

# Finsbury Park Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** EY288638  
**Inspection date** 29 November 2007  
**Inspector** Kanwal Sonia Lobo / Malini Parmar

**Setting Address** Dulas Street, Finsbury Park, London, N4 3AF

**Telephone number** 020 7263 3090

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Asquith Court Nurseries Limited

**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](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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Finsbury Park Day Nursery opened in June 2000. It operates from six group rooms within a purpose build single storey building located in Finsbury Park, in the London Borough of Islington. It is open from Monday to Friday each week from 08:00 until 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. It is registered for 103 children under five years. Children from the local and surrounding community attend.

There are currently 70 children on roll who attend full time or on a sessional basis. Of this number, there are 20 children who receive nursery funding. There are 18 three-year-olds and two four-year-olds. There are three children attending who have English as an additional language and none with disability or a learning difficulty.

There are three members of staff who work with the funded children who are qualified and experienced.

The setting receives support from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, and the regional childcare and educational team employed by Asquith Court Nurseries.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about hygiene during daily routines, they know they need to wash their hands before and after lunch or after taking part in art and craft activities. This is because staff continue to raise their awareness of the importance of having clean hands. Babies have their own individual wet flannel which is used to clean their hands and face before and after eating and this helps to prevent the spread of germs. Older children have access to suitable hand washing facilities and visit the toilet independently. There are systems in place to maintain cleanliness of all areas of the nursery, but these are not wholly effective. This is because at times children play with some toys and equipment that are not sufficiently clean for their use and this can compromise their health.

Children receive suitable first aid treatment in the event of an accident as all members of staff hold valid first aid certificates. There is a record of accidents which includes a parental signature to acknowledge the entry. In the event that children are sick or infectious they are encouraged not to attend as clear information is shared with parents to help prevent the spread of infections. All relevant policies and procedures are in place for the administration of medication.

Healthy eating is promoted well as meals are planned in consultation with parents, taking account of a variety of nutritious foods and children's individual dietary needs. Several staff have received food and hygiene training, and so most often prepare the snacks. They cut, for example, the apples and bananas in manageable pieces for the children so that they are able to share from the 'fruit platter'. This often leads children and staff to engage in useful discussions about the benefits of eating plenty of fresh fruit. Children enjoy a range of other freshly prepared meals which are made on site. The menu reflects different foods from around the world, such as Moroccan lamb with Basmati rice.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are safeguarded through the general security of the setting. The use of the entry phone system and staff vigilance reduces the risk of children leaving unsupervised or unwanted visitors gaining access. Parents and visitors are permitted into the nursery once they have been identified and a record of visitors is well maintained.

Displays of children's work contribute to the child friendly environment. In the main, children access play equipment, toys and furniture that are safe. However, the risk assessments are evolving and are not yet robust in ensuring that children are not at risk from, for example, accessing a broken toy or sleeping mats which have exposed foam.

All children are made to feel comfortable when they are resting. This is because they have their own cot or sleeping mat which is labelled with their name and fresh bed linen which is washed on a daily basis. Staff frequently check on the safety of babies and young children whilst they are asleep and maintain a daily written record.

The nursery recognises the need to give fire safety appropriate priority, consequently, fire drills are practised periodically. They ensure that the patterns of children's attendance is taken into account so that everyone has sufficient and equal opportunities of learning how to respond in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Staff show a sound knowledge of safeguarding issues because they access regular training and know how to implement the setting's child protection policy. This contributes to safeguarding children from risk.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The babies participate in a range of activities that encourage their current stage of development. They have daily opportunities to mark make as they, for example, mix the different coloured paints on paper with their fingers and see the patterns that emerge. They have lots of fun playing with the sand and water, and staff help them to notice that it sparkles because it contains the glitter they have added. The babies have many chances to engage in holistic play and explore the natural materials found in the treasure baskets. The interaction between the children and staff is warm and positive, and as a result the atmosphere is calm and relaxed. The environment is planned well to take account of the individual needs of the babies as, for example, they are able to rest safely in line with their individual routine. Although the babies have access to a separate outdoor play area the daily routines are yet to be reviewed to ensure that they have daily opportunities to play outside in the fresh air.

The toddlers are well settled and most respond generally positively to the routines in place. Most of the younger children show an eagerness to do things for themselves such as, feed themselves and staff support them to be independent in most aspects of their care. Children have lots of opportunity to choose what they want to do next and are able to easily access resources and activities because the environment has been planned to take account of this.

Most staff working with children under three years have a developing knowledge and understanding of how to implement the Birth to three matters framework effectively. Although staff endeavour to maintain written jottings of what they observe the information is not yet evaluative and consequently does not always clearly inform the reader of the progress that is being made. The setting aim to continue improving the planning, observations and evaluation of children's progress in order to extend the scope of individualised learning.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children enjoy the practical activities on offer. They develop confidence as staff generally interact positively with them and ask useful questions to extend their learning. Systems for planning and assessments are developing. Staff make regular observations on the children's progress. These are evolving to ensure they are consistently evaluative and clearly identify children's next steps in learning. Staff collate this information together with examples of children's work in the form of children's profiles. The emphasis on continuous play enables children to select resources freely from the indoor and outdoor environment. In practice this process is developing to make sure children are consistently engaged in purposeful play. Although, staff are mostly available to support children, sometimes the organisation of the routine means not all areas are fully available for children to make choices from. As a result, at times children do not make full use of the environment and become restless. At these times they sometimes display unwanted behaviour. Children receive sound levels of support to develop their concentration, and as a result they persevere to complete their chosen task. They build train tracks and complete puzzles.

Children are beginning to develop their self help skills; older children dress themselves for outdoor play. They delight as they find their coats using their name pegs. However, many

chances to extend these skills, such as at meal times are missed. Children speak clearly and confidently sharing conversations with their friends and adults alike. They enjoy listening to stories at group story times and particularly enjoy signing action songs. Staff help children to learn to listen to the rhythm of the songs and clap accordingly. Children respond positively as they match the sounds they hear and learn to differentiate between loud and soft. They enjoy using the chalk boards in the garden to make marks and pictures. However, chances to write for a purpose are not always available. Children benefit from listening to much mathematical language to describe shape, colour and size. As a result, they often repeat this to describe the 'big yellow Christmas tree' they make from play dough.

Children learn to count as they scoop sand and learn to make the wheel spin. They develop an understanding of road safety as they explore and investigate how to change the colour of the traffic lights in the garden. Although a computer is available children are not consistently encouraged to explore how it works as it does not yet form an integral part of their learning and experiences. Children enjoy making models from the construction kits. They carefully manipulate the small pieces with increasing control to strengthen their dexterity. Children use their bodies to push forward as they pedal bikes, and gain control over their movements as they learn to balance on scooters. They clearly enjoy using the crossing to 'stop and go' when the traffic lights change. Children enjoy some creative play; they have access to a wide range of different textures, colours and shapes to enable them to communicate their thoughts and feelings. They clearly enjoy using props for imaginative play, taking the role of the 'lollipop' person. However, sometimes children abandon this play prematurely because staff are not available to extend their experiences further.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery recognise the importance of promoting equality of opportunity and a positive attitude to diversity. They welcome all families equally and the staff team are approachable which contributes to a warm and welcoming atmosphere. The staff and children attending belong to the diverse local population and so they bring with them different experiences, interests and knowledge of a range of cultures and religious beliefs. There is a sense of community cohesion as the children and staff work and play harmoniously together. The children and staff are having fun as they prepare for Christmas. For example, in the toddler room children make a big collage of a Christmas tree using a piece of each child's art work. This helps them to feel they have made a valuable contribution. As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Strategies to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities include working in close unison with parents and other professional bodies. Planning is reviewed where necessary to take account of the use of materials and resources, adapting the environment and activities to enable all children to feel part of the group and secure in their surroundings.

In the main, the babies and toddlers respond well to the staff as they receive instruction through gentle and sensitive interactions. However, older children's behaviour is at times erratic. This is because sometimes they are unclear as to what is expected as they are not always offered explanations in line with their level of understanding and maturity. This is particularly apparent when they are not able to make full use of their environment such as, playing outdoors when they want to because of staffing ratios. The lack of clear guidance and ineffective organisation at these times results in a display of unwanted behaviour in some children. Staff recognise the

importance of praise and encouragement, and children are developing confidence and their self esteem is promoted as their achievements are acknowledged.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff welcome parents warmly and exchange pertinent information daily. Written information is available about the setting which includes information about the curriculum and this is displayed throughout the nursery. Children's developmental records are available for parents to view at any time. Parents receive written information about how well their child has settled after a set period of time. In addition parents are invited to attend programmed meetings with their child's key worker to discuss progress and development. Systems to ensure parents can participate fully in their learning are developing to ensure a clear exchange of children's individual learning priorities.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The space is generally used well to meet the individual and basic needs of the children attending. They have sufficient space to move freely and explore their surroundings. Most children respond well to the firm routines in place, however, sometimes they do not fully benefit from them. For example, the toddlers are currently all encouraged to sleep at the same time and this means their individual needs have not been assessed effectively. As a result, some toddlers are disengaged as they lay awake. The manager is aware that this arrangement suits the needs of the organisation, therefore, this has been identified in the nursery's own action plan as an area for improvement.

In the main, staff are deployed effectively to work directly with the children but sometimes due to staff being redeployed to deal with organisational tasks, such as preparing for sleep time some children are not adequately supervised during the lunch period.

Children benefit from the systems in place which are being developed to support staff in maintaining the required records. The setting has the required policies and procedures that are reviewed in line with changes.

Leadership and Management is satisfactory. Children gain from a stable staff team who work well together. The Manager has some knowledge of the weaknesses within the provision, and a programme for improvement has been identified. The existing systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of the provision are evolving to ensure it is fully robust. Staff are keen to continue improving upon quality of teaching in order to fully support children's learning and development. They are aware that there is a need to strengthen their knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. There is a commitment to ongoing training and this is facilitated by the organisation.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children attending.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection a number of recommendations were raised for care and nursery education. Most of these have now been met. The provider agreed to provide opportunities for children to develop their imaginative skills and to ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. The nursery have developed some areas within the nursery environment, such as the home corner to enable children to mimic the world around them. The setting have also developed

the resources to include more props and dressing up. Children clearly enjoy using these for imaginative play and readily take on the role, for example, of the 'lollipop' person. Children are able to access a range of activities and resources, such as puzzles, books, dolls, posters, photographs of children and staff that reflect positive images and these form an integral part of the environment. Children are engaged in a range of activities relating to themes that celebrate religious and cultural festivals. This has had a positive impact on their awareness of the wider world.

The provider was required to ensure that the provision for information and communication technology provides the full range of learning for children. This is an aspect that the setting have recognised remains an area for improvement. This is because they are reviewing the arrangements for the accessibility of the computer for the older children and looking for ways to make this aspect an integral and fun part of their learning experiences. The nursery are continuing to develop more formal systems for monitoring and evaluating the performance of the nursery as this is not yet robust.

### **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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### **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):

- establish a more effective system for cleaning toys, furnishings and other equipment.
- make more effective use of the risk assessment by taking further steps to eliminate the risk of children accessing broken toys or mats with exposed foam.
- continue to improve on the quality of planning, observations and evaluation of progress children under three years make in order to extend the scope of individualised learning.
- provide all children with regular outdoor play and learning opportunities that are interesting and offer sufficient challenge.
- review the routines in place to ensure that they take account of the individual needs of children and that there are sufficient staff deployed effectively to work directly with them.

## **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 ensure children are consistently provided with explanations and clear guidance to help them learn to manage their own behaviour and to understand why their behaviour is unacceptable.
- continue to develop the planning and assessment to ensure observations are used to identify children's next steps in learning and use these to identify learning priorities.
- provide children with greater opportunities to develop their self help skills and increase their independence.
- continue to develop a rigorous system to monitor and review the groups strengths and weaknesses and that of the educational programme.

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