



The Little Hall Gardens

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	138217
Inspection date	23 January 2006
Inspector	Christine Goode
Setting Address	49 Durnsford Avenue, Wimbledon, London, SW19 8BH
Telephone number	020 8947 7058
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Registered person	The Gardens Childcare Limited
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?

The Little Hall Gardens Nursery opened in 1996 and is part of a group of three privately owned nurseries. It operates from a converted village hall. The setting is situated on the ground floor of a single storey modern building in the residential area of Wimbledon Park in the London Borough of Merton. The setting consists of a baby unit and main play room, plus kitchen and toilet facilities, storage and an office. There are two enclosed outdoor play areas. The setting provides a service for children from

the local community.

There are currently 68 children aged from 1 year to under 5 years on roll. This includes 21 funded children. Children attend a variety of full and part time sessions. The setting supports four children who speak English as an additional language. Currently there are no children attending with special educational needs.

The nursery is open every weekday for 51 weeks of the year. Sessions run from 08:00 to 19:00, 08:00 to 13:00, 14:00 to 19:00.

There are 12 members of staff working with the children who are both full and part-time. More than half of the staff team have early years qualifications including National Vocational Qualification to level three. There are four members of staff who are unqualified, two of whom are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. There are five visiting teachers who come into the nursery to deliver music, French, ballet and a physical activities programme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of appropriate personal hygiene through organised activities and routines. There are suitable procedures in place to sustain levels of hygiene and prevent the spread of infection, such as staff wearing disposable gloves and aprons for nappy changing. There are appropriate systems in place to ensure that children who require medication receive the correct dosage and all accidents are recorded.

Children's dietary needs are appropriately met because staff use information from parents when planning the meals and snacks. Children sit together for snack and their main meals. However, snack and mealtimes are not organised to encourage the development of children's social and independence skills. Children do not serve themselves and are not able to choose how much they have on their plate or how much they would like to drink. Adult support at mealtimes is a supervisory role rather than sitting with the children and making mealtimes a social occasion. Meals are freshly prepared at the nursery. However, health and hygiene guidance such as wearing gloves is not followed when preparing food.

Children have opportunities to play in the fresh air and undertake physical activities. When using the garden they develop their self confidence in physical skills through the use of large toys and equipment. They participate in balancing on the beam and riding tricycles energetically which develops their co-ordination and large muscles skills. Children are becoming aware of space and others, and move around appropriately. However, there are too many children in the garden at the same time which restricts activities for older children. Children are learning to listen to their bodies and rest or be active according to their needs. Children are developing their hand eye co-ordination through the use of small tools and drawing with crayons.

Staff are beginning to use the Birth to three matters guidance to provide a range of suitable physical experiences for children aged under 3. All are able to rest and be active according to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a warm, welcoming and appropriately maintained environment. They have access to a suitable range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate resources. These are well organised at child height to help encourage independent access. Staff check toys regularly to ensure they are clean and safe for children to use.

Children's safety is given priority because good security systems are in place. This ensures children cannot leave the nursery unsupervised and nobody can enter the provision unseen. Children enjoy a safe and secure environment indoors and out. Fire evacuation procedures are clearly displayed, known to all and practised regularly. Staff undertake a risk assessment when taking children out. There are suitable arrangements for staff to child ratios and staff take a mobile phone for communication.

Children's safety in relation to child protection is not wholly secure. Staff know to report any concerns regarding child protection to a senior member of staff. However, new staff appointed do not have a sufficient knowledge and understanding of child protection issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies and toddlers receive lots of affection and are forming a strong bond with their key worker, which increases their sense of well-being. They benefit from routines that are consistent with their home experiences. Babies and toddlers benefit from the key worker working closely with parents to support their progress and individual needs. For example, they enjoy a range of colourful toys that make sounds. They develop early communication skills as they attract the attention of staff who respond to their sounds during play. Staff are beginning to develop the Birth to three matters framework when planning suitable activities for younger children and recording their observations.

All children benefit from warm relationships with staff. They play happily together and with adults, enjoying the resources such as puzzles, small world toys and outdoor equipment. They happily engage in painting and playing in the sand and water. They experiment with crayons and pencils and explore play dough. However, younger children's needs are overlooked when all children are in a large group in the main room, and altogether outside for play.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff plan out a range of activities that are topic based. Staff record children's progress in the nursery on a regular basis. However, they do not use this information to identify individual children's next steps in their learning. Furthermore, most staff have not undertaken training in the Foundation Stage or early learning goals. This means they miss opportunities to deliver a fully comprehensive programme. Staff's interaction with children is kind and sensitive, but often fails to challenge them to think and learn new skills and ideas. Therefore, children do not achieve as much as they could.

Children enjoy the company of others. They show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other as they arrive. They are generally engaged in their play as they select and carry out activities. They assume responsibility for most of their personal care. Children feel confident enough to approach staff to show what they can do. They have warm relationships with adults. Staff use appropriate behaviour management strategies and children respond well. Children concentrate appropriately on self-chosen activities.

Children speak confidently. They are beginning to express their ideas and experiences. Children enjoy books and stories and their listening skills are good. However, story time is sometimes in a very large group so more mature children are not always challenged appropriately. Children find their name card at registration time and confidently put it up on the board. Older children are learning the shapes and sounds of letters of the alphabet. They use work sheets for writing, they have insufficient opportunity to practise mark making in their play and activities.

Children confidently recognise shapes and count numbers as part of a formal planned programme supported by work sheets. However, children do not benefit from counting and calculation through practical play, daily routines and number rhymes.

Children develop an interest in the world about them. They are learning about growing things, for instance they are growing daffodils from bulbs. There are a few programmable toys which help children to learn how and why things work. Children enjoy visits from the community police and other people who help in the area. Children have the opportunity to learn French and know that others use different languages to communicate. There are commercial materials available for children to join together and build their own models. However, there are limited opportunities for children to enjoy science activities.

Children enjoy the outside time, although at times it is too crowded for children to play freely. They have opportunities to go out to the local park and have visiting specialists to help support physical activities.

Children enjoy experiences such as cooking and tasting food they have made. They enjoy lively dance sessions with a specialist teacher. However, there are less opportunities for them to explore sound. Children use their imagination and express their ideas creatively through a range of mediums. Sometimes the use of pre-printed sheets prevents complete free expression.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children from different backgrounds are welcomed into the nursery although they are not always supported fully if their first language is not English. They use a suitable range of resources that reflect the wider community they live in. Children's individual needs are respected by staff. For example, potty training is discussed with the parents and they agree an acceptable approach. There are no special education needs children currently attending. Appropriate systems including a special educational needs co-ordinator are in place if the situation should change. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children behave well and there are clear boundaries in place which help children to learn right from wrong.

Overall, Partnership with parents is good. All children benefit from the good relationships and informal contact between their parents and staff. Parents share information about their child's needs when they drop them off and collect them. The nursery has just introduced a formal time for parents when they can discuss their child's progress. There is a seasonal newsletter, welcome folder and notice board. They also receive clear information about the day to day organisation of the nursery. More mature children take books and work sheets home to share with their parents. Policies and procedures and the complaints procedure are displayed on the wall.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. There are appropriate procedures in place for recruitment and staff checks that ensure that all staff working with children are suitable to do so. The induction programme for staff enables them to be familiar with the policies and procedures of the nursery. However, there is no reliable system in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching. Consequently staffs professional development has not been effectively identified. Space inside and outside is reasonably well organised to help children gain from the activities. However, the large grouping of all children in the main hall and outside in the garden is less successful. Both younger and older children's learning opportunities appropriate to their age and stage of development are overlooked at these times. Children do benefit from staff working well as a team in the two rooms and the key working system enables children's individual requirements to be appropriately met. The nursery is undertaking a quality assurance programme. Most, but not all recommendations from the last inspection have been addressed appropriately.

All records, policies and procedures which are required for efficient and safe management of the nursery and children's well-being are in place. The exception being, the lack of some important details within two policies. The child protection policy should include a statement of procedure regarding allegations and the behaviour policy needs to include a statement about bullying. The provision meets the range of needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The provider agreed to improve the policies and procedures to include child protection and lost and uncollected children. The provider has updated some policies and procedures. However, the improvement to child protection and behaviour policies are still outstanding.

At the last inspection the provider agreed to improve the recording for accident and medication to ensure parents and staff signed each time. The provider agreed to keep the first aid box up to date and accessible. The nursery now have a procedure in place which includes the signature of staff and parents. The first aid box is accessible in the kitchen. The manager is the named person responsible for the first aid box upkeep. Consequently children's health is better protected. They agreed to ensure times for children's arrival and departure to be recorded in the register. All children's arrival and departure times are recorded. The records are now correctly maintained.

The provider agreed to improve the risk assessment on the premises. There is a full risk assessment undertaken yearly and each time children go out. However, the provider intends to ensure that a monthly recorded risk assessment will be put into place. This will ensure children are kept safe. The provider agreed to ensure that the staff would learn about basic food hygiene. Some staff have undertaken this training. However, with staff changes in the kitchen is an ongoing area for improvement.

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure that the daily menu is shared with parents. There is now a blackboard in the entrance hall that displays the daily menu. Parents and children are now kept informed.

At the last inspection the provider agreed to develop staff understanding of the early learning goals. Limited progress has been made and many learning opportunities are overlooked.

The provider agreed to complete written observations and assessments of children's progress in all six areas of learning and to provide regular opportunities to share with parents. There are now written observations in place. Staff have a formal meeting with parents where they can discuss their child's progress. However, no individual objectives are set or linked to future planning to take forward children's learning.

At the last inspection the resources and learning opportunities for children in mathematics and knowledge and understanding of the world needed to be improved. There is a mathematics table and some suitable resources in place. However, this aspect has not been fully addressed leading to weaknesses in these two areas of learning.

The provider agreed to introduce a system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching practice. The management of monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching is informal and not rigorous enough to recognise and tackle weaknesses.

Complaints since the last inspection

In August 2004 concerns were raised relating to National Standards 6-Safety 7-Health and standard 14- Documentation. An Ofsted inspector made an unannounced visit on the 17 August 2004. The issues around the complaint were discussed and as a result, the following recommendations were made: Standard 6:ensure hazardous substances are kept out of the reach of children in the baby room area. Standard 7:improve hygiene practice by providing suitable hand drying facilities and improve staff and children's awareness of hygiene practice and healthy living by teaching them the importance of ensuring children's noses are wiped and tissues disposed of. Standard 14:ensure that all day care records are available for inspection. Ofsted is satisfied that the registered person has taken appropriate steps to address the concerns, and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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

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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):

- develop staff knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and review the child protection policy to include the procedure to be undertaken when allegations are made against a member of staff
- review the behaviour management policy to include a statement about bullying
- ensure that anybody responsible for the preparation and handling of food is aware of and complies with Environment Health requirements.
- review the grouping of children over 2 to enable their individual needs to be met effectively

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):

- raise standards by developing staff's knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- use assessment to develop children's individual learning objectives and inform planning
- provide more stimulus for children to make marks and explore their early writing skills within their play and other activities and help them to explore counting and calculation through practical activities, routines and rhymes
- review snack time arrangements to provide children with opportunities to socialise and become independent
- devise a formal system to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching.

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