully planned and, where appropriate, linked very well to Birth to three matters framework. The setting is in the process of implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage and activities are being developed to meet this framework. Children's development prepares them for future work based upon the Foundation Stage.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of how young children learn and a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff also have an excellent grasp on the abilities of their children, their level of development and how they can continue this as they move through the nursery. The activities that the children undertake are a very good balance between child chosen and adult led tasks. The nursery plans its activities very well, they are becoming increasingly influenced by the Early Years Foundation Stage which is being implemented and will continue to develop. Staff interventions are timely, skilful and respond to the needs of the children; for example, as children came to the end of a shared book task a member of staff reinvigorated them by suggesting that they could make a picture of the story which they did with enthusiasm and interest. Children respond well to this level of support and are showing very positive signs of being able to apply themselves for appropriate periods of time. Staff take part in regular assessments of children as they work and play, these are based on observations and an appraisal of the tasks that the children undertake. These on-going assessments inform staff about the progress that children are making and also about future learning goals. The setting is able to make accurate assessments of children's learning in all areas and also of whether achievements are as they would expect for children of this age. Information gained from assessments helps the setting to create portfolios of children's work which give a very accurate and largely encouraging understanding of children's achievements. These portfolios build very well on those that were completed before the children entered the foundation stage.

The children enjoy good social relationships as they play together, share and take turns. Children are given many opportunities to be independent as they select activities and decide how to spend their time in the nursery. The children are very confident speakers; they talk about their work with good vocabulary to describe what they are doing. A group of children spoke about a mathematics activity that they had worked on where they discovered the relative heights of each other; they used language very well to describe what they had discovered. The nursery promotes an environment where writing is very important, books are used and shared regularly, labels are used throughout the setting and children are encouraged to use their names and write them where possible. Some children had undertaken a writing exercise concerned with colouring T shirts, which had been made into an attractive display, inspiring children and making them want to learn more about writing and language. Children enjoy listening to stories and make appropriate contributions that show that they understand them and have opinions about them. The setting has a good range of mathematical equipment that helps children understand more about numbers and their value, for example, when they count and put numbers in order of magnitude. Throughout the foundation stage children are given opportunities to understand and work with shapes, dates, distances and quantities. Children explore everyday technology through computers and role play activities using toy washing machines and microwave cookers. Children's physical development is good as they have a range of activities available to them, these include, painting, playing with modelling clay and using jigsaw puzzles. Children have access to very good art activities; their imaginative work is displayed very effectively. The nursery supports children's learning very well in the Foundation Stage.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The nursery has a very good system in place to ensure that all necessary information about children's backgrounds is made available to them. The setting ensures that it responds to this information in the interests of the children and works effectively to ensure that individual needs are catered for. Staff are very knowledgeable about their children and the setting uses information about them well to effectively meet needs that may arise, for example, where English is an additional language. The setting has an excellent understanding of the needs of children who may have learning difficulties, experienced and well trained staff ensure that any children requiring support are given help to promote development. The setting is very inclusive in its practice and staff are deployed effectively to be able to support children individually or in small groups. The nursery's physical environment limits its ability to accommodate all children but it has a staff that are committed to meeting the needs of all children. The work and play atmosphere in the nursery is excellent. The staff and children together show good trusting relationships as they work and talk together. There is a very positive and caring feel to the nursery with staff acting as good role models who work consistently to engage children and interest them. Children's behaviour in the setting is excellent as children share games, take turns and exchange opinions freely. The nursery uses resources that reflect positive images of diversity and plan work to give children a good understanding of their diverse world. As a result children learn about festivals from around the world and the setting celebrated an "Indian Day" to enhance the children's understanding. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are welcomed into the nursery everyday by staff that show that parents are valued; parents appreciate this informal contact as they consider that it helps the nursery provide very high standards of care. Parents feel that the contact they have with the nursery allows them to have a good understanding of how it

operates and permits a good level of consistency in how parents and the setting work with children. In addition to the very positive views that parents have about the informal contact, the parents also value the parents' evening where they can discuss children with key workers, written reports and regular newsletters. The parents also think that the nursery provides a comprehensive range of information which enables them to have a good understanding of its work, policies and procedures. Parents also welcome the opportunities that they are given to contribute ideas to the setting and in particular the written feedback that they provide in the diaries that children take home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provider has established very robust recruitment procedures, these help to ensure that staff employed at the nursery are suitable to work with children. All staff have a good idea how children learn and have very effective planning and assessment systems in place. The setting is developing its work in line with the Early Years Foundation Stage framework. The effectiveness of the staff is due to good recruitment and on-going training but in addition to this the setting has very good induction processes which positively impacts upon the nursery's organisation. The setting has policies and procedures in place to ensure the effective and safe management of the nursery. Staff deployment is very good; the nursery has excellent resources and spacious accommodation. Children enjoy their work and play, and achieve very good outcomes in their learning and development. Children are given many meaningful opportunities to make healthy choices and understand how to keep safe. Children's wellbeing and care is given very good attention. The children's behaviour is excellent with staff supporting, guiding and caring for the children with great skill and respect.

The leadership and management is good. The provider has a very good understanding of the strengths of the setting and seeks constantly to work on areas that may require development. She has a clear vision for the nursery which she shares with all the staff and she leads a team that is committed to enabling children to develop, thrive and grow in a happy and purposeful environment. The provider has cultivated excellent relationships with parents which makes a significant contribution to the effectiveness of the provision. The provider also has very effective periods of induction, training and the development of all staff. Staff value the professional attitude within the setting and the respect that is shown to them as professionals. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection made the recommendation, that hot water used by the children was regulated at a suitable temperature. Since that time the setting has undertaken work to ensure that this recommendation has been followed.

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):

- continue to develop the activities that children undertake as a result of implementing the Early Years Foundation Stage.

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 with the developments indicated in the care section above.

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