

Mouse Hole Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY366856
Inspection date	27/01/2009
Inspector	Amanda Jane Tyson
Setting address	2a Mallinson Road, LONDON, SW11 1BP
Telephone number	01622 833 331
Email	ce@thekindergartens.com
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Mouse Hole Nursery School was first registered in 2005, and re-registered in 2008 on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The setting is situated in Battersea, south-west London and is within walking distance of the shops and transport links of Clapham Junction. A combination of Montessori and traditional teaching methods are used to promote children's learning and development. The nursery operates from a large, ground floor premises. There is no outdoor play area, but Wandsworth Common is within short walking distance.

A maximum of 23 children aged from two to the end of the early years age range may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 92 children aged from two to three years on roll altogether. Children attend a variety of morning or afternoon sessions, 09.00 to 11.45 and 12.45 to 15.15, term time only. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language. Nine staff are employed, including the manager, of which seven hold childcare qualifications ranging from a Level 3 childcare or Montessori diploma to a degree level. Two members of staff are working towards a recognised qualification.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. The staff team work exceptionally well together to provide a fully inclusive, highly stimulating, safe and secure play and learning environment. Children's welfare is safeguarded and supported through robust record keeping and a vigilant and professional staff team. Improvement is continuous and enabled by constant use of self-evaluation. Young children are making exceptionally good progress towards the early learning goals. A strong partnership between staff and parents exists and the relationship between staff and children is secure and trusting.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- improve the system for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of role play to ensure that children are provided with consistently good opportunities to act out their real and imaginary experiences

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Leadership is strong and proactive. Rigorous attention to record keeping and the use of well documented operational policies and procedures safeguards and promotes the welfare of all children. The team are well qualified and experienced and management make good use of their individual expertise and skills, such as to

lead the support of children with English as an additional language and in designating the responsibility of child protection issues. Furthermore, high priority is given to supporting staff's professional development through a thorough induction, a rolling training programme and appraisal system. Most staff have had training in paediatric first aid and management have ensured allocated time for all staff to discuss and evaluate the content of the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting operates term time only and the whole team training days take place during the school holidays. This provides an excellent forum for staff to link their developing knowledge to planning. Children's progress and development towards the early learning goals is effectively monitored and assessed and the information gathered is used well to inform and guide planning.

The setting's partnership with parents is exemplary, particularly with regards to monitoring and meeting the needs of new children settling. A daily diary goes back and forth between key workers and parents to ensure that important observations and information is shared to enable consistency and continuity of care and learning for children between their two settings. Weekly newsletters provide photographs of the children at play, along with details of the learning theme and planned related activities. This enables parents to extend children's learning with activities and discussions within the home. They regularly view children's progress and development records, attend consultation evenings with their child's key practitioner and receive a yearly developmental report. Curriculum information evenings secure parents' knowledge and understanding of the EYFS and how the setting combines Montessori teaching methods.

Staff meetings are regular and used well to review the comprehensive self-evaluation document which drives improvement through a working action plan. The effectiveness of this is very well demonstrated by the improved use of the local outdoor environment and the innovative ways in which the setting now brings children into contact with nature. However, the system for monitoring the effectiveness of activity planning in practice is not always as effective; sometimes gaps, such as in the presentation of the role play, are not noticed.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Older toddlers are highly secure, very happy and confident within the setting. This is achieved through the sensitive and individually tailored settling-in policy for new children, which takes good account of parent-child attachment issues. Effective use is made of the key-worker system to build a trusting relationship with children before a gradual leaving process begins. Teaching ideas, such as the use of the story book about a mummy owl that 'always returns' to the nest after a day of food searching, are an inspiring feature. Children demonstrate high levels of independence. The Montessori teaching apparatus, such as wooden button, zip and velcro frames help children to master practical life skills quickly. Children are polite and considerate and take an active part in caring for their environment, for example they independently water the plants using a spray and select and tidy away resources from shelving. Children's awareness of diversity is consistently raised through topological activities, such as taking part in dragon dancing during the festive period of Chinese New Year and as they access some good quality play

resources. 'Eddy Teddy' the nursery bear goes to stay with children and their families over the weekend or when they go on holiday. Through the sharing of Eddy Teddy's exploits, children learn about the lives of each other.

These young children are making remarkable progress in their learning and development because they are provided with a wide range of inspiring play activities and first-hand experiences that encourage independence and which challenge their thinking, understanding and physical skills. Children are becoming confident and articulate communicators. They sing with gusto, contribute enthusiastically to circle time discussions and enjoy quiet, undisturbed moments in the book corner telling themselves a story by interpreting the pictures, or listening to one read by staff. Opportunities for mark making are plentiful. Pre-writing skills are exceptionally well encouraged. For example, during music and dance sessions when whole arm movements are used, when they feel the pattern of sandpaper letters and make marks in cornflour and shaving foam. Children use paint brushes, chalks, crayons and pencils to make marks and tweezers to transfer small objects. This all helps to encourage pencil control. Toddlers have tremendous fun experimenting with solid shapes which vary in size. They build dens and bridges with giant soft shapes and are able to recognise and name complex shapes, such as a sphere, crescent and cube. Miniature wooden cylinders are sorted and inserted in order of diameter and height as children experiment and play with their ideas. Children count competently during singing and whilst engaged in practical and play activities.

Children enjoy parachute games and have good opportunities to practise climbing and balancing skills both inside the setting but also on outings to the nearby common and play-park. The highly inclusive programme for specialist physical activity includes a range of different sport skills, as well as music and movement. Children enjoy nutritious fruit snacks and have access to drinking water throughout the session. The foundations for children to adopt healthy lifestyle habits are being firmly laid. High quality and innovative planning brings children's learning to life. Children enjoy outings to the pet shop and Natural History Museum during the topic of animals and a wealth of first hand experiences. For example, they watched chicks hatch from eggs in the incubator, they nurtured and observed the lifecycle of the butterfly from chrysalis and caterpillar to the releasing of butterflies. They made a wormery and snail house, keep fish and visit the farm. The role play often provides superb opportunities for children to make connections between their play and real experiences, for example when it was a potting shed, vets and pet shop. However, sometimes the area is not presented or equipped to its full potential.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	1
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted.

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.