



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 130521

DfES Number: 546042

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 20/09/2004
Inspector Name Tina Kelly

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care, Out of School Day Care
Setting Name Gilah Nursery School
Setting Address Borehamwood & Elstree Synagogue
Croxdale Road
Borehamwood
Hertfordshire

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Ms Susan Gray

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Gilah Nursery School has been in operation since 1980. They have sole use of seven rooms within two buildings of the Borehamwood and Elstree Synagogue.

There are currently sixty eight children on roll aged between two and four years, at inspection this included eight funded three year olds, there were no funded four year olds. The nursery supports two children with special needs but none with English as a second language.

The group opens five mornings during term time with additional lunch club and afternoon sessions on Tuesday and Thursdays. The morning sessions are from 09:15 until 12:15 with the extended days finishing at 14:30. Children may attend for a variety of sessions through out the week with the longer day being offered to the older children only.

The Head of Nursery co ordinates a team of twenty staff. The deputy and three senior co coordinators work with twelve staff who have early years qualifications at level two or above with assistants working towards early years qualifications.

This Orthodox Jewish nursery is managed by a governing committee of parents, nursery staff, the Rabbi and members of the Shul. The nursery's daily routine includes religious customs which are carried out in Hebrew language.

The nursery is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. They are in the process of starting work to be accredited by the Herts Quality Standard scheme.

How good is the Day Care?

Gilah Nursery School provides good quality care for children.

The nursery offers a calm, warm and welcoming environment where children are happy and secure. A high ratio of well qualified staff are aware of the safety and well being of the children in their care. Well managed routines ensure good personal hygiene is promoted within each age group. Snacks and drinks are prepared and

served under strict hygiene procedures.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place to support staff in the day to day running and management of the nursery. Ongoing training for all staff is of high priority, the records relating to courses attended and future plans are to be revised.

Children are cared for in small groups that take account of their age and abilities, there are four age ranges. Children aged from two years and under three access a very good range of resources and age appropriate activities. The older rising three years and a small group of rising four year olds take part in planned activities in line with the nation curriculum and also benefit from a very good selection of creative and imaginative play resources within the large home room.

The nursery does have a purpose built adventure play area, however this has been out of bounds due to maintenance, however children do have regular access to outside play. The routine and plans for outside play are to be developed to ensure children's physical skills are fully developed.

The staff team is well qualified, there is a commitment to training with an expectation that all staff will attend basic courses that ensure the safety and well being of all children in their care such as child protection, first aid and behaviour management. Senior staff now need to extend their understanding of child protection issues with regard to a large nursery setting.

Documentation is in place to ensure the children's individual needs are met, staff discuss day to day issues with parents on a regular basis.

What has improved since the last inspection?

At the last inspection the nursery was required to seek advice from the Children, Schools and Families team with regard to child protection concerns, this has been done and all staff have attended Child Protection training.

What is being done well?

- Children are well supported by staff who use praise and give encouragement, which gives them confidence to explore and try new skills. On inspection in the room caring for two year olds, staff displayed work on the wall as soon as the young children finished their pictures, the children were delighted in seeing their end product.
- The nursery provides a stimulating range of planned learning and play opportunities for all children. These are theme based with the whole setting working towards similar art work and experiences. Children have the opportunity for free choice and time to develop their own play ideas, they are able to access a wide range of resources which are well presented and readily available.
- Good use is made of the spacious play rooms to provide for the different

areas of learning. Children enjoyed quiet areas to concentrate and work in small groups with staff who develop the children's language and social skills in a kind and calm manner. All resources are age and developmentally appropriate

- There were very good responses received from the parent questionnaire, with issues raised that the management team were fully aware of and in the process of dealing with. Staff are available at all times to talk to parents, there is an introductory leaflet, notice boards and regular weekly newsletters that ensure parents are kept fully up to date on their children's achievements and nursery news.

What needs to be improved?

- staff records to show training attended, dates and plans for meeting future training needs
- outside play opportunities to ensure all areas of the children's physical skills are developed to their full potential.
- knowledge and understanding of the senior staff of child protection issues with regards to a large nursery setting.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
2	Staff records to show training attended, dates and plans for meeting future training needs.
3	The outside play area to be managed and activities planned to ensure all areas of the children's physical skills are developed to their full potential.

13	Widen knowledge and understanding of child protection issues, with regards to a large staff team and nursery setting.
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INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Gilha Nursery School is of high quality overall. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals within all six areas of their development.

The quality of teaching is very good. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals, curriculum planning effectively challenges and supports the children to make progress. The provision promotes high staff ratios which allows for excellent support and extension for all individuals. A positive approach to the inclusion of children with special needs, ensures their personal requirements are fully assessed and monitored. Staff ensure children have equal access to all resources and activities through careful monitoring and recording. Children receive appropriate praise and encouragement, they are on the whole polite and co-operative.

Staff are maintaining informative assessments on children's progression, they show a good awareness of where children need to be challenged, and implement this within their future planning.

The leadership and management of the nursery is very good. There is a strong commitment to team work and ensuring continuity for the children. The staff meet regularly to discuss forward planning and assessment practices. The manager encourages on-going training and where possible provides in-house training opportunities for all staff. She has a hands on approach, thus is always available to cover staff and offer extra support to the children. The manager values staff appraisals which are in place.

The partnership with parents and carers is generally good. Parents are provided with good-quality information about the setting and the education provided. Parents have expressed their satisfaction with this provision both verbally and through questionnaires. However they would value more information on how they could support their children's learning both at home and within nursery. Parents value weekly newsletters.

What is being done well?

- Children's personal, social and emotional development is given high priority. Children are supported to become independent learners and to take responsibility for the care of their environment. They are happy and settled within their peer groups, and it is evident that close friendships are forming. Staff promote positive role models which results in a calm and yet busy atmosphere.
- Children are developing effective communication, language and literacy skills. They are confident to ask relevant questions and to discuss all aspects

of nursery life and how this links with their home experiences. Children are delighted to share their news about a recent visit to the synagogue where they listened to the shofar being blown by the Rabbi. Staff make good use of visual aids to support children's early recognition of letters and sounds.

- Staff have established secure relationships with the children, they are aware of their individual needs and meet these well. Children receive encouraging praise and recognition both within small focussed groups and during their free play. They respond enthusiastically to staff interaction and extension of activities.
- Staff plan an interesting and varied programme of activities for the children, ensuring there are lots of practical experiences for children to explore. They provide a good balance of both focussed and free play sessions, with an awareness of encouraging children to fully utilise all areas of the curriculum. Staff utilise children's assessments to plan for their next steps in learning.
- The manager and her staff team work closely with outside professionals, and parents to ensure their children's individual needs are being catered for appropriately. They have a positive attitude to inclusion, they utilise their environment, staff and resources flexibly. Individual Education Plans (IEP's) are in place where necessary.

What needs to be improved?

- information for parents, to extend their involvement within their children's learning, through the provision of further detailed information about what the children are learning, and how they can be supported at home.
- curriculum planning within physical education, to ensure all aspects of the early learning goals are covered. In particular give due emphasis to incorporating the outside play area.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Very good progress has been made in implementing the action plan drawn up to address the two key issues for action, identified at the previous inspection.

They were requested to develop more ways of promoting independent writing during free play. The children now always have access to a writing area, where they can explore a range of different writing implements and paper. The children fully utilised this area on inspection, they helped themselves to paper from the draws and made decisions about either using pencils or crayons.

They were also to provide more regular opportunities for children to use information and communication technology. The funded children now have a computer in their room which can be utilised daily. A qualified member of staff is on hand to offer the children appropriate support and extension. The children have further access to a variety of resources such as telephones, programmable toys and calculators within both their role-play and more structured activities.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident and settled within their environment. They are keen to share their experiences and to take lead within their Tefilla prayers during group sessions. Children are developing a respect for their own culture, they are enthusiastic to take part in festivals such as Yom Kippur. Children can share books and resources, they work co-operatively to achieve tasks such as a large fish collage. Children's self-esteem and independence is boosted through the classroom helper system.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident speakers, they can talk about real and imaginary events as they play and work. They are beginning to link sounds and letters during discussions about the weather and days of the week. Children's early reading is supported through self-registration and effective labelling. They enjoy books, handling these with care and respect. Children are developing good writing skills, there are ample opportunities for them to utilise writing aids and to observe correct letter formation.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are developing excellent counting skills, they count to 20 when finding the days date. Many children recognise numbers in a familiar context and are supported well to correctly label double figures. Children competently match, sort and compare coloured teddies into their appropriate groups. They can discuss the size of their shapes created with play dough, which is the biggest? and smallest? Children are keen to take on challenges, they concentrate and persevere with complex puzzles.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Children have many opportunities to learn about the world around them. They observe a trout (fish) and discuss its properties. They ask meaningful questions, such as "Has the fish got blood?" "And why is it dead?". The activity tied in with the current theme Jonah and the whale. Children can build and construct with a wide range of resources and access ICT on a daily basis. Their sense of time and place is reinforced daily through routines, topics and discussions about every day events.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children move confidently and safely within their environment. They access resources independently, showing good co-ordination in manoeuvring wheeled toys within available space. Children are aware of their own needs, they wash hands at appropriate times and help themselves to tissues to wipe their nose. Children's finer manipulative skills are being effectively supported through their use of scissors, threading, drawing and painting activities. However the garden is not fully utilised.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children fully explore colour, texture, shape and form through the provision of play dough, sand, water and painting activities. They enjoy creating rainbow coloured fish with bright paper and glue sticks. Children sing their good morning song with enthusiasm, and benefit from weekly specialist music sessions. Children play imaginatively with the dough, creating pizza and fish that they pretend to eat. They work co-operatively to enact a variety of familiar roles within the home corner.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT

There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:

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- To extend parents involvement within their children's learning, through the provision of further detailed information about what the children are learning and how parents can support their children at home.
- To develop further curriculum planning within physical education, to ensure all aspects of the early learning goals are covered. In particular give due emphasis to incorporating the outside play area.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.