

Dulwich College Kindergarten and Infant School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY381689
Inspection date	12/03/2009
Inspector	Denys Rasmussen
Setting address	Ducks, Eller Bank, 87 College Road, LONDON, SE21 7HH
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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 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).

Description of the setting

Dulwich College Kindergarten and Infant School are part of Dulwich College and known as Ducks. It has been operating since 1992. The Kindergarten has been registered with Ofsted since 2008. It is registered on the Early Years Register. The kindergarten, based in a large detached house cares for a maximum of 52 children aged three months to three years. Currently there are 86 children on roll aged from three months to three years. Children are grouped by age in one of three rooms. There are separate sleep rooms and two bathrooms. There is an enclosed garden that has been designed specifically for young children to provide outdoor play. There are 14 staff employed to work with the children, 12 of whom have an early years qualification. The Kindergarten works very closely with the infant school and Dulwich College.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. There are excellent systems in place to ensure that children are safe and secure at all times and any additional needs are identified and supported. This ensures children's welfare is promoted successfully. Children's learning and development are supported well because staff have a sound understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and how this relates to each phase of a child's development. The partnership with parents contributes significantly to ensure the needs of all the children are met well, particularly at times of transition. Regular self-evaluation results in priorities for future development being identified and acted on demonstrating the Kindergarten's commitment to continual improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend opportunities for children to have control over their learning to further develop their creativity and critical thinking.
- continue to develop the assessment and planning cycle to clearly show the learning intentions of activities and how observations of the children inform the planning.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The Kindergarten is warm and welcoming with information for parents, photographs and children's work displayed attractively. Children settle well because of the good relationships fostered with the parents. Detailed information is gathered about individual children from parents to enable the staff to understand their needs. Staff use this information meaningfully to be aware of children's starting points to be able to offer an appropriate learning and caring environment. Parents are given good information about the service offered. They

are invited to an information evening and are presented with a slide show about how children are learning through play, discussing areas of learning and how the Kindergarten promotes these. The open door policy welcomes parents who are also encouraged to take part in activities with the children such as cooking, art and craft and outings.

There are valuable systems to monitor and evaluate the Kindergarten ensuring that practice is reflected on and reviewed. This has been supported by completing Southwark's quality assurance scheme; Pathways to Quality. A recent example of improved practice which ensures parents are encouraged and supported to exchange information with their key person at the end of the session, reveals how seriously staff value parents comments. The garden has been extensively improved to offer a stimulating and challenging outdoor experience for the children.

Children benefit from an appropriately qualified, experienced and dedicated staff group who work well together as a team. The clear recruitment procedures ensure children are cared for by appropriately vetted staff, safeguarding their welfare. The excellent management of the deployment of staff ensures ratios of staff to children are well maintained. The children have a key person who they build close attachments to, supporting their emotional development and promoting their well-being. Risk assessment is completed enabling safety measures to be put in place to protect children. The effective maintenance of all the required records along with comprehensive policies and procedures reflect the good practice; resulting in the safe and efficient management of the Kindergarten.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The key person system facilitates strong relationships to be built with the children and their families. Babies make good attachments to their key person enabling them to settle well, they are easily reassured and confidently explore their stimulating environment. Staff are knowledgeable in child development, particularly those working with the youngest children. The children are given a good variety of play opportunities which focus on their senses, movement and developing communication skills. For example, the babies enjoy climbing in and out of containers, using the corridor area to push their buggies up and down and throw balls, staring at and talking to the eye catching mobiles, singing and moving to music and being cuddled and talked to. The babies individual needs are identified well through good communication with the parents and insightful observations, ensuring the play and development opportunities offered are relevant and help them to make good progress.

Play opportunities are planned, although it is not always clear what the learning intentions are. However, all the children are supported in their learning through the provision of a wide range of interesting resources and activities which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Observations of the children, photographs and children's achievements are linked to an area of learning and next steps for learning are identified to provide a profile of children's progress. However, it is not always clear how this informs the planning. The variety of positive imagery both within play resources and displays on the walls include

photographs of the children encouraging the children to value differences and to gain a sense of belonging. Staff encourage good behaviour by praising appropriately, providing adequate support and setting realistic boundaries. The staff are polite and affectionate, setting a good example to the children. As a result, the children are happy, confident and well behaved. The children understand that the rules are in place to keep them safe. For example, not throwing rice because it might get in their eyes and sweeping up the sand from the floor in case somebody slips over. The consistent routine helps the children develop a sense of time and understand what is coming next. For example, when they hear the bell ring they stop what they are doing and begin to tidy up.

Resources are offered to promote children's creativity and independence, however the availability of resources are not yet fully exploited to extend opportunities for children to have control over their learning which would further develop their creativity and critical thinking. Staff take into account the children's interests to extend activities so that they are meaningful. For example, using a child's interest in buses. Ducklings went on a bus trip, looked at different coloured buses, looked at photographs of buses and drew their own buses. Their drawings have been added to a mural on the wall encouraging them to be proud of their work. The role play area is turned into a bus station to further extend children's interest and support their imaginative play. Children are offered interesting media to experiment with such as corn flour, baked beans, jelly and shaving foam. They learn about the world around them when they visit farms, walk around the grounds to look at nature and dig up worms in the garden. They learn about people that help them when the fire engine visits, they talk to the fire fighters, examine the hose and try on the hats.

The children enjoy participating in story time and the staff use props to engage the children. For example, reading 'Handa's surprise' the staff showed the children the fruit from the story and encouraged them to taste it. Children are confident mark makers, they paint, draw, write on the interactive white board and make their own shopping lists after playing the shopping list game. Children learn to sort, count and compare through practical activities that are offered such as compare bears, sequencing cards, matching objects and colour hunts. They complete simple puzzles with skill and talk about shapes. The children enjoy cooking activities, they examine the ingredients, follow recipes and measure quantities. They examine and describe the mixture when it is raw and compare it to when it is cooked.

Children are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They are offered a nutritious diet and benefit from having an on-site chef. Special dietary requirements are complied with ensuring children remain healthy. Children are offered fresh fruit and vegetables daily. The older children independently access drinking water from the water dispenser. Meal times are a sociable occasion helped by staff who sit and eat their lunch with the children. Fresh air, exercise and fun feature in the children's daily routine; they have daily access to a well resourced, creatively designed garden which the Kindergarten make full use of all year round. The children enjoy negotiating their bikes and scooters around the paths or simply holding their legs up and rolling down the hill in excitement. The climbing equipment is appropriately challenging and some features of the garden such as the water pump and pebbled area provide interesting areas for exploration.

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

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
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?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
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?	2
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?	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 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 registration.

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.