

Places for Children

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

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Inspector

Liz Corr

Setting address

10 Galway Street, Islington, London, EC1V 3SW

Telephone number

020 7 2513475

Email

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

Places for Children Nursery registered in August 2005 and is one of 12 nurseries run across the country by Places for Children. It operates from ground floor premises in a housing complex near Old Street station, in the London borough of Islington. Children have access to the ground and lower ground floor indoor play areas, toilets and an enclosed outside play area. The nursery opens five days a week from 08:00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks a year.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 96 children under the age of eight may attend at any one time. There are currently 66 children on roll in the early years age group. The nursery is registered to receive government funding for early education.

The nursery employs 16 members of staff, including the manager most of whom hold suitable qualifications. The nursery receives training and support from the local authority early years department.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The nursery provides a satisfactory service which generally meets the children's individual needs well. Appropriate relationships have been developed with parents which help staff to provide appropriate care for each child. Children's individual backgrounds are acknowledged and valued. Secure systems are in place to promote children's safety at the setting. The manager has recently made changes to the organisation of the staff team to promote working relationships within the team in order to benefit the children's welfare. There are systems in place to plan and evaluate children's learning however, this is not consistent throughout the nursery. The manager has identified some areas for improvement but has not developed formal systems for reflecting on practice with the staff team to identify improvements.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure fresh drinking water is available at all times
- improve the organisation of nappy changing so children are not unsettled and further develop the key person system so that the majority of the care is provided by children's key person
- improve the organisation of lunch time for older children to increase opportunities for spontaneous learning and developing their independence
- improve the organisational systems for children's developmental records to ensure they are easily accessible, consistent and regularly monitored by senior staff. Ensure that systems are developed with parents so children's learning is continued at home

- continue to develop the quality of teaching through conversations and questions to extend children's thinking, vocabulary and understanding

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are generally well safeguarded as appropriate recruitment procedures ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. A full set of policies and procedures are in place to support children's welfare and the organisation of the setting. A good complement of staff are first aid trained to ensure that children receive appropriate care in the event of an accident. Written reports of accidents are signed by parents. A clear sickness procedure is followed which means that children are cared for at home when they are unwell. Medication procedures are secure as staff ensure written consent is provided by parents and clear records are kept of each administration. Regular emergency evacuations are undertaken and these are appropriately recorded. The manager has a sound understanding of child protection issues, including how allegations of abuse made against staff would be managed.

The manager has identified some areas for improvement but has not developed formal systems for reflecting on practice with the staff team. The manager demonstrates a positive commitment to making any necessary improvements to the service. Recent changes have been introduced to promote consistent team working. The manager has recently introduced changes and has reorganised staff in order to promote team working. Although new key person systems have been organised this has left some children unsettled during the initial change over as they adjust to new staff. Furthermore, individual care routines for toddlers are not always carried out by the key person, consequently children miss out on the opportunity to develop a strong relationship with a significant adult.

Staff are currently working with the local authority to improve systems for planning and assessing children's learning. Improvements include individual planning for children and details of their initial starting points. However, there are no systems in place for senior staff to regularly check that staff are completing records appropriately. Consequently systems for completing assessments are not consistent with some staff not securely recording how children are meeting the early learning goals. Records of achievements are shared with parents twice a year. However, once records have been passed on to parents staff do not keep copies of these achievements and therefore some of the current records do not clearly identify children's progress and the next steps for their learning.

Secure relationships have been developed with parents. Appropriate information is shared with staff in order for children to receive individual care. For example, staff are well aware of children's special dietary needs or food allergies. Regular newsletters keep parents informed of any changes at the setting and the formal meetings to discuss children's development twice a year keep parents informed of their child's progress. However, there are no systems in place for involving parents in continuing their child's learning at home.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Overall, children enjoy their time at the setting. They settle well and develop good relationships with staff. Individual routines for babies are followed such as sleep and feeding times. They are cared for in a calm environment where an appropriate range of play materials and sensory experiences are provided. Children are generally well occupied throughout the day with a range of chosen and adult led activities. Toddlers enjoy singing familiar songs with staff and opportunities for creative play with paints and sponges. However, older toddlers are not always fully engaged in challenging experiences and consequently their behaviour deteriorates.

Children's health is well promoted as they are provided with healthy meals and snacks. Food is freshly cooked on the premises and children's individual dietary needs provided for. However, fresh drinking water is not readily available in between meals and snacks. Staff follow their hygiene procedures well as they change nappies appropriately and clean tables after messy play. However, staff do not always consider the individual needs of children during these routines as toddlers become upset when they are taken for nappy changes during snack times which unsettles them.

Older children enjoy opportunities for phonic work to promote their understanding of early reading and promoting their speaking and listening skills. Children take part in regular rhyme sessions where they practise the sounds of letters of the alphabet. They are developing good personal, social and emotional skills as they take part in role play sessions. Girls and boys happily play together pretending to cook for and feed their babies. They are developing language skills as they talk to each other about the strawberry medicine they will give to their babies who are not well. Older children are provided with some opportunities to develop their independence skills as they choose their own play materials and wash their hands. However, the organisation of meal times prevents children from having opportunities to practise their independence as staff serve their meals and drinks. Some staff talk to the children about what is on the menu today but in general there is little discussion and consequently children do not take part in meaningful conversations to promote their learning. Furthermore, staff do not always use effective methods and questioning to promote children's thinking, vocabulary and understanding.

Children are generally well behaved, they receive praise and encouragement throughout the day. When older children are involved in activities in the writing area they are praised for their achievements. However, due to the organisation of lunch time the older children are sometimes left waiting in between courses and can become distracted. Children are seated in two large groups and staff tend to focus on children who are not eating or those who have become distracted. Consequently, little attention is given to children who are well behaved. Older toddlers are not always fully engaged in stimulating activities which means they become distracted and their behaviour deteriorates.

The premises are appropriately organised and children can easily access play materials from low-level storage units. They have appropriate opportunities to

develop their physical skills during indoor and outdoor play sessions. The environment is effectively monitored to remove potential hazards. Babies and young toddlers eat and sleep comfortably as appropriate furniture is provided. Older children have opportunities to learn about road safety during organised activities using road safety props. Children are learning how to keep safe in an emergency as they regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure.

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?	3
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?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

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?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.