

Balham Nursery School & Children's Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY382475
Inspection date	03/06/2009
Inspector	Pamela Patricia Paisley
Setting address	72 Endlesham Road, LONDON, SW12 8JL
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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).

Description of the setting

Balham Nursery School & Children's Centre originally opened in 1935 and was registered in 2007 to enable children under two years to attend the nursery school. The provision was re-registered in 2008 because of a change of premises. The nursery school is part of a maintained children's centre that provides education and wrap around care. It operates from a converted house in Balham near the town centre. Children mainly come from the local area. The nursery school opens Monday to Friday from 9.00 to 15.15 the breakfast club from 07.30 to 09.00 and the after school club from 15.15 to 18.00 during school term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The premises have a ramp access, disabled toilet facilities and a lift.

The nursery school is registered on the Early Years Register to care for a maximum of 10 two-year-old children at any one time. There are currently 13 children in the early years age group on roll. The nursery employs 4 members of staff, all of whom hold an early years qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. The nursery school's policies and procedures are effective and inclusive for the children who attend. Staff ensure that the learning environment and resources are available to all children. Effective steps are taken by the nursery to evaluate its provision for children's welfare, learning and development. Plans for the future are well targeted to bring about further improvement to the service they provide and the outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- ensure all electrical sockets are inaccessible to children
- improve the organisation of accident records to maintain confidentiality and ensure all entries are signed by parents

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The nursery has a full range of policies and procedures, including one for complaints. These are regularly reviewed, updated, and shared with parents. However, accident records are not organised to maintain confidentiality and entries made are not always signed by parents. Staff have a good understanding of how to safeguard children, and recognise that this is their first priority. They are vigilant, aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and know the appropriate procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child in their care. Children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe as they

practise fire drills. Regular risk assessments are carried out to minimise risks to children, although some electrical sockets are not inaccessible to children. There are effective recruitment and induction procedures in place to make sure that experienced and qualified staff work directly with the children. Children are assigned a key person to ensure that all their welfare needs are met and they achieve as well as they can. Staff work very well as a team and are committed to providing a valuable service for parents. They regularly update their childcare knowledge through attending relevant training courses.

Since registration the nursery school has developed some of the areas used by the children. There is now additional room for the younger children. Furnishings were carefully chosen to create a stimulating environment where children can relax and explore. Parents were also involved in going on a trip to the local pet shop with the staff and children to buy goldfish for the room. All staff are involved in monitoring and self-evaluation of the provision to identify targets for further improvement. The nursery school has further plans to develop the service they offer and are taking part in the UNICEF award which raises awareness on children's rights and responsibilities. The nursery school works closely with outside agencies, such as health visitors, speech therapists, occupational therapists and social workers, to ensure that every child receives the best possible support to ensure progression and continuity of learning and care.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The activities and experiences provided are exceptionally well matched to children's needs and interests. Staff provide a highly stimulating and welcoming environment where children have a very enthusiastic attitude to learning. They are happy and settled and relish their time in the setting. Staff have a full understanding of how young children learn and progress and use their vast childcare knowledge and experience to provide very well planned activities that take into account children's individual needs and help them make very rapid progress. Staff carry out rigorous assessments and observations and the information gained is used very effectively to guide them in planning for children's next steps of learning. Children are becoming extremely confident. They play well together and have very strong relationships with each other. They are gaining high levels of independence as they help themselves to drinks and make their own choices about the food they eat from the morning snack bar. They help to lay tables at lunch time and take great responsibility for clearing their own plates.

Children confidently recognise their name in print at the snack bar and choose their favourite nursery rhyme which is displayed in words and picture form. Children sing with great enthusiasm at group times and their language development is greatly enhanced by staff as they encourage them to talk about the story in books and question them about what will happen next. Children have excellent opportunities to explore life cycles of living things. They help to look after the nursery guinea pig and goldfish and gain great experience in learning how to incubate chick eggs. They record their observations through very detailed drawings and an excellent display gives accounts of the children's thoughts about what happened when the chicks hatched. Children have their own area outdoors where

they can plant flowers, fruit and vegetables. They show great initiative and a very good understanding of why they need to water them on a regular basis. Children are becoming increasingly aware of diversity as they celebrate festivals and have access to an extensive range of resources, play opportunities and activities, which reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences.

Children have an extremely positive approach to physical activities. The outdoor play area is richly equipped with ropes, ladders, a climbing frame, logs, tyres and equipment for riding and ball games. Children are able to greatly enhance their physical development as they take part in activities such as using swings, ropes, ladders and balancing on logs. They show high levels of enthusiasm as they take part in role play. They have regular access to an outdoor den and log cabin, which are very well equipped with play materials that they can use to enhance their imagination. Sand, water, paints and malleable materials are readily available throughout the day so children can experiment and explore. There are excellent opportunities for children to learn about technology through the use of a computer with an extensive range of programmes that they use independently to support all areas of their learning and development. Relationships with parents are extremely well established. Parents are invited into the nursery school to read to the children and share their cultures and skills. Parents receive extremely detailed feedback on their children's progress and are very much encouraged to extend their learning at home. There is a forum in place which gives parents great opportunities to voice their opinions and make suggestions. There are regular family sessions where guest speakers, such as community dentists and nutritionists, are invited to the nursery school to give talks to parents. Staff have a very strong commitment to supporting parents to ensure that their children achieve the best possible outcomes in their learning and development.

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?	1
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?	1
How well are children safeguarded?	2

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?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
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

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