



Lavender Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY305277
Inspection date	23 January 2006
Inspector	Mauvene Burke / Pamela Bailey
Setting Address	Tamworth Farm Recreation Ground, London Road, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3LA
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Registered person	London Borough of Merton,
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Lavender Nursery was registered in 2005. It operates from 5 rooms in a purpose built building in the London Borough of Merton. All the children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 70 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 17:45 for 49 weeks of the year.

There are currently 42 children on roll. Of these 6 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports 1 child with special educational needs, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 12 staff and a part-time qualified teacher. All of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the early years partnership in Merton.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and hygiene is satisfactorily promoted by staff who implement sound procedures to reduce the risk of cross infection, for example, they wear aprons and gloves when preparing food or when changing nappies. A number of staff have food hygiene certificates and first aid certificates. Children are learning about good personal hygiene routines through a range of daily activities, such as washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet; younger children are assisted in doing this. Children enjoy healthy mid morning snacks consisting of a variety of fresh fruit, and a healthy and varied lunch is provided which is cooked on the premises by the cook. Younger children are offered drinks throughout the day, older children can help themselves to water at any time. Although children are given healthy snacks and are following good hygiene routines, they do not have the opportunity to explore healthy living, for example, the reasons why it is important to wash hands at certain times or why it is necessary that we eat healthily.

Children enjoy a good range of indoor and outdoor physical activities that promote and contribute to their wellbeing. Children take part in daily outdoor physical activities where they are set challenges and staff are on hand to give support and encourage new skills, such as balancing and climbing on frames. They manoeuvre tricycles around obstacles and push each other along. Staff are good at encouraging and supporting children to take part in activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children come happily into the nursery and settle quickly into an activity. They select activities from a wide range of good quality toys and equipment which meet safety standards. Attention to safety education is good; children know the rules and use them, such as not to run in the nursery. Children can move around the rooms safely, freely and independently.

Children learn to manage their own safety, as staff teach them about potential hazards, such as the possible dangers of running in the nursery. They are kept safe in the event of a fire or emergency, due to effective procedures for evacuation. They are secure in the nursery, as doors to the nursery are locked and the manager monitors visitors closely through the use of closed circuit television. Children are protected by the staff's satisfactory knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and the implementation of effective procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's independence is effectively promoted through a variety of opportunities. They benefit from a range of planned and free play activities both inside and outside. The children in the under 2's room enjoy a variety of activities planned for their age, such as treasure baskets and mirrors which helps them to realise who they are. They explore and experiment a variety of materials, such as glitter, mark make in corn flour and paint using their hands and feet.

The 2 to 3-year-olds are developing their self confidence and self-esteem well. They are involved in a broad range of activities which support their language and imagination, such as play in the home-corner. They are learning to become independent as they do things for themselves, such as putting on their own coats when going out to play, unfastening buttons and sorting out dry clothes when they need to change out of wet clothes. Staff gently support and encourage them in their tasks.

There are inconsistencies in the way staff observe and record children's development when using the Birth to three matters framework, for example, not all staff record what children's next targets are or what the learning intentions are when planning activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff use their sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage to provide a broad range of activities. A good balance of adult led and child led activities in a range of independent, small and large group situations enable children to achieve satisfactorily in most areas of learning. Resources are of good quality and well organised to increase children's independence.

Long term and short term plans note the six areas of learning and learning intentions, however, medium term plans lack details. Assessment records clearly identify children's achievements, however, there are inconsistencies in recording information. Dates have been omitted and the next steps in children's learning do not correspond with achievements recorded. For example, a child can count from one to ten; the next steps are for the child to learn to count from one to ten. Group activities are presented in a lively and enthusiastic manner, but are not always extended to provide sufficient challenge in particular aspects of literacy and mathematical development.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they welcome each other to the group. They are encouraged to be independent as they help with routine tasks, such as setting the tables for lunch and take care of their personal needs, such as dressing and washing their hands. Children concentrate well at self chosen activities and in large group activities. The organisation of resources and equipment allows children to independently self select and make choices. Children's confidence and self-esteem are built up by staff who are sensitive to their needs and know them well. They are friendly and show concern for others.

Children are keen to communicate with staff and their peers either through signs, gestures or talk. They speak confidently when taking part in discussions and are learning to say 'Hello' in many different languages. They listen intently, contribute to story time and select books independently. Children are able to recognise and write their names and are given opportunities to practise writing by labelling their work. However, they are not encouraged to link sounds to letters and activities, such as role play, are not extended to include opportunities to write for different purposes.

Children learn that coins have different values as they pay for foods in the pretend restaurant. The potential to develop an awareness of weight and measure is exploited through the use of resources, such as water, and during cooking activities. Children benefit from good support to

help them count, recognise numbers, shapes and colours. They use numbers from one to ten in a familiar context and enjoy number rhymes and songs. However, their understanding of numbers is not reinforced as they take part in routine tasks, such as laying the tables for lunch. Children are not able to make comparisons, such as more or less in each group or attempt to add to groups of objects.

Children have access to a range of resources and materials, including information technology equipment which encourages them to explore and investigate. They are confident when using the computer and demonstrate good mouse control. They use CD players and telephones during role play. Children use a range of materials and tools competently, for example, model making from construction kits, woodwork and recycled materials. Planned activities help them notice changes that occur, for example, when water is mixed with oil and paint. Children learn about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people, through planned activities. They are currently celebrating Chinese new year and welcome each other in a variety of different languages.

Children take part in daily outdoor physical activities where they are set challenges and staff are on hand to give support and encourage new skills, such as balancing and climbing on frames. They manoeuvre tricycles around obstacles and push each other along. Children's fine motor skills are developing well. They are competent when selecting and using small equipment, such as chopsticks, hammers and paintbrushes.

Children express themselves creatively through a range of media, such as painting and drawing. They make musical instruments. Children participate in dance, drama and join in singing sessions. They have opportunities for role play and act out well known stories, such as 'The Gruffalo'. Children dress up in costumes and perform for the parents.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and staff get to know each other well, and useful information is obtained from parents to enable staff to provide for children's individual needs. Children are developing a secure sense of belonging, they are greeted as they come into the nursery and in turn some of the older children greet children and staff as they arrive into the room and again during circle time when they say good morning to each other through song. Children behave well and are guided by staff who apply consistent boundaries for behaviour management. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Resources relating to practical life and the wider world, such as books, puzzles and posters which reflect positive images, help children to learn about differences in society. Activities reflect a range of cultural backgrounds to help children learn about the wider world, this includes Muslim and Christian festivals and currently through celebrating the Chinese New Year. Children with special educational needs are welcomed into the nursery. They are able to participate in activities with their peer group as staff ensure that there are appropriate resources and equipment to support this.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Relationships with parents are developing. They are informed of the nursery's policies and procedures through the Parents Handbook and through the notice board. Staff organise child progress review meetings every six months where parents are given a written report on their child's progress. Parents receive some information about the Birth to three matters framework and their children's progress and achievements, but this is limited, for example, they do not know what the next steps are in their children's learning and as a result are not fully involved in their children's learning.

Information on the curriculum for the Foundation Stage and how children will learn ensures parents understand that play has an important role in developing children's skills for the next stage of learning. Children benefit from a two way sharing of information between parents and staff. Some parents contribute to their child's assessments and are involved in planning the next steps in their child's learning. This is not sufficiently systematic to ensure parents of all children are well informed to allow them to share in their child's learning and fully contribute to the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is underpinned by satisfactory policies and procedures, which most staff know and understand, due to effective induction procedures. Children are settled and secure in the provision, as a result of well-established daily routines and procedures. Staff have a satisfactory knowledge of organisational policies and procedures and implement this in their practice. Children engage in activities that are appropriate for their stage of their development. Good relationships are developing between staff and parents but improvement is needed regarding the information parents receive about the education their children are receiving at the setting.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Most of the staff are appropriately qualified in childcare and the manager has put in place training to ensure that those who work with the children in receipt of funding for nursery education have sufficient knowledge of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage to enable them to help all children achieve well. However, the lack of systematic monitoring of teaching and learning and contradictory information in children's records of achievement means that gaps in children's learning continues unnoticed. This hinders children's learning and not all parents are well informed to allow them to share in their child's learning.

Overall, Lavender Nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

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

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made to parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure parents are given information about the Birth to three framework

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop a more effective assessment and planning system for staff to follow which ensures that the next steps in learning for all children are identified and met (also applies to Care)
- increase children's awareness of the sounds of letters and of the different purposes for writing and improve the use of practical activities and routine to challenge children's learning and understanding in calculation
- introduce a rigorous system to monitor the quality of teaching so that areas for improvement are identified and quickly addressed
- ensure parents are given information about the Foundation stage

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk