

Mudchute Farm Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY283985
Inspection date	18 February 2008
Inspector	Sarah Johnson / Deirdra Keating
Setting Address	Mudchute Farm & Park, Pier Street, London, E14 3HP
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Registered person	Mudchute Association
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mudchute Farm Day Nursery was registered in 2004. It is managed by the Mudchute Park and Farm Association Management Committee, part of which is made up of parents of children at the nursery. It operates from a building within the grounds of Mudchute Farm & Park within the Isle of Dogs, East London. A maximum of 76 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18.30 for 51 weeks a year, closing for Christmas, New Year and bank holidays. All children share access to three secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 74 children from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area and attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a number of children who have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 24 members of staff. Of these, 19 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted as they play in a very clean and hygienic environment where good personal hygiene is encouraged throughout the daily routine. Children are taught the importance of washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating. For example, staff take time to demonstrate to children how to rub their hands together and children can easily access the facilities provided, including liquid soap dispensers and automatic air dryers. Staff help younger children to use tissues when they need to wipe their noses and older children automatically place used tissues into the bin. Throughout the day staff follow good cleaning routines to ensure all areas remain very clean. For example, staff routinely clean the areas used for sleeping and nappy changing areas are maintained to very hygienic standards. In addition, staff remove their outdoor shoes and wear slippers when visiting the baby room to ensure children's health is promoted further. Younger children sleep comfortably in cots or on mattresses with clean bedding which is washed daily. Staff respect the children's individual sleeping routines and monitor sleeping babies at all times.

Good procedures are followed by staff to ensure children receive effective care should they have an accident or become unwell. For example, clear records are kept when medicine is administered to children and information about accidents is also recorded and a photocopy passed on to parents. However, children's health is not fully promoted as the accident records are not always signed by parents. The setting supports children's individual medical needs by ensuring that several members of staff have completed first aid training for infants and young children.

Throughout the day, children help themselves to drinks of water from their own easily recognisable flasks. They enjoy a nutritious selection of mid-morning and mid-afternoon snacks such as crackers with cheese, soup with fresh bread, fresh fruit and vegetable sticks. Meal times are enjoyable sociable times where children sit together to enjoy a range of freshly prepared hot meals including shepherd's pie or cheesy pasta with a choice of vegetables, baked beans, potato wedges, salad and bread. Children's individual dietary needs are given high regard as staff obtain information from parents which is displayed prominently in each playroom and the kitchen for easy reference by all staff.

Children have good levels of energy and enjoy free-flow access to three inviting and well-equipped outdoor play areas. They busy themselves with a range of activities that develop their physical strength and co-ordination, contributing to a healthy lifestyle. For example, they pedal a range of ride-on toys, climb on large apparatus and balance as they walk carefully across the large netting bridge.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and child-friendly environment which contributes positively to their care, learning, play and ability to stay safe. The nursery walls are decorated with bright and colourful displays, posters and photographs, creating a stimulating environment for the children. There is a light and airy feel to the setting as natural light pours through the windows. The staff have carefully considered the layout of the playrooms to ensure children are offered good space and freedom to move around and spread out in their play. Sofas, bean bags and carpet

areas are provided in each of the three playrooms, enabling children to sit and relax in comfort. Child-friendly toilet facilities are easily accessed by the children and these include child-height doors which offer children privacy whilst enabling staff to maintain visual supervision. Children enjoy a good range of play resources and toys which meet their different ages, interests and stages of development. All resources and play equipment are effectively organised to foster children's choice, with many set out at the children's level or stored in low-level units.

Children's safety is given priority as staff follow effective safety procedures and conduct good daily risk assessments of indoor and outdoor areas. The nursery is very secure as the main gate and external doors are locked and a Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) system is in place to ensure only known adults can enter the premises. Procedures for collection of children ensure only authorised adults can collect them from the setting. For example, parents and staff agree on a password which is passed on if someone different is due to collect their children. Children are protected further as effective fire safety precautions are in place such as a clearly displayed fire evacuation procedure and routine fire drills which are practised with the children. Children are developing an understanding of how to keep themselves safe. For example, staff remind them of the dangers of running indoors and they talk about safety during topics such as 'people who help us'.

Most staff have completed training in safeguarding children and they demonstrate good knowledge of the signs of possible abuse and understand their responsibilities in protecting children. An overview of the child protection policy is displayed in each of the playrooms to ensure all staff have the information they need to address and deal with concerns effectively. Consequently, children are well protected from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well when they arrive as they are welcomed by caring staff and they are clearly reassured by the familiar daily routine. A group of children quickly forms when staff spontaneously sit down on the carpet to sing cheerful songs. The children sing along, requesting their favourite rhymes and joining in with the associated actions. Staff are motivated by what children say and do and are consistently introducing children to new ideas and experiences. Children proudly take responsibility for tasks within the daily routine, helping to develop their independence. For example, they enjoy using cloths to wipe the outdoor equipment and eagerly sweep the floor with a brush. Children's learning is extended well and staff have high expectations of what children can achieve. For example, when staff notice children collecting balls, they encourage them to name each of the different colours and set them the task of finding a blue ball next.

Younger children receive good levels of support as the staff use their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to inform their planning for children in this age group. For example, clear planning of daily activities is displayed, which is linked to all aspects of the framework and highlights methods for facilitating young children's development. Younger children are fully encouraged to build on their communication skills as the staff patiently listen and respond with enthusiasm to their developing speech. For example, younger children are given time to communicate their choices when they are asked what they would like to eat for lunch. The setting offers treasure baskets containing a range of interesting resources such as wooden household utensils, silk scarves and bottles filled with coloured water, all of which stimulate children's senses and exploratory play. Children enjoy messy activities. For example, they freely use their hands to explore trays of sand, water and cornflour gloop mixture. Babies and younger

children experience good continuity in the care they receive as staff fully respect each child's individual routines.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Curriculum plans are topic-based and broken down into weekly plans which are clearly linked to the stepping stones. Staff are all encouraged to add their ideas to the plans using observations and evaluation of children participating in activities.

Consequently, plans are linked to children's current interests and individual needs and are clearly documented for staff to follow. Staff maximise on children's learning potential well by supporting children in activities of their preference and choice. Children in the role play area have the quality of their play and learning enhanced by sensitive support from staff. Children with English as an additional language are supported well by knowledgeable staff who use a range of resources to ensure that all children can make good progress towards the early learning goals. Activities are skilfully adapted by staff who tailor a story to meet the needs of all the children in the group.

Children's behaviour is good throughout the day. Good, effective use of time allows children a wide range of choice throughout most of the day. Children move freely between the spacious indoor and outdoor areas. They clearly enjoy the freedom of movement and choice that is offered through the stimulating and varied activities on offer. Regular assessment of children's progress is made by key worker staff who use observations and examples of children's work to ensure that children continue to make good progress. Children's next steps are generally highlighted on observation sheets and used to inform future plans. Some information is gained on admission from parents, however, this does not give enough detail to gauge children's starting points.

Children are motivated to learn through exciting and challenging activities which capture their interests. Staff encourage children to manage developmentally-appropriate tasks for themselves which promotes their personal independence. Children are self-assured as they form relationships with adults and peers, they confidently approach adults and staff initiating conversation and asking questions. Children's achievements are valued and celebrated by staff who display their efforts giving children a sense of pride. Cultural festivals and traditional days are planned for and children are encouraged to respect the views and beliefs of others.

Children's language development is good, they take turns to speak and listen as they identify parts of their home lives with aspects of a story. The room has many labels and prompts encouraging children to know that text has a meaning. A writing area houses a range of mark-making equipment displayed for children at a table. However, this is not available in other areas of the room or the outside area. Children enjoy looking at books in the colourful and comfortable book corner which houses a good range of books and cosy cushions. Staff are readily available to read books with the children. As a result, children regularly spend time enjoying stories and looking at books. Children are making good progress in their mathematical development. They enjoy a good range of colourful equipment and activities which enable them to learn about shape, space and weight. Colourful construction bricks encourage them to problem solve as they fit the pieces together. Children are starting to use mathematical language as they sort plastic bears into order according to their size.

There are many opportunities for children's creative and imaginative play. Children engage well in imaginary play where they have time to become engrossed in their game. They co-operate

well with one another and staff support their play by allowing space and time to develop their imaginary ideas and act out their roles. Children happily recreate many roles and experiences that are familiar to them. A three-seated wheeled toy becomes a bus as children improvise during an imaginary game. Children use a good range of musical instruments where staff help them explore different sounds and tempo.

Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them through a range of different activities. A well-designed outside area enables children to explore natural materials outside in the fresh air where their interest and curiosity is enhanced. Children have good opportunities to explore through messy play experiences where they can compare differences and observe growing things. Coloured foam, sand, bark, water and soil give children tactile and hands-on experiences. Children regularly cook and make their own play dough which they manipulate using a range of tools and equipment. Children display good dexterous skills as they use scissors and glue, they demonstrate increasing control as they carefully thread string through small holes. The well-resourced outdoor area houses a wide range of appealing climbing and balancing equipment which enables children to develop their physical abilities well. Children confidently use wheeled and push-along toys outside. They negotiate space well as they ride around showing care for one another and their environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children play in an inclusive environment where staff value each child's individuality. Staff help children to develop a good sense of belonging as they display photographs of the children throughout the nursery and provide children with their own drawer and peg for keeping their personal belongings safe. A designated member of staff oversees the implementation of the setting's clear written policy for equal opportunities. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. They learn to value differences in people and begin to talk about diversity as they look at pictures and play with resources that reflect people of different ages and from different cultures.

The nursery has a positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and children with additional needs are welcomed into the nursery. A designated member of staff oversees this area and has attended specific modular training. Practitioners work well with other professionals and utilise ongoing support from the local authority. There are good procedures in place for the close observation of children who require additional support. Practitioners work closely in partnership with parents and carers throughout this process. This complies fully with the required code of practice and is underpinned by clear and concise policies. Consequently, support is carefully planned for each child meeting their individual needs. This promotes equality of opportunity and inclusive activities for all children in the nursery.

Children's behaviour is very good as they remain engaged in the activities offered and learn how to play well together. A number of positive strategies are used consistently by the staff team to ensure children are learning clear boundaries. They skilfully distract children by offering them alternative activities when they are struggling to share resources and help them to learn the importance of being kind and helpful by rewarding good behaviour. For example, children receive stickers when they help to tidy up. Children respond well when they are prompted to recall the simple list of golden rules which are listed in an eye-catching and colourful display at their level.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. New parents are welcomed in by friendly approachable staff who take time to explain the importance of play in children's learning. Parental involvement is proactively encouraged regarding children's progress and records are regularly shared with parents. Daily feedback sheets are provided which keep parents well informed about children's care and activities. A very good range of information is displayed on an informative notice board which parents clearly refer to. Parents are given good support regarding children's stages of development. For example, staff take time to provide practical ideas for parents to use with their children at home. An up to date and clear complaints policy is in place to ensure parents are informed of how to raise a concern. Parents speak highly of the nursery and the high-quality care that their children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The premises are well organised. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximise play opportunities for children. Children are clearly settled and at home in the nursery, they confidently initiate their own play and learning. Good deployment and recruitment of staff ensures that good ratios are maintained and contingency arrangements are in place in the event of staff illness. This ensures that children are supported well by safe and suitable adults that have had all necessary procedures and checks to ensure children's safety and well-being. Children's care, learning and play is supported well by the policies and procedures within the operational plan. Arrival and departure times of staff and children are managed by staff who oversee this manually using an electronic locking system. Parents are asked to sign children in and out which corresponds with a printed register of children who are booked in. However, children's safety is potentially compromised as the registering system for children and staff is not consistently maintained and does not provide an accurate record of hours of attendance.

The leadership and management is good. The group is led by a management structure that is overseen by a management committee, part of which is made up of parents of children at the nursery. Staff work very well to form a strong team. They deputise effectively in one another's absence and ensure that the aims of the setting are reflected in all aspects of practice. Job descriptions and an effective appraisal process ensure staff are all aware of their roles and responsibilities and training needs are identified. Staff development plans reflect the setting's commitment to ongoing training that is tailored to the needs of the children who attend the nursery. Staff work very closely with an early years advisory teacher to ensure that teaching methods are effective and inclusive. The staff team make time to reflect on their practice and highlight areas for development. This ensures that the nursery continues to grow and improve. All required documents and consents are in place to ensure children are looked after according to their parents' wishes.

Overall the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to: develop procedures to ensure volunteers are aware of their role and responsibilities; develop staff's awareness and understanding of consistent behaviour-management strategies; ensure that the routine in the toddler room meets the needs of the children and to plan lunch and snack times to offer the children first-hand experiences and promote their independence.

The provider has considered and made secure improvements in each of these areas. For example, children's care is promoted as they interact with students and volunteers who receive an induction and relevant written information when they first join the setting. The staff team have good understanding of a range of positive ways to support behaviour, contributing positively to children's good behaviour whilst at the setting. The care of younger children in the toddler room is well organised as staff are deployed effectively to offer good levels of direct care and support to children. In addition, lunch and snack times have been reviewed to offer increased opportunities for children to make choices and be independent. For example, the setting operates a rolling snack programme so children can decide when to have snack and they are involved in choosing which food they would like to eat.

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 written accident records are consistently signed by parents
- develop the registration system to provide an accurate record of hours of attendance for both staff and children.

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 opportunities for children to mark-make in all areas
- develop information gained on admission to determine children's starting points.

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