

Hanover Play School At EGA School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY268459
Inspection date	07 July 2008
Inspector	Judith Reed

Setting Address	EGA School, 2 Donegal Street, London, N1 9QT
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Registered person	EGA School
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care, Crèche
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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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hanover playschool and crèche at Platform 1 was registered in 2003 and is managed by a voluntary committee. It operates from a self contained building in the grounds of Elizabeth Garrett Anderson School in Islington N1 and serves families living or studying in the local area. A maximum of 14 children may attend the group at any one time. The group operates five days a week during term time from 09:15 to 15:30. Children have access to a playroom and enclosed outdoor areas.

There are currently 23 children aged from one year to under five years on roll. Of these, five children receive funding for early education. The setting currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The committee employs five members of staff to work with the children. Of these, four hold suitable early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are healthy as they enjoy regular opportunities for physical exercise. They use the outdoor play area throughout the year and children take every opportunity to play outside. They ride on sit and ride toys and move them around the area. Some children climb onto the equipment and slide down the slide. Children take turns on the equipment. Later in the day staff offer children balls to kick. Children learn to balance and kick the ball into a goal area. A further garden area has recently been renovated and made suitable for children's play. Children relish the opportunity to use this area and walk along balancing beams or wooden stepping stones. Children are taken to local parks for more extensive physical play opportunities and they also benefit from weekly yoga bugs sessions in the community centre.

Children benefit from a healthy diet and have nutritious snacks and meals. Drinks of water are available throughout the sessions. At snack time children choose drinks of water or milk. They are offered prepared slices of fruit from a plate. Children walk to the other side of the school for their cooked lunches. A school cook prepares healthy meals as agreed with the play school manager. Children consume spaghetti bolognese with sweet corn, which is served onto plates by the staff. There is always an alternative option for vegetarians. A plate of bread and butter is also offered around the group, and then pudding of fresh fruit salad and evaporated milk. Staff are fully aware of children's individual needs and appetites. Many children take the opportunity to have second helpings.

Children are protected by some good hygiene routines. Children use the toilets independently and they are reminded to wash their hands afterwards. Staff remind children to wash their hands before meals and snacks, as well as after being in the garden. Individual hand drying towels are available. Staff wear gloves when changing nappies, however, they do not always wash their hands in between changing children's nappies and children may be at risk from cross infection. Staff are trained in first aid matters and a suitable first aid kit is available. Parents complete forms giving permission for emergency medical advice or treatment. All necessary documentation is in place to record accidents and medication administered and parents sign as required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure and safe environment. Staff ensure the outer door is kept locked and parents knock for entry. Parents sign their children into the premises as they enter. Children use a playroom with a separate toilet and changing area off to one side. There is also a separate office with a kitchen and staff toilet. The well fenced and secure outside play area is divided into two. One area has a soft play surface and may be used all year around. The other new area has grass and a bark pathway. Children use this area for gardening as well as play activities. A wildlife area has also been created for children to observe insects and birds.

Children are safe as the staff team is very aware of safety issues. Stair gates are in place in the outer doors as well as the office doorway. Health and safety posters are displayed to ensure staff remain vigilant at all times. Risk assessments are completed on all activities and outings. Regular fire drills are held in conjunction with the school. Staff are fully aware of their duties

when carrying out evacuation and discuss the process afterwards to improve practice, however, they do not currently keep written records.

Children use a wide selection of toys and equipment. Staff set out toys according to the children attending and children have a free choice throughout the sessions. They ensure equipment is safe and suitable for those present and older children are made aware of safety issues regarding small items. A programme for toy cleaning is in place and staff are very aware of ensuring toys are hygienic.

Children are safeguarded by a knowledgeable staff team. Staff are aware of child protection procedures and would report issues to the manager. All staff are aware of their professional duty to safeguard children. Parents are made aware of the child protection procedure in the policies folder.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are personally welcomed into the play school by familiar staff. They enter happily and settle into activities quickly. Children's photographs are displayed at low level where they can see them easily. Young children look at photographs of themselves and staff look at the pictures with parents. They talk about the pictures and help the children recall what they have done. Their work is also displayed which helps to improve children's self esteem. All children join in circle time and most are aware of the days of the week. Children answer the register when their name is called. Staff know all the children very well and are very aware of their individual needs. Very young children rest in their own pushchairs after lunch. Staff carefully put their coats on and wrap blankets around their legs before putting the pushchair just outside the open door in the outdoor play area. An area of the play room is used in inclement weather.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff know the children well and ensure their ongoing development is encouraged. Staff meet with parents when children start and discuss their starting points. They complete documentation to begin building each child's personal record folder. While children attend the play school they are targeted approximately every three months. At that time parents are invited to discuss their children with the staff and more formal observations are completed. These records are filed in children's personal folders and build into a complete record of their time in play school. Staff use these records to form the basis of plans for the coming week. Planning is currently unclear and linked to target children's requirements only. Staff do not ensure learning targets are identified for all children attending the setting and they do not use the Foundation Stage curriculum as a basis for plans. However, as staff know the children well they ensure progress is made in most areas of learning. Children experience free play activities throughout the day. They choose what they wish to do and often ask for equipment which is not already available. Staff are involved with the children throughout the sessions.

Children are creative and join in singing activities at circle time. They sing and join in actions for 'Incy Wincy Spider' as well as 'The Wheels on the Bus'. Children also ask for music and movement tapes to be played and briefly dance along with the music. They set up their own imaginative scenarios when they wear police and fire fighters helmets, using toy mobile phones. Children take part in printing activities. They choose their own paint and shapes for printing.

Some children make regular patterns with the shapes. Children are praised as they await their turn. They proudly show their art work and talk about what they have made.

Children enjoy the current theme of growing and staff link this into many activities. Children count the number of hand shapes alongside the measuring chart to see how tall they are. Staff measure on the chart and show children how tall they are with a ruler. Staff talk about how tall the children are and who has grown since the last measurement. They ask children who is tallest and children observe each other. Photographs show children have joined in spotting numbers which are around the neighbourhood. For example, they have seen speed signs, house numbers and registration numbers on cars. Photographs also show children join in playing maths games and number puzzles.

Children listen carefully to stories. The manager reads an exciting and scary story to the whole group. She holds the children's interest in the book by skilfully using her voice to make the story more exciting. Children enjoy looking at books on their own. They help themselves to books from the extensive library and turn the pages to carefully look at the pictures. Children take the opportunity to use pencils and paper in an office area. Some children doodle and practise writing skills, while others are able to write their names and form clear letters. Children are encouraged to find their names on a chart and link sounds to letters.

Children join in planting and growing activities linked to the theme for the half term. They have planted several different varieties of vegetable including radishes, carrots, tomatoes, strawberries and potatoes. Children help to care for the plants by joining in watering. Children are aware that plants need water to help them grow. Children are skilled at using the computer and games machine. They ask staff to turn on the computers and staff sit with children and use positional language when discussing the game. Children operate another computer themselves. They move the mouse confidently to put a tractor together and move it around. Children remove the disc when they wish to change the programme. Children also take part in activities linked to the wider world, for example, celebrating various festivals and talking about other cultures.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated as individuals and staff know the children and their families well. Staff welcome children from a number of cultures and ensure they are aware of the whole community. A notice board near the entrance is used to display information about festivals and work by the children on Chinese New Year and Diwali. Posters around the setting depict children from around the world and children have the opportunity to taste foods from other cultures. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Many toys reflect diversity including small world characters, dressing up clothes, home corner equipment and books.

All children are valued and staff know their individual needs well. Staff make additional observations of children with additional needs. These are discussed with parents and advice is sought from outside agencies when required. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported by the caring staff team. All staff take care to speak clearly with children who have English as an additional language. They use their hands to describe actions such as eating and make every effort to communicate and help the children feel welcome.

Children behave well and know the routine of the play school. They are encouraged to share the equipment and learn about taking turns. Staff are good role models and praise and encourage the children throughout their activities. The manager makes up her own stories to give examples

and show children how to behave. All staff know the children well and are aware of their individual behaviour issues. Staff discuss behaviour management strategies during meetings and also share ideas with parents.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents state that they are very happy with the play school and communication is very good. Staff have a positive attitude towards parents. Staff listen to parents, they are helpful and remain professional at all times. Parents are involved in their child's learning through the regular target child meetings. They feel this works well and it is good to have the opportunity to discuss their child's development regularly with staff. Parents feel that their children are making positive progress and like to contribute to their child's records. Parents receive regular informative newsletters which include the themes as well as other useful information. A folder of policies is available to parents at all times and includes the complaints procedure. The local community is involved in the play school and advice is sought from the police community support officer when required.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The play school is well organised and staff ensure parents sign their children in and out of the setting. An additional register is completed with the children during the sessions. Children are busy and involved in activities during the sessions. Staff are deployed around the play school as required and work closely as a team, supporting each other as necessary. Additional staff are available during lunch periods and when children are taken out and the manager ensures ratios are met at all times. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Children's documentation is stored confidentially in the office. Children's records are stored in a locked drawer and are available throughout the day. A full range of policies and procedures are available to staff and parents.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The staff team work together well. The committee and management team follow appropriate recruitment procedures when appointing new staff. They ensure all necessary checks are completed. Induction is completed with new staff as well as students attending the play school. Staff have informal discussions each morning before the session. They also meet more formally twice a term. The manager's office door is always open and she is available to everyone. Annual appraisals are carried out and training needs are discussed. Support and guidance is provided by the local authority advisory teacher. Evaluation of the provision is carried out by the whole staff team. The manager does not currently evaluate the planning to ensure the learning outcomes for children are met and that all areas of learning are included equally.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to obtain written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment, to ensure parents are aware of the complaints procedure as well as the child protection procedures.

Staff hold written permission for emergency medical advice or treatment for each child. This is obtained with the registration information when children start. A full range of policies and procedures are available to parents including the complaints procedure and the child protection procedures.

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

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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):

- carry out written evaluation of fire evacuation drill
- ensure staff wash their hands after carrying out each nappy change

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):

- ensure that all staff can implement children's identified learning targets into their everyday practise across all areas and aspects of learning
- ensure planning effectively covers all areas of learning

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