

# Elephant & Castle Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

EY372669

**Inspection date**

18/02/2010

**Inspector**

Linda Close

**Setting address**

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**Type of setting**

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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## 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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

## **Description of the setting**

The Elephant and Castle Day Nursery is privately owned and is one of two nursery settings owned by the same provider. It operates from a purpose built unit that is located in a side road near the Elephant and Castle shopping centre. The local authority is Southwark. The nursery has been running under the same provider for 12 years and was re-registered in 2009 due to a change of company name. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register to provide care for a maximum of 80 children at any one time. All of the children may be in the early years age range but no more than 50 may be under three years old at any one time. The nursery is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register although it does not provide care for children over five years at the present time. The nursery is open every weekday from 8am to 6pm all year round, closing only for Bank Holidays and for one week at Christmas. Children are cared for in three main areas and they are divided according to age although they play together at the beginning and end of the day. Children have access to three interlinked outdoor play areas which are securely fenced. There are currently 76 children aged from six months to under five years on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come primarily from the local community. The nursery currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties. Approximately 77% of the children on roll hear other languages spoken at home and a small number of children are learning to speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 34 members of staff and almost all are appropriately qualified. One member of staff has Qualified Teacher Status (QTS), one is working towards Early Years Professional Status (EYPS) and three members of staff are currently working towards a degree in Early Childhood Studies. The small number of staff who are not qualified are due to begin training in the near future.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff greet the children and their parents with warmth and kindness at the start of the day. The children enter the setting confidently and they soon settle to play with the staff and their friends. Staff get to know the children and their abilities well and children's progress towards the early learning goals is good. Partnerships with parents and other agencies are strong and this significantly helps the staff to meet the individual needs of the children. The provider evaluates her service to children effectively in most respects and she makes sure that steps are taken to improve any identified areas of weakness.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- further develop assessment and record keeping systems by ensuring that

- staff consistently identify the next steps for children's learning
- ensure that staff are fully aware of what significant changes or events must be reported to Ofsted

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Senior staff are well informed about safeguarding matters. They attend relevant training and they share their knowledge and understanding with the whole staff team. There is a useful display of clear and very detailed information in the setting about what staff must look out for and what steps they must take if they are concerned about the welfare of the children in their care. This displayed information also helps to ensure that parents and carers are aware of the setting's responsibilities.

A self evaluation exercise has been conducted by the provider and senior staff and they discuss the findings of this exercise at team meetings so that all members of staff can reflect on their work and contribute. In most respects evaluation is successful. The provider is currently devising a questionnaire that will give parents an opportunity to contribute to future evaluations. Staff appraisals have also highlighted areas for development and the whole staff team is working hard to secure ongoing improvement. They have worked, and continue to work, effectively with local authority advisors who arrange training and make frequent visits to the setting to advise and train the staff. The provider's support for the staff to gain qualifications to aid their professional development is exemplary.

There are more staff at the setting than is required by regulation and this ensures that the children are well supervised at all times. Toys, books and art materials are plentiful and they are checked and replenished on a regular basis. The resources for Information and Communication Technology are limited. However, this area is under scrutiny at the moment and more equipment has already been selected which will be arranged for children to access independently.

The children and the staff represent a very wide range of cultures and everyone is treated with respect. Staff are vigilant and they identify children with learning difficulties. They invite specialist staff working with the Local Authority to visit them to observe and to give guidance and advice about the best ways to offer support to these children. Children who have little English when they join the setting are supported very well. Staff have a list of important vocabulary in children's home languages to use when necessary. The children are settled and beginning to communicate in English.

The level of engagement with parents and carers is good. Staff arrange consultation time so that parents and key staff can share their observations of the children. Parents add their thoughts and views to the children's files. This assists staff in identifying children's individual needs and special interests. Parents are encouraged to take part in celebrations and fund raising initiatives and their involvement and support is much appreciated. Parents say that they are very happy with the care that their children receive, in fact some families now have

their third and fourth children attending. They say that they are given ample information about their child's progress and they feel that their children are in good hands and are making good progress.

The nursery keeps comprehensive records about attendance, medication and accidents and all are held ready for inspection at any time. Records and registration details for each child are stored securely in the office and confidentiality is assured. Senior staff are aware of the need to inform Ofsted about significant events although they are not completely clear about all of the details of this requirement.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children**

The children are happy and lively and they are learning to relate to others appropriately. Staff lead them to an understanding of fairness, taking turns and sharing their toys through setting a good example and through explanation and guidance. Children are actively encouraged to make choices and decisions. They choose what they would like to play with and they know that they are expected to help to put their toys away at tidy up time. Staff provide children with a wide range of materials and media to explore. They encourage the children to make models and pictures according to their own ideas.

The youngest children show that they feel safe in the way that they hold out their arms to staff to be held and cuddled. They settle calmly to sleep after playing happily with the staff and their friends. Toddlers and older children relate well to staff and visitors. They are happy to involve adults in their play and they ask questions and express their thoughts with confidence.

Children are making good progress in their learning from their starting points. The older children are learning to recognise letters of the alphabet through games and discussions and they are beginning to write their own names using recognisable upper and lower case letters. Children thoroughly enjoy singing songs and saying rhymes together at circle time. They also enjoy looking at books and listening to stories and they listen politely when others are speaking.

Children show that they can solve problems when they play with construction toys and puzzles.

Staff count aloud with them in play and they play matching games with the children that help them to recognise numerals. Children's progress with early numeracy and literacy forms a good basis for their future learning. However, their opportunities to use information and communication technology to support their learning are a little limited but this weakness has already been noted and new equipment has been chosen to supplement the resources that children are currently using.

Children are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. Their food is tasty, freshly cooked before delivery to the setting and it is served with vegetables or green salad. Staff are trained in food hygiene. They use a probe to take and record the

temperature of the food. The standard of tidiness and cleanliness in the kitchen is exemplary. Children can take a drink of fresh water at any time. They wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet facilities.

Children go out and about regularly in the local area to visit the library and on their journey they learn about road safety which is very important in this busy area of London. Themes and topics are chosen to develop children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them including looking at different types of transport. The activities chosen to celebrate children's diverse cultural backgrounds are very successful. Black history month involves them in dressing up in international costumes and sharing food from different countries. Staff and children listen to stories from different parts of the world including Handa's surprise and they dance to traditional music. Parents, children and staff come together to join in and enjoy these activities in the nursery. Parents, staff and children also take part in fund raising activities for various charities.

Staff observe the children and they record their response to their activities and their progress towards the early learning goals. They get to know the children well and they can speak knowledgeably about each child's interests and learning needs. However, some staff are only just beginning to make a note of the next steps for children's learning and this aspect of their record keeping is not sufficiently developed as yet.

## 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*

### The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

<b>How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?</b>	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

### The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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### Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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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