

Lilliput Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	122480
Inspection date	05/08/2009
Inspector	Deborah Jacqueline Newbury
Setting address	Burwood Road, Hersham Green, Walton-on-Thames, Surrey, KT12 4AA
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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

Lilliput Children's Centre in Hersham, Surrey was registered in 1992 and is one of three nurseries owned by the same proprietors. It has sole use of a single storey building, that was formerly a school, which is located close to the centre of Hersham village. The nursery provides full-day-care for children up to five years of age and serves families living in and around Hersham. It is open from 08:00 to 18:30 every weekday throughout the year, closing only for public holidays and for one week between Christmas and New Year.

Children are grouped in base rooms according to their age. They also have access to a hall and a number of enclosed outdoor play areas. In addition, there is an outdoor swimming pool within the grounds.

The nursery is registered to provide care for a maximum of 147 children in the early years age group, of these, not more than 48 may be under 2 years at any one time. There are currently 189 children on roll, whose ages range from seven months to four years. A total of 53 children are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language. The provision is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

A total of 32 members of staff work directly with the children, of these 23 hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are currently attending training. A chef and kitchen assistants prepare meals on site and there is a full time office administrator, accountant and handyman. Peripatetic teachers visit to teach extra curricular subjects including dance, swimming and sports skills. The nursery receives support from the Early Years and Childcare Service.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. Children attend a setting that is welcoming and inclusive. They are cared for by practitioners who are friendly and affectionate, which helps to ensure that children feel happy and at ease. A reflective approach and keen desire to improve the existing quality of care and education for each and every child attending the nursery means the capacity for continuous improvement at this setting is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- improve systems of communication to ensure parents have a very clear understanding of why they should not allow people they do not know to access the premises and to ensure staff communicate proposed changes at times of transition so that ratios are maintained
- continue to develop outdoor play provision to ensure due regard is always

- given to each area of learning
- extend systems for working in partnership with other providers to ensure cohesion and continuity in children's learning and care.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Management has a realistic view of the nursery's strengths and weaknesses and monitors the quality of the provision through comprehensive self-evaluation and by seeking the views of practitioners to gain their views of their perceptions of the nursery and areas for development. The open door policy for parents and use of parents' comments books means that they too are invited to express their opinions. The nursery manager is reflective and acts promptly on any incidents that occur. Robust recruitment, vetting and appraisal procedures ensure the suitability of adults working with children. Management values practitioners and they, in turn, feel supported by management. The importance of ongoing training, both for professional development and as a way of improving outcomes for children is recognised. Staff deployment is generally good, although on the day of inspection, for a short period of time, ratios were not maintained in one room because practitioners did not communicate their proposed arrangements to support children's transition between rooms to management. Written policies and procedures underpin practice and required documentation is in place.

Children are safeguarded because practitioners have a secure understanding of their role and responsibility in respect of child protection and several practitioners have attended relevant training. Arrangements for ensuring other aspects of children's safety are mostly effective through comprehensive risk assessments, which are revisited as necessary, and completion of daily safety checks for all areas that children come into contact with. The nursery is secure. Parents are provided with access codes to the premises. They are informed of the importance of not allowing other people to enter the premises behind them, both informally and by means of prominently displayed notices. Unfortunately, some parents do not always abide by this and permit visitors to follow them into the building. This action potentially places children at risk and undermines the other good measures implemented to ensure children's safety.

Overall, parents are generally very pleased with the nursery. They feel that their children are happy and they find practitioners approachable. Parents are aware of their children's learning journeys and feel consulted and included in their learning, although some indicate that they would value more information about nursery life. Practitioners seek important information from parents about their children and the completion of the 'all about me' booklet each time children move rooms means that this is an ongoing process. Photo-boards featuring members of the children's families provide a nice link with home; these are evident throughout all base-rooms. The nursery has devised links with the schools that children will be moving on to. However, this arrangement has not been put in place for those children who also attend other provisions at the same time as attending this nursery to ensure a cohesive and consistent approach in respect of their care and education.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Most children settle quickly upon arrival and those, who are a little distressed, receive support as practitioners pick them up and cuddle them. Every child has a key person, with a back-up, who is responsible for supporting individual children and for making sure their individual learning needs are identified and catered for. Planning is done on a weekly basis which means that practitioners can respond to children's learning needs and interests. Each child's progress and achievements are tracked through their learning journey and child profile. Children's base rooms are set up to enable them to self-select what they wish to do from a variety of resources. Practitioners aim to ensure a balance of adult-directed and child-initiated activities. The nursery has identified the need to develop its outdoor play provision and has begun to put action plans for this in place. On some occasions, practitioners take out resources other than those designed to support physical development but they do not always ensure they make sure children can access items for each area of learning when they are outdoors. This restricts opportunities for children to further extend their play and learning in some instances. Children are interested learners. Babies are curious as to the contents of the treasure bags and they explore the sensation of cooked pasta with their fingers. Slightly older children enjoy exploring sand and investigate pouring water from one container to another. Pre-school children concentrate well; they play cooperatively and negotiate turns with one another. They display good mouse control skills as they complete games on the computer and design and make models using a variety of construction toys. Children in most rooms are encouraged to play an active role in helping to care for their environment; for example by helping to tidy away toys. Children's independence is fostered in a variety of ways, although this could be extended still further. Practitioners respond to children's gestures, vocalisation and speech and engage in conversation with them. Use of effective questioning, especially in the older age group encourage children to think, predict and do things for themselves. Children enjoy singing and listening to stories. Many children choose to look at books independently. They develop their problem-solving, reasoning and numeracy skills as they operate simple press-button toys, count and take part in number rhymes and songs.

Children benefit from fresh air as they all go outside to play several times during the day, weather permitting. They are eager to be outdoors and develop their gross motor skills as they explore the climbing apparatus, manoeuvre the wheeled toys around and play with balls. Babies play peek-a-boo with practitioners as they crawl through the tunnel and try to hide their faces with the parachute. The nursery implements good procedures overall to ensure a hygienic environment and to minimise the potential for the spread of infection; for example through effective nappy changing procedures and not allowing outdoor shoes to be worn in the baby unit where young children are sitting and crawling on the floor. Additional precautionary measures have also been introduced to take account of concerns about swine flu; for instance through the provision of anti-bacterial gel at each entrance to the nursery and in each room and the display of information explaining how everyone can help to protect both themselves and others. Children learn about and follow simple personal hygiene routines, such as washing their hands before meal-times. Even the youngest children are encouraged to have a go at

doing this themselves. However, some practitioners do not ensure a fully consistent approach to this at all times as they do not encourage children to wash hands their hands before snack-time. This may lead to some children receiving mixed messages. Children eat food which is prepared on site. This takes account of their individual dietary requirements and includes healthy, nutritious options. Children learn how to keep themselves safe with the support of practitioners. Children understand about not running indoors and confidently explain the reasons why they should not do this. Older children understand why they need to have sun cream on before they go out to play. They also learn about stranger danger when the local police come to visit as part of the nursery's Community week.

There are systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure they are able to achieve as well as they can; this includes working with parents and other agencies as necessary. Several children attending the nursery have home languages other than English and practitioners are actively searching for different ways of bringing these into the setting so individuals can use and see their language reflected and so other children can also share in and celebrate the individuality of one another. Practitioners foster children's self-esteem and confidence effectively. They readily praise children's efforts and achievements. Babies and young children enjoy snuggling in; they know their carers and look to them for reassurance. The display of 'the golden rules' for behaviour, discussion about these, and prompt adult intervention as and when situations arise, reinforces the need for polite, cooperative behaviour and helps children begin to understand the need to respect and appreciate others.

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?	3

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?	2
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?	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?	2

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