

The Tree House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY357805
Inspection date	14 August 2008
Inspector	Julia Louise Crowley
Setting Address	2 Fords Grove, London, N21 3DN
Telephone number	07912 420 775
E-mail	emma.taaffe@thetreehousenursery.co.uk
Registered person	The Tree House
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?

The Tree House Nursery is a privately run nursery which opened in 2007. The nursery operates from two rooms on the ground floor of a converted building. It is situated in Winchmore Hill within the London Borough of Enfield. A maximum of 22 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 08:00 to 18:00, for 49 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 37 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, six children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs eight staff. Seven staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because they are cared for in premises that are well organised, hygienic and comfortable. All the required health documentation is in place and well maintained.

Children's good health is promoted in the event of an accident because several practitioners hold valid first aid training certificates. Procedures, such as practitioners wearing disposable gloves and aprons for nappy changing and serving food, sustain high levels of hygiene and help to prevent the spread of infection.

Children develop an understanding of good hygiene because they use good quality hand washing resources and facilities at appropriate times. Children automatically go to the bathroom to wash their hands before snack time and lunch. There are visual aids throughout the nursery supporting children's learning, for example, the 'wash your hands before eating' poster outside the bathroom. However, access to tissues is not always readily available to the children and, consequently, children's ability to prevent the spread of germs is not consistently supported.

Children are well nourished. They enjoy a wide range of home-made meals and snacks with plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables included in the menus. For example, children can enjoy roasted Mediterranean vegetable pasta with fresh salad, chicken in mushroom sauce, and lamb with rice. Drinking water is accessible at all times and drinks are regularly offered. However, opportunities for children to increase and learn new tasks and independence at snack time are sometimes limited. For example, children lack opportunities to refill their cups and learn pouring skills and balance.

The outdoor play space provides an inviting and stimulating environment for children to learn about their bodies and have fun. Innovative wind chimes, made from curtain rings and discs, catch the light as they move in the wind. Children enjoy time with each other as children from the baby room and older children can play together outdoors. Babies and younger children benefit from regular opportunities to engage in physical activity. They make use of the outdoor play area using a range of equipment and also enjoy physical activity indoors. Indoors, they are given plenty of space to move, roll, stretch and explore the things around them. Older children engage in physical activity sessions each day, either outdoors or indoors. They use a range of equipment that supports and develops their physical control. For example, children gather to balance across the low wooden beams secured in the ground, while others excitedly see who crosses the wooden bridge of the climbing frame first.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move confidently around the warm, welcoming learning environment, both inside and out, making choices about their play. Space is well organised and used effectively to allow children opportunities to engage in a varied range of activities. The outdoor play space is used daily to provide children with an extended curriculum and to take the indoor environment outside.

Children use high quality toys and equipment that are appropriate for their age and stage of development. The rooms are welcoming to children because they are colourful and well organised. There is a sense that the rooms belong to the children as they stamp their mark on

the walls and equipment. For example, children's initial interest in rockets and space inspires a whole theme of space travel. The book area is now a spaceship covered in silver paper, while rockets are suspended from the ceiling.

Furniture is at children's height and self selection of activities and equipment is promoted. Children are able to access toys independently because resources are stored accessibly. Children access these confidently, making decisions about what they would like to play with and how they would like to spend their time.

Practitioners show a good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues, which helps them protect children from harm and neglect. The whole staff team are aware of their responsibilities regarding child protection. Good use is made of local training opportunities to ensure that knowledge is kept current and that practitioners are clear about appropriate procedures to follow if they have concerns regarding a child's welfare. Appropriate policies and procedures are in place and contact numbers are readily accessible. Children are safe because the nursery has appropriate arrival and collection procedures that ensure that children only leave with known and authorised adults. Children participate in regular emergency evacuation practices. This ensures that they develop an understanding of the actions that they should take in the event of a fire.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies and toddlers are well stimulated, as they experience different textures and materials, using all of their senses. For example, different textured and coloured fabrics hang down creating an interesting setting. Their sense of self is extremely well developed as they see photographs of themselves, carefully displayed around the walls. They learn to communicate as practitioners interact skilfully with them and encourage them to respond. They become creative through an excellent variety of sensory activities, such as playing with pasta or soap bubbles, and in small world and role play. Currently practitioners have collected items related to the Olympics, for example, a small world globe sits amongst balls, bats and flags. Children develop a love of books from an early age, as they use the well resourced book areas.

Younger children are confident in their relationships with practitioners. They sit together to enjoy lunchtime and the selected 'centre piece' on the table. This time children enjoy taking their individual names and photo cards out of the box. Practitioners are attentive and encouraging as young children begin to recognise the letter of their names. Practitioners are skilled and knowledgeable about children from birth to three and plan and provide a range of worthwhile play opportunities and activities for babies and younger children in line with their individual stage of learning and development. They successfully observe and assess individual children's stage of learning and ensure that activities are adapted to help all children make progress in line with their individual needs.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Practitioners have a good knowledge and understanding of learning. Planned focused activities are evaluated and observations and assessments on children's progress are regularly made. Information gained is effectively used to inform future planning. A flexible approach is applied to the daily routine and children have good opportunities to engage in both self-chosen and adult-led activities. Children's interest is well sustained during group activities and a calm environment is created, with children given

time and the opportunity to complete tasks in an unhurried way. Practitioners are enthusiastic in their delivery of the curriculum. They offer clear instructions and interact well with children. Consequently, children achieve regular and continuous progress in all areas of learning.

Children show a strong sense of belonging and develop good self-esteem. They enjoy looking at photographs of themselves and proudly show their displayed work. Children are interested, keen to learn and actively and purposefully engaged in activities. They play cooperatively together, show concern for others, are able to wait their turn and share tasks. Children gain confidence through support from practitioners. They enjoy being involved in group discussions, telling others about their families and home life. Their independence is fostered well as they manage their own toileting needs and take some responsibility at snack and mealtimes.

Children are starting to link sounds and letters through clear guidance given by practitioners and planned activities using a range of familiar objects beginning with the same letter. Children recognise their first names and often those of their friends. Children enjoy listening to stories and looking at books. They handle them appropriately and understand that print carries meaning. Children have easy access to writing resources and confidently access these and use them for their own purpose, for example, to write shopping lists in the home corner. Some of the children are able to independently write their names, whilst others are well supported by practitioners as they begin to form recognisable letters. They have plenty of opportunities to mark-make and practise their writing skills. However, not all labelling is clear and enabling to children's learning.

Children develop their understanding of numbers through counting in daily routines, such as the number of children present and through rhymes. Some children are able to recognise different numbers. However, sometimes opportunities to understand addition and subtraction through practical activities and discussion are not always maximised when extending children's play and language for thinking. They enjoy singing number rhymes and songs and are skilled at recognising different shapes. Resources and themed activities support children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the friendly informal relationships between practitioners and parents. Parents feel comfortable in the setting and are confident to speak with key-workers about their child's day. They feel welcome and actively involved in settling their child, assured that they are able to stay with their child as long as the child needs the reassurance of their presence. They receive good quality information about the setting in the welcome pack and regular updates in newsletters.

Children are valued and respected as individuals by practitioners who have a clear understanding of their needs and preferences. Children participate in a range of activities that promote their understanding of others within the group and the wider outside community. There are good procedures in place to identify and support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The partnership with parents is good. Strong partnerships between practitioners, parents and external agencies effectively promote children's well-being and help each child develop their full potential. Well-detailed individual education plans are produced to identify short-term targets for children. These are regularly reviewed in partnership with parents in order to assess

the progress of the child. As a result, children make significant progress in their learning and development.

Throughout the setting children are well behaved. They are happy and settled in their care environment and busy and occupied in their play. Practitioners have a clear understanding of the setting's behaviour management policy and implement this very well as part of their working practice with children. They are positive in their approach and develop children's confidence and self-esteem through warm praise and encouragement and recognition of children's efforts and achievements. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery creates an intimate and homely atmosphere where children are successfully nurtured and supported. Children benefit from the consistent care of an experienced and well-qualified staff team. Practitioners are committed to developing their skills and to constantly improving the quality of provision. They are reflective in their practice, and constantly monitor quality and make improvements, which enhance children's learning and development. Children enjoy playing in a safe and very attractive environment, where time, space and resources are used extremely effectively, to meet their needs. Effective recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are in place which ensures that children are cared for by safe, suitable and well-informed practitioners. They support children well during activities and allow them the time and space to initiate their own learning.

All the required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place, carefully stored, well organised and effectively maintained. They are regularly reviewed and are only accessed by staff, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained. The setting's range of policies and procedures are well thought out and are known by practitioners, who effectively incorporate them into their working practice with children. They are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure that they reflect current good practice and professional advice.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. Practitioners are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage curriculum and use observations and assessments effectively to evaluate how children are progressing toward the early learning goals. These are then utilised to inform future planning and specifically to identify how individual children will be helped to move on. The manager works closely with the practitioners to monitor the curriculum and the impact on children's individual progress. There are effective systems for monitoring the quality of nursery education, including regular staff appraisals and team meetings. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable: this is the first inspection since registration.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration, 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):

- improve opportunities for children to develop independence, new skills and decision making at snack time (also applies to nursery education)

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):

- provide and promote consistent opportunities for children to increase self care (also applies to childcare)
- ensure that labelling throughout the nursery is consistent, clear and enabling
- increase children's opportunities to develop an understanding of addition and subtraction through practical activities and discussion and to begin to use the vocabulary involved

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