

Little Gems Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY233954
Inspection date	06 March 2008
Inspector	Maria Therese Conroy
Setting Address	Stanmore & Canons Park Synagogue, London Road, Stanmore, Middlesex, HA7 4NS
Telephone number	0208 954 0841
E-mail	
Registered person	Paula Anne Leaman
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 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?

Little Gems Nursery was registered in 2002. It operates from Stanmore and Canons Park Synagogue in Stanmore in the London borough of Harrow. Children have access to two rooms, toilets are located in the entrance area, and an enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 42 children may attend the setting. The setting opens five days a week during term time. Sessions are from 09.30 to 12.30 Monday to Thursday and from 09.15 to 12.15 on Friday. Older children can attend a lunch club on a Thursday.

There are currently 25 children on roll, aged 18 months to three years. Of these, four children receive funding for early years education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are seven members of staff including the manager, most of which hold a relevant child care qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority, the Pre School Learning Alliance and the Agency for Jewish education. The group has a Jewish ethos which is reflected in the curriculum offered and children from the Jewish community are welcomed.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning to take responsibility for their own personal hygiene through practices that are part of their daily routine, such as washing their hands after using the toilet, and wiping their hands prior to eating. Information relating to accidents, parents' consent and administration of medication is recorded appropriately. Two staff have a current first aid certificate which means that children are protected if they have a minor accident. Specific procedures are in place for children who have severe allergies and some staff have had EpiPen training.

Children bring their own fruit and snack which they have individually labelled to ensure staff can easily identify, children with individual dietary needs are known by staff who consider this when planning any activity involving food. Once a week some of the older children stay for lunch club and food provided is suitable to provide a healthy diet for example, pitta bread, cucumber, carrots and fresh fruit.

Children have regular opportunities to promote their physical development, for example, they balance as they walk along the beam, slide and jump up and down on the trampoline. They enjoy dancing, parachute games and steering cars. Children's fine motor development is promoted through the daily activities, for example, they use pencils to draw, thread shapes and complete puzzles.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The main play area is made more attractive by the children's work which is displayed around the room. Children have access to a good selection of toys and books to support their learning. They can move around and select the resources they wish to play with from those that have been set out.

Staff supervise children well, for example, when they are using equipment such as the trampoline. Staff regularly undertake head counts, for example, when children have been taken out of the room to go to the toilet. Security on the main entrance is good with parents supporting staff by taking turns on a rota basis. Basic risk assessments are undertaken on the areas used by the children, however, at present risk assessments are not undertaken on the activities provided for the children or the equipment they use, which means that hazards are not always clearly identified.

Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures and have a written procedure in place. The provider makes sure that procedures are kept updated and that staff attend regular training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children are happy and settle well into the nursery, due to the flexible settling in procedures in place. A secure environment is created by the staff team who are friendly and caring. A range of activities are provided for children, however, the way in which they are planned and the way in which children are organised does not fully address their developmental

needs. Children enjoy singing familiar songs and rhymes, they enthusiastically sing 'wind the bobbin up' and throughout the morning spontaneously sing songs such as 'old McDonald' while sitting on the balancing beam. Children are developing their imagination through role play as they dress as a dinosaur and a princess. Children enjoy creating and designing, for example, they glue feathers and add stickers to their paper and print using various materials such as fruit, sponges and cotton reels.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and use this to plan a variety of activities that satisfactorily promote all areas of learning. Staff work well as a team, enjoy their work and are motivated to continue to improve their skills and knowledge by attending further training. Staff question children in order to encourage them to learn, however, the level of challenge does not always meet children's individual needs. Although staff observe and assess children this is not carried out on a regular basis and the information gained is not fully utilized to influence planning.

Children enjoy taking part in activities that promote mathematical development they sing songs such as 'ten fat sausages sizzling in the pan', use mathematical language in their play when they discuss the shape of an orange used for printing and identify a triangle when building with the stickle bricks. Children have daily opportunities to count, for example, they count the total number of children who are at nursery and they enjoy cooking activities where they weigh and measure the ingredients.

Children's language skills are promoted when they discuss the topic they are currently studying, 'shopping', staff ask the children what shop they buy certain foods from. Children talk about different fruits and where they grow and discuss what they have inside them, for example 'a plum has a stone'. Children enjoy listening to stories such as 'getting to grandad bear' and singing familiar songs such as 'oranges and lemons'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning about their own culture through planned activities and practices incorporated into the nursery routine, for example, prayers before snack time. In addition the nursery have regular celebrations to acknowledge the festivals throughout the year. Children are learning about other cultures through planned topics such as 'families around the world', when they find out about languages spoken, food eaten and weather in other countries.

Children generally behave well, they are learning to be kind to one another, share and take turns. Staff give clear explanations to children when they display unwanted behaviour to help them understand as to why the behaviour is unkind. For example, staff explain they have made their friend sad and they must be gentle. Staff praise children for their achievements, when they do well or are kind to their friends, which promotes their self esteem and promotes positive behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

General information is available on the parents notice board such as the registration certificate and some of the policies and procedures, for example, the complaints procedure. A board is displayed showing photos of staff members and their role within the nursery. In addition newsletters are regularly sent out to share information and invite parents and grandparents to

forth coming celebrations. Parents state they are happy with the care provided and they like the friendly, caring staff and nurturing environment.

Partnership with parents whose children receive funding is satisfactory. They are given some information on the Foundation Stage curriculum and the policies and procedures, however, not all are easily accessible to parents. Once a year staff meet with parents to discuss their child's progress and share their assessment file and samples of their work. A list of themes/topics is given to parents each term and a list of activities that children have taken part in is displayed.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and Management is satisfactory. The nursery have systems in place to monitor and evaluate the education programme provided, however, they are not fully effective. Staff receive appraisals and have opportunities to attend training, for example, behaviour management, special education needs and child protection. Staff meetings are held at the beginning of each term in addition staff meet prior to the start of each session to go through the activities planned. Staff are generally deployed effectively and they are clear on their roles and responsibilities, which enables the routine to run smoothly.

All of the required records, policies and procedures are in place and up to date. The staff team are consistent and the majority of which hold a relevant childcare qualification. They work well as a team and are given additional roles and responsibilities within the nursery which promotes their professional development. The setting meets the needs of the children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the previous care inspection the setting were asked to increase opportunities for children to choose toys and equipment independently, allowing them to explore and investigate spontaneously. The nursery now have a trolley of creative materials which they have out regularly to allow children to make their own choices about what they make.

In relation to areas for improvement following the education inspection, the nursery were asked to develop in three areas as follows; to provide more opportunities for children to make links between sounds and letters and explore writing for a variety of purposes through play. Staff now make a point of sounding out the first letter of children's names at snack time when giving out their snack. They also provide paper and pencils in the shop and chalk is out on a regular basis.

The nursery were asked to develop short term planning to make better use of observations of children demonstrating clear learning intentions and include sufficient details to make the best use of the activities. The staff now use evaluation sheets where they assess if activities have worked well to use for future planning. Weekly planning sheets contain basic information and staff verbally discuss how the activities planned for each morning prior to children arriving.

Finally the setting were asked to provide ample chances for children to explore technology through everyday objects ask questions investigate and find out how things work. The nursery bring in everyday objects to the home corner such as battery operated computer and weighing scales and have discussions with children as to how things work.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the previous 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.

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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):

- undertake risk assessments on the equipment used by the children and the activities they take part in
- review the organisation of the session/activities to ensure children's individual needs are met
- plan and provide activities to help young children's development in line with aspects and approach described in the 'Birth to three matters'

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):

- improve the systems in place for observation and assessment and provide children with suitable challenges to promote all areas of learning
- improve the systems in place for monitoring the quality of education provided
- provide more detailed information on the Foundation Stage curriculum and make policies and procedures more accessible to parents

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