



Ethelburga Early Years

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY289376
Inspection date	27 March 2006
Inspector	Mauvene Burke
Setting Address	60 Worfield Street, Battersea, London, SW11 4RA
Telephone number	0207 924 3005
E-mail	
Registered person	The Management Committee Ethelburga Early Years
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?

Ethelburga Early Years was originally registered in 1987 under the name of Ethelburga Family Centre. It was re-registered in 2004 under the current name. It is managed by the Ethelburga Early Years Centre Management Committee. It operates from a separate baby unit and a play room plus several domestic rooms, in a single storey purpose built premises. The nursery is located on the Ethelburga Estate in Battersea. The nursery serves the local area.

A maximum of 29 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00. Sessions are also offered from 08:00 to 13:00 and 13:00 until 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area, with a separate designated area for children under two years.

There are currently 26 children aged from 0 to 5 years on roll; of these 4 children receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery employs ten staff. All staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's wellbeing is sufficiently protected by the policies and procedures that are in place and carried out by staff. They are protected from infection because staff follow rigorous procedures to ensure this. For example, no outdoor shoes are worn in the baby unit and staff wear disposable gloves and aprons when changing nappies. Children are learning about good health and hygiene practices through daily routines and activities, such as washing their hands at appropriate times. They are learning about the importance of keeping themselves and things they use clean; this is currently being achieved through the "Spring Cleaning" theme. More than half the staff are appropriately qualified in delivering first aid, ensuring that children are protected in the event of an accident.

Children enjoy healthy and nutritious meals provided by staff. Children's dietary needs are taken into account and recorded clearly for all staff to see. Children are offered a choice of drink during snack and lunch times. Although older children have fresh drinking water available to them at all times, babies and toddlers are not given the same opportunity.

Children have regular opportunities to play outdoors whatever the weather. The door to the garden from the main play area is usually kept open; children can wander out when they want and staff are always on hand to ensure they are fully supervised. There are opportunities for all children to climb, ride scooters and balance in the garden. However, the older children do not have enough opportunities to take part in more energetic or vigorous physical activities. The under two's have a separate garden area where they can climb, slide and move around safely.

Children are using a range of small equipment with increasing control. For example, rolling pins, scissors, spades when digging in the garden and through mixing paint and pouring drinks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happily and settle quickly in a warm and friendly environment. They are made to feel welcome by staff who are always on hand to receive them. Children have access to a good range of exciting and developmentally appropriate toys and resources, which are well maintained for safety. They are able to access toys easily which enables them to choose what they want to play with.

The risk of accidents are minimised through effective procedures. Children are learning to keep themselves and others safe by not running, putting away toys and picking up chairs. There is a fire evacuation procedure in place, this is practiced regularly with the children and recorded. However, children's complete safety and well being may be compromised; staff are not always vigilant in ensuring that visitors to the nursery sign themselves in and out.

Children's welfare is protected because staff have a secure knowledge of issues relating to child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children of all ages benefit from the tender support and assured interaction they receive from staff, to support their play and learning. Children throughout the setting are able to learn in a stimulating and rich environment . Staff plan topics and themes to capture their interest such as the current theme Spring Cleaning.

Staff use the Birth to three matters framework when planning activities for the under three's. Staff in the baby unit provide babies with activities that help to promote their development under each of the components. Planning is effective. Babies and toddlers are involved in a wide range of exciting play, such as sensory activities, involving texture, sound and smell. For example, the play dough activity where babies mix flour and water while staff add colour and essence or through treasure baskets and painting. Whilst the written plans for the 2 to 3 year olds are not as detailed as those for the under 2's children still have access to a good range of activities. For example, imaginative play where they enjoy looking after dolls by cooking, feeding and changing their nappies or taking sick "babies" to see the doctor, who will make them better. They enjoy listening to stories and singing songs whilst playing instruments. Children of this age also benefit from playing alongside the three and four year olds. For example, they are able to recognise their name and are growing in independence as they follow the older children. Overall children benefit from the good use of the key worker system to ensure they settle well; staff monitor their development to ensure progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching an learning is satisfactory. Children are making generally good progress through the stepping stones to the early learning goals. Teaching involves a range of questioning techniques to extend thinking and learning with discussions stimulated by the use of topics and themes. For example, birds, insects

and their current theme "Spring Cleaning". Staff plan a variety of practical activities and most understand what children learn from them. Although staff organise the indoor space and resources imaginatively, to create an interesting learning environment, activities are not always extended to provide sufficient challenge, particularly in aspects of physical, mathematics and creative development. Whilst some staff successfully assess children's learning against the stepping stones, they do not always use this information to plan what children should do next. There are inconsistencies in the way staff record children's assessment. As a result parents of these children do not gain a true picture of their children's progress.

Staff manage children's behaviour well and have good relationships with them. Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. Children are happy and settled and enjoy coming to the setting. They can sit and listen during circle time or small group work and are confident when talking in familiar groups. They are able to concentrate for long periods of time when involved in an activity. Whilst some children are building relationships with others there are some children who prefer to play alone. There are opportunities for children to practice their pre-writing skills. For example, when they write their "shopping list" when playing in the garden, this needs to be extended within the setting. They understand that print carries meaning and handle books well, they enjoy story times and participate enthusiastically.

Children can confidently count up to ten, a few can count beyond. They are gaining an understanding of numbers through a range of practical activities but are not sufficiently challenged. Children are able to problem solve for themselves, for example, when completing puzzles. Some opportunities are missed. For example, to extend their use of mathematical language and problem solving through simple addition and subtraction. Children are learning about the world they live in. They learn about different cultures and celebrate festivals, such as the Chinese New Year. They have lots of opportunities to explore living things. For example, worms, birds and snails and are aware that birds make their own nests. They have access to information technology and are confident when using the computer and mouse. Children can recreate past and present events. For example, they remember what happened on Mother's Day and can say when their birthday is and what they plan to do.

Children have good opportunities to engage in imaginative play when using the home corner, which can be turned into different scenarios such as a café, hairdresser's or doctor's surgery. Some children are able to draw recognisable pictures but there is a tendency for staff to use templates which hinders children's creativity.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing confidence and self-esteem through the good relationships they have with staff and each other. Children attend the setting from a variety of ethnic backgrounds, all are welcomed into the setting. Staff ensure there are good resources which positively represent the children attending. Staff ensure children find out about their local community by taking them to local shops and businesses. This

helps children develop a positive attitude towards each other and ensure that their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents are satisfactory. Communication is clear and keeps parents informed about the setting and its provision. The provision encourages parents to make suggestions about improvements to the nursery. A notice board has been provided with relevant and useful information for parents to read and take away. Parents spoken to are satisfied with the care that their children receive in the nursery. There are opportunities for parents to speak to staff, both formally and informally, about their children's progress. However, they are given very little information about the curriculum for the funded children. There is a satisfactory procedure in place for recording complaints from parents. Although parents are aware of this it is not available to them in writing.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Appropriate systems are in place for recruiting staff and ensuring that unchecked staff are not left unsupervised with children. Induction training, policies and procedures are generally in place and work, in practice, to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. However, there are times when children's welfare is not fully safeguarded. Staff do not always ensure that visitors to the setting sign in the visitors book. Also the times that the babies arrive and depart are not systematically recorded as required.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy coming into the setting. They respond appropriately to realistic adult expectations for acceptable behaviour which enables learning to take place. Children follow daily nursery routines well. However, staff do not provide enough opportunities during the day to allow older children to participate in more challenging activities, for example, when the younger children are asleep. This restricts their learning in reaching their full potential.

Leadership and management of the nursery are satisfactory. The manager has a good understanding of the foundation stage and has a clear vision and ethos for the nursery. Plans are in place for future development and she is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. Whilst the manager has a secure knowledge of the foundation stage, the planning of learning opportunities needs to be extended. To ensure that children are appropriately challenged and that staff have a consistent approach, to the way they record their observations and assessments of the children. The quality of teaching and learning is continually developing as the staff team are committed to providing positive experiences for the children.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Improvement since the last inspection has been good.

At the last inspection a number of actions were set: The provider was asked to improve the staff's knowledge and understanding of the needs of children under 2 years old. For example, by using the Birth to three matters framework. Considerable improvement has been made in this area. Staff have adopted the framework and babies in the unit now show signs of being happier as they are more secure and settled. The provider was further asked to ensure that good hygiene practices, regarding hand washing, were followed and that staff handling food received basic training in food hygiene. There are now good procedures in place regarding hand washing and more than half the staff have attended the Basic Food Hygiene training. This means that children's health and well-being is being promoted. The action to improve the staff's knowledge regarding the foundation stage, the assessment and planning and putting in place a system to monitor the quality of teaching, continues to be on-going.

Complaints since the last inspection

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.

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received one complaint. On the 23rd February 2006, a concern was raised under National Standard 3: Care, Learning and Play that not enough emphasis is being put on learning, leading to the children spending a lot of their day playing, under National Standard 8: Food and Drink, that staff are often unable to provide feedback to parents regarding their child's food and intake, and National Standard 9: Equal Opportunities, that some children may be receiving a lower level of care due to their background.

We asked the provider to investigate the concerns raised. The provider sent to Ofsted, a detailed letter addressing all the issues raised in the concern. No action was taken and the provider remains qualified for registration.

The provider has made a record of the complaint in their complaint record.

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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 the babies have fresh drinking water available to them at all times
- ensure all visitors to the setting record their details in the Visitors Book
- provide a range of planned opportunities to foster children's physical development (also applies to nursery education)

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):

- make use of information gathered from children's assessments to inform planning in order to ensure that children's next steps of learning are identified and recorded in a consistent manner
- review the organisation of the daily routine to ensure that more challenging and focused activities are provided for the nursery funded children
- increase all practitioner's knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage to improve the quality of teaching and children's learning and put in place a rigorous system to monitor the teaching so that areas for improvement are identified and quickly addressed

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