

Places for Children

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY370006
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Inspector Jeannette Waring

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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 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

Places for Children Nursery at Sherrington is part of a chain of 13 nurseries. It occupies its own rooms within Sherrington Children's Centre, which is situated within Sherrington Primary School in Charlton. It serves families from the local area and works closely with the children's centre and the school and wrap-around care is provided for up to 24 children attending the school nursery class.

The nursery has been registered since April 2008 and is included on the Early Years Register and on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register and may care for a maximum of 62 children in the early years age group. A total of 38 children are accommodated in the two nursery rooms. When providing wrap-around care, before or after school and during holiday periods, a further 24 children use the central space, which is shared with the school nursery during the school day. The nursery is open Monday to Friday 08.00 to 18.00 throughout the year with the exception of bank holidays and one week at Christmas.

There are currently a total of 49 children on roll, including a small number of children who are bi-lingual. The nursery employs nine staff to work directly with the children, including an apprentice. The manager is super-numerary. All of the staff, with the exception of the apprentice who is currently studying for her NVQ 2, hold a relevant childcare qualification. The nursery also employs a cook.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory. Children are happy, settled and secure in the bright and welcoming nursery. Staff are caring and enthusiastic in their work and demonstrate a good understanding of children's individual care needs. Children enjoy nursery and make progress in their learning, although the new observation and planning system is not yet fully effective and does not ensure that all children are sufficiently challenged. The nursery manager has used the self-evaluation process to identify some areas for improvement, but the monitoring system is not yet robust enough to identify some practice issues. Good partnership with parents, the school and the children's centre are in place and this offers families good access to a range of services.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- review staffing arrangements to ensure that there is good supervision in all areas, in particular during the lunch breaks
- ensure that all staff follow good hygiene procedures at all times in order to protect children from the risk of cross-infection
- continue to develop the self-assessment process to enable the setting to identify areas for improvement in day-to-day practice
- review the use of background music in the play rooms to ensure that this

- does not distract children from their play or unnecessarily raise noise levels
- continue to develop the observation and planning system to ensure that all children's needs and interests are supported across the full range of play provision

To fully meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- ensure that the premises are organised in a way that meets the needs of the children, in particular, review the risk assessment and ensure that the baby room is maintained at a temperature which ensures the comfort of children and staff (Suitable premises, environment and equipment)

09/08/2009

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery manager has made good progress in identifying and addressing some areas for improvement. She has reviewed the layout and organisation of space, put in place good arrangements to support partnership with parents and engaged staff in the self-evaluation process. However, she has not carried out routine observations of practice within the rooms, consequently some areas for improvement have been overlooked. For example, staffing arrangements in the baby room over the lunch break are not always good enough to ensure that the needs of all children are met.

There are good arrangements in place to safeguard children. There are robust vetting procedures in place, which are carried out centrally by the nursery head office and the nursery keeps clear records for all staff on site. All staff demonstrate a good understanding of their role in protecting children from harm or neglect and the nursery manager has a clear understanding of local procedures.

Risk assessments are carried out regularly and recorded and most hazards have been identified and minimised. However, there has been no risk assessment linked to the care of children during very hot weather, with the result that some areas are uncomfortably hot, particularly areas where young children are sleeping.

Inclusion is given a high priority at this nursery and staff provide all families with a warm welcome. Suitable arrangements are in place to provide support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The good partnerships with parents ensure that children's care needs are met and staff are beginning to share information relating to children's learning and development and to engage parents in decision making at the nursery. In addition the nursery is building good links with the children's centre and the school. For example, the nursery offers wrap-around care for children attending the school nursery class. A number of children attend before and after school, together with either a morning or afternoon session in the nursery. Information about children's

interests and achievements is shared between the school nursery teacher and the nursery staff. In addition parents are able to access training and information through the children's centre programmes.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children enjoy their time at nursery. The good settling-in process helps children to relax and they quickly learn the nursery routines. They become confident in their surroundings and older children develop independence as they help themselves to a drink, hand out meals at lunch time and as they take themselves to the bathroom. The nursery rooms are safe and well maintained and children learn how to keep their play space safe as they keep toys to a defined area and help at tidy up time. Cleaning and general hygiene routines are good and ensure that children can play safely within the rooms. However, some staff do not demonstrate a clear understanding of good hygiene practices and do not always follow nursery procedures. For example, at nappy change time and as a result there is some risk of cross-infection.

The nursery has a harmonious and inclusive atmosphere where staff treat children with respect and courtesy and, as a result, children learn to respect themselves and to appreciate each other's differences. Children are well behaved and learning to become self-disciplined. Staff patiently remind or redirect children when necessary and their calm and friendly manner presents children with a good role model.

A key person system ensures that staff know children well and are able to meet individual care needs. Staff have recently introduced a new observation and planning tool to enable them to plan activities based on children's interests and ensure that activities are planned across the six areas of learning. They observe children at play, making useful notes. The observations are clear and identify what children know and can do, and they enable staff to write meaningful assessment notes for parents. A daily or weekly focus activity is always planned and is drawn from the interests of a particular child or group of children. This activity is well supported and always has a defined learning intention. A range of other planned activities are also provided, which children access freely. Although staff play alongside children at these activities they do not always take the opportunity to vary the activity according to individual needs or to bring a clear focus to the play. As a result, some activities lack challenge for the older or more able children.

Children enjoy the lively mid-morning story time, they listen well, ask and answer questions about the text and are able to recall elements of the story. The use of nursery rhyme CD's as background music without a clearly defined purpose in nursery rooms raises noise levels and interrupts children's concentration.

Children have good opportunities for physical play in the outdoor play areas and they have recently been able to use the raised decked area so can now enjoy free-flow indoor/outdoor play. The nursery manager and cook have recently reviewed menus and children thoroughly enjoy the varied and nutritious meals. The cook

enjoys the challenge of producing healthy, well balanced meals that children enjoy so that they are encouraged to make healthy lifestyle choices. The kitchen is maintained in a scrupulously clean condition at all times.

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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	2

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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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