

Pillar Box Gardens Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY152556
Inspection date	03 April 2008
Inspector	Liz Corr
Setting Address	49 Fairfield Road, Bow, London, E3 2QA
Telephone number	0208 983 7431
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Registered person	Pillar Box Nurseries Ltd
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Pillar Box Gardens Nursery opened in 2001. It operates from a large Victorian House in Bow in the London borough of Tower Hamlets. The premises have been converted to house the nursery which is on two floors and consists of five rooms, children's toilets, a kitchen, an office and staff room. A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 19.00 for 49 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 29 children aged three months to three years on roll. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel in to work in and around the London area.

The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight members of staff seven of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years service in Tower Hamlets.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean environment where staff carry out appropriate health and hygiene procedures. Hygienic nappy changing routines are practised by staff who use separate disposable gloves and aprons for each child. Hygienic practices such as removing outdoor shoes and providing individual bedding further protects children. Children's hands are washed regularly however, there are no clear routines in place for more able children to practise personal hygiene. A separate area is available for older children to wash their hands independently but is not used regularly. A clear hygiene procedure is in place however, staff do not always follow this. Consequently, after lunch staff sometimes use paper towels or tissues to clean children's faces instead of flannels.

Children's health is generally well promoted. A clear written sickness procedure is in place and shared with parents. As a result, parents are contacted and asked to collect their children if they become unwell at the setting. Permissions are provided by parents for the administration of medication at the setting. However, staff sometimes appear to be unsure of the procedure if senior members of staff are not available to oversee this. An appropriate number of staff are qualified in first aid and sound procedures are followed for the recording of accidents that occur at the setting and in the home.

Children enjoy a range of healthy and well balanced snacks and meals. Suitable systems ensure a member of staff qualified in food hygiene prepares the food. Children are learning to be independent as older children are able to feed themselves. They enjoy their lunch and eat well. Children sit together at meal times however, the organisation of high chairs means that babies are unable to see each other and develop social skills. Older children sit together during their meals however, space is restricted and therefore staff are unable to sit with them and make this a more relaxed and social occasion.

Children enjoy regular opportunities for fresh air and to develop their physical skills as they are taken into the enclosed garden. Babies sit comfortably on soft mats as staff provide a sufficient selection of play equipment to encourage them to crawl and stand with support.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children and parents are welcomed into a generally safe and well maintained environment. The premises are regularly risk assessed which helps to create an environment where children can explore and take risks while being appropriately supervised. However, the door to the kitchen has not been appropriately risk assessed. This poses a risk to children's safety. The premises are brightly painted and systems in place for programmed redecoration. However, the paint on the skirting boards in one room is chipped in places. Children benefit from the organised routines for checking the temperature of the rooms throughout the day to promote children's comfort and well being. Flexible routines ensure children can rest when needed and they are regularly monitored throughout their sleep time.

Children are protected from strangers by good monitoring systems at the entrance to the building. Parents and visitors can only gain access when they have been securely identified. The attendance of staff, children and visitors is well recorded including, times of arrival and

departure. Regular emergency evacuations take place. This ensures that staff are familiar with the procedure for keeping children safe in an emergency.

Children are safeguarded from abuse and neglect as staff have a sound knowledge of child protection guidelines. The procedure is regularly updated and is in line with the local Safeguarding Board guidelines. However, the procedure for dealing with allegations against staff does not contain the correct guidelines for contacting the investigating agency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from an appropriate settling-in procedure which generally works well as children are allocated a key worker to help them feel secure. One child is obviously delighted when they see their key worker enter the room. The child is happy to change activities as they follow this member of staff to a painting activity. However, some staff do not always have a clear strategy when parents leave their child for the first time. As a result personal care routines such as nappy changing are carried out by other staff and children become unsettled and upset. Sound systems are in place to reevaluate the settling-in period if a child is not ready to be left at the nursery and parents are consulted regarding any changes.

Positive relationships are evident between babies and their key worker who are aware of their individual needs. Babies enjoy age story time as they sit in a small group with good adult support. Staff encourage their interest as they show them photographs of babies in everyday situations, saying to them 'this baby is sucking their thumb, you don't suck your thumb, do you?' and 'ooh look at this baby having a hug, shall we all have a hug'. They smile and laugh as staff sing familiar songs to them and encourage their participation during 'if you're happy and you know it'. They are praised as they join in with actions, clapping their hands and nodding their heads. Staff plan an appropriate curriculum based on the Birth to three matters' frame work. Children are provided with a satisfactory selection of play equipment and activities. Creative and malleable experiences are programmed into the daily plan however, this is usually restricted to one activity a day. Babies have some opportunities to access natural materials to stimulate their senses and encourage them to explore however, in general they play with plastic toys and have limited opportunities to make choices as there is no low level storage.

Older children enjoy opportunities to sing and dance to music, their enjoyment is increased as staff join in with them. They happily build the train track with adult support and are learning the letters of the alphabet as staff involve them in large alphabet puzzles. They are beginning to play imaginatively with dolls and prams in the home corner area. Older children have opportunities to make choices from the sufficient supply of play equipment. However, during table top activities younger children's mobility is restricted and they unable to make choices or move away from the table without adult support. Group singing and story times are not always suitably organised to meet the children's needs. During a story session children's attention is distracted as staff organise the collection of their bottles and cups and talking loudly to them and each other. Consequently, the children become restless and start to move away from the group.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are generally happy and settled at the setting as staff are aware of their individual needs and backgrounds. Photographs are displayed depicting the children's family members which helps children feel valued as individuals. They access an appropriate range of toys and equipment which help to develop a positive image of themselves and the wider world. They take part in regular celebrations to promote their understanding of different religions and cultures such as, Easter and Eid. Appropriate systems are in place to ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are identified and supported.

Children are generally well behaved and relate well to staff and each other. They are regularly praised and encouraged throughout the day which helps to promote their self esteem and good behaviour. However, during some group sessions older children sometimes become restless if the group is too large or not well managed. Older children do not always receive appropriate support when they are upset by acknowledging their feelings. Staff sometimes use distraction techniques such as singing which does not help to calm them.

Children benefit from a good relationship between staff and parents. Parents are warmly welcomed each day and are able to telephone the nursery to talk to their key workers if they have any concerns. A parents group has recently been developed to encourage more involvement at the setting and to give them an opportunity to discuss relevant issues. One parent expressed their satisfaction with the nursery including, their relationship with the key worker. The parent is pleased with the daily exchange of information about their child. A clear complaints procedure is provided and includes details of the regulator.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that staff are suitable to care for children. Most staff hold a relevant childcare qualification and all staff have opportunities to extend their knowledge through further training. A full range of policies and procedures are in place and regularly updated to promote the smooth running of the setting, with the exception of the child protection procedure which does not contain the correct guidelines for reporting to the investigating agency.

The setting benefits from a qualified and suitably experienced manager. However, the organisation of activities and meal times do not fully meet the children's needs. Staff are unable to sit comfortably with the older children to promote a social and relaxed atmosphere. Staff working with babies are not always fully prepared at lunch time. Drinks and flannels are not always within easy reach, which does not promote a relaxed environment. Group sessions are sometimes too large and children become distracted and wander away from the group.

Good systems ensure a deputy manager and group leaders are in place to oversee the day to day management of each room. This works generally well but there are occasions when staff are unclear of procedures for individual children's needs when senior staff are not in the room.

Staff have a generally good understanding of health and safety guidelines as they closely monitor children at sleep time, regularly check temperatures in the rooms and closely supervise the arrival of visitors to the setting. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to develop the outdoor area as a further resource and ensure that safety checks for premises and equipment were put in place.

Children use the outdoor area on a regular basis to enable them to develop their physical skills and to promote good health. The introduction of a system for rigorous risk assessments and daily checks throughout the nursery ensures the children's welfare is safeguarded at all times.

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

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.

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):

- improve opportunities for children to develop independence and personal hygiene skills by using the bathroom for hand washing and ensure that babies receive appropriate personal care in line with the hygiene procedure
- improve the systems for the organisation of information for children's individual allergies and medical needs
- improve safety by ensuring children are unable to gain access to kitchen
- improve opportunities for all children to make choices, gain independence skills and improve opportunities for natural and messy play
- improve the organisation of the settling-in procedure, meal times and group sessions to fully meet children's needs

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