

Sticky Fingers

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	123138
Inspection date	14 December 2007
Inspector	Linda Close
Setting Address	St John the Divine Church Hall, Garratt Lane, Earlsfield, London, SW18 4EH
Telephone number	020 8871 9496
E-mail	
Registered person	Jean Dalton
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sticky Fingers has been open since 1996 and was registered in 1999. The nursery operates from St John the Devine Church premises on a main road in Earlsfield in south-west London. The local authority is Wandsworth. The majority of the children attending live in the local area. Full-time and part-time places are provided. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 and, operates 48 weeks a year excluding Public holidays. The premises includes a large hall, a kitchen, toilets facilities and a nappy changing area. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area at the rear of the hall.

There are currently 31 children aged from 18 months to under five years on roll. Of these, eight children receive funding for nursery education. There were 19 children present at the time of the inspection. There are no children on roll who have identified learning difficulties. There are several children who speak English as an additional language or who hear other languages spoken at home.

There are four full-time staff including the provider/manager and two part-time staff. The provider/manager and staff are experienced and most hold appropriate early years qualifications

including, Montessori Diploma, NNEB and National Vocational Qualifications at levels two or three in childcare. The nursery employs a blend of traditional teaching and Montessori methods to promote children's learning and development. Three peripatetic staff visit the setting each week to provide massage, dance and computer tuition.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for appropriately if they have an accident because a first aider is on site at every session and parents are asked for their written permission for staff to seek emergency medical treatment or advice if required. Children do not attend if they are unwell or infectious and staff put up notices for parents in the foyer if there are any childhood diseases prevalent in the nursery. This prevents the unnecessary spread of infection amongst the children.

Medication is only given to children with written permission from their parents. Medication records are kept but a few lack detail. Children sleep in a quiet area in clean sheets that are labelled for their individual use. Nappy changes are carried out hygienically. Children learn about good personal hygiene because the staff explain why they must have clean hands before eating.

Children enjoy healthy snacks and they have easy access to drinks of fresh water. The cook has trained in food hygiene and she prepares children's meals in clean surroundings. The menu includes healthy choices chosen to meet children's dietary needs. The children eat their meals with pleasure. There is a very good range of opportunities for healthy exercise provided for the children at the nursery. They make daily use of a secure outdoor area for play with balls and wheeled toys. In addition they have dance sessions with a visiting teacher in the hall.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed into a spacious nursery environment. The hall is beautifully decorated with many examples of children's work, posters and pictures. The outer door remains locked throughout the day and staff open the door personally to parents which ensures that children cannot leave unnoticed and strangers cannot enter unobserved. The hall is clean, light and well presented but very occasionally it is a little cool. Children have easy access to an interesting range of books which are set out around a comfortable reading area. There are ample good quality toys and resources which meet the needs of the age range attending.

Children's safety is of prime importance to the staff. They carry out visual checks each day before the children arrive and a more thorough risk assessment is conducted on a regular basis by the provider. A safety gate prevents children from accessing the kitchen and hazardous materials are stored safely. Staff and children practise emergency evacuation from time to time to promote children's safety.

Children are safeguarded in relation to child protection issues because the provider and most members of staff have a good knowledge and understanding of this aspect of childcare. The majority of the staff can confidently describe the signs and symptoms of ill-treatment. The very few members of staff who are not as confident have identified this as a training issue in discussion with the provider and they are already booked to attend relevant training in the near future.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children under three years of age are engaged in delightful activities that catch their attention particularly well. Staff are fully informed about the Birth to three matters framework and they plan with care under the appropriate headings. Children are assigned to a keyworker who takes a special interest in a small group. Children's parents contribute to an initial profile which forms the basis of their learning plan. Staff observe the children and they conscientiously note their responses to the activities. Children's strengths and areas for further development are identified from these observations and staff make very good use of the information to plan in order to meet their needs. All members of staff contribute to the observation notes for every child in this small nursery group.

Children find their activities very engaging. They explore a selection of interesting objects frozen into different shaped ice blocks and cubes. They touch the ice and exclaim at how cold it feels. They note that the ice becomes wet after a while and the staff explain the term 'melting'. Children explore the properties of dry sand and laugh out loud when it trickles through their fingers. They play a range of musical instruments and find out what different noises they can make. Staff play with the children but they do not limit the way children play. They promote children's language development by modelling clear speech. Children gather round the staff to listen to stories. They are beginning to take an interest in the pictures and they are making good progress with their listening skills. Staff explain new words as they arise in discussions over children's play and at storytime.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff plan an exceptionally good range of focus activities for the older children every week. Staff are observant, thoughtful and very well informed. They are making excellent use of their current studies which helps them to understand how children learn. Staff respond to the children's interests and they shape the work to meet their individual needs. They plan next steps and make the activities appropriately challenging for each individual child. Staff speedily recognise and make exceptionally good use of learning opportunities as they arise. They find reasons to count in art work, refer often to shapes and sizes and use lots of good vocabulary when children are playing to help them to learn unobtrusively.

Children are gaining a very good level of independence. They make choices and decisions every day. They take turns to set the table for meals, they select equipment, get it out, use it and then put it away in accordance with the Montessori philosophy theory of learning. They also pour out their own drinks at meal times and help themselves to snacks. Behaviour management is gentle but firm and the children are pleased to do as they are asked. The older group of children work in a quiet area which helps them to concentrate. Younger children who wish to join them are welcomed and a suitable activity is found for them. Relationships are very good and children of different ages get along well together.

Children can find their own names to add to the 'Who's in today' chart and some can already write their names unaided. Clearly written labels all around help children gain familiarity with print. They have easy access to a wide range of good quality mark making materials and displayed examples of work show that they make good use of them. Children are introduced to modern technology by a visiting computer teacher. Records show their very good progress in manipulating and controlling the computer with the mouse and their achievements in using

programmes that are graded to provide appropriate challenge. Children learn about the world around them through topic work, shopping trips and outings. They are also involved in worthwhile activities which include growing strawberries and sunflowers in the outdoor area. Children experiment and create art works according to their own ideas. The art work on display shows a bold use of colour using a very good range of materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from continuity of care because the staff take heed of information shared at the time of registration and they meet individual needs well. They take into account issues such as special likes and dislikes and children's home language and culture when they are planning activities. Celebrations are carefully chosen to reflect the diverse backgrounds of the children in the setting and the community in the local area. Behaviour management is a strength in the nursery. The children respond well to the kindness of the staff. Children learn to be pleasant to one another because the staff are good role models. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The provider is well informed about helping children if they experience learning difficulties. She shares her knowledge with the staff and liaises well with parents and outside agencies.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Ample good quality information is readily available at the nursery. It is shared via newsletters, notices, displayed planning documents and frequent conversations with staff. Parents are invited to attend parties and special events which include Christmas celebrations. They are welcome to see their own child's progress file. They are encouraged to discuss the contents with their child's keyworker. The examples of work, targets, observations and comments written in the files are particularly useful for parents. They enable parents to support their children in their learning. The files also provide information that helps parents to continue their child's learning at home. Several parents have written letters to the provider praising the high standards of care and education in the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provider makes sure that all staff, including visiting teachers, are checked for their suitability to work with children. The induction of new staff is carefully carried out which helps staff to gain familiarity with the policies and procedures followed at the nursery. Staff meet with the provider annually to review their work in the setting and at this time they identify useful courses to help them develop professionally. A good system is in place for replacing staff who are either attending training courses or unavoidably absent. The system ensures that the children are always cared for by staff that they know well which helps them to feel secure. The staff rota is well planned and this ensures that there are always sufficient staff working with the children.

All of the necessary documents and records are in place and most include sufficient detail. The provider ensures that the hall is clean and well organised. Appropriate steps have been taken to keep the setting at a comfortable temperature although this can sometimes vary. Regular checks and frequent replenishment ensures that there is a good range of resources, toys and books available for the children.

Leadership and management in relation to nursery education is outstanding. The provider shares her knowledge and experience of childcare with the staff. She firmly believes in helping her staff to attend useful training courses to underpin their work in the setting. Her

encouragement and support helps the staff to provide high quality learning experiences for the children. She monitors the record keeping system which is particularly good and she ensures that the information gained from observations is used by staff to plan suitably challenging activities for every child. 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 three recommendations for improvement were made. The provider agreed to improve the heating in the nursery, particularly in the hallway and toilet area. The heating has been improved and the hall is comfortable most of the time. The provider was asked to make sure that smoke alarms are maintained in working condition. Smoke alarms are in place and checked often which helps to keep the children safe. The provider agreed to improve the presentation of toys and resources and to extend the range of resources that reflect diversity. The hall is well organised and there are now ample resources that reflect diversity which helps children to learn about the range of people in the community.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since the last inspection concerning National Standard 2: organisation, in relation to an allegation that staff at the nursery were not suitably qualified. An Ofsted inspector made an unannounced visit to the setting on 17 September 2007 and found that the staff are suitably qualified. However, the inspector was unable to access all documents and records at the time of this visit and an action was made to have them ready for inspection at any time. The provider remains suitable for registration.

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 outstanding.

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):

- monitor the temperature in the hall to ensure it is always comfortable for the children
- ensure that the medication records include sufficient detail.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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