

Lavender Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	10/12/2010
Inspector	Gillian Cubitt

Setting address	Tamworth Farm Recreation Ground, London Road, Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 3LA
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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*.

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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.

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Description of the setting

Lavender Nursery was registered in 2005. It is part of the wider service offered by Lavender Children's Centre in Mitcham. The nursery is situated at Tamworth Farm Recreation Ground on the London Road. It is accessible to all users with public transport connections and there are parking facilities nearby. The nursery is purpose built and access is via automatic doors that lead to a reception area. Children use four rooms all of which lead out to secure outside play areas. There is also a separate baby sleep room and a further room for quiet activities.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. A maximum of 70 children may attend the nursery at any one time from the age of three months to five years. There are currently 69 children on roll. The nursery is open each weekday for 49 weeks a year from 8.00am to 6.00pm and children may attend full or part time.

The nursery employs 21 staff overall. The Head of Centre is a job share role and both managers hold relevant early years qualifications. There are fourteen early years educators and three assistant early years educators, all of whom are appropriately qualified. There are four members of staff working towards the Early Years Foundation Degree.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The nursery excels in meeting the needs of all of the children; they promote their welfare, learning and development needs to a very high standard. Children are active learners who take the lead in their progress with the full support of the partnership between staff, parents and others. The senior management lead effectively and, along with their staff team, promote a very positive commitment to continuous improvement. Their meaningful self-evaluation and action plans ensure that all children progress at their own pace in an inclusive and vibrant learning environment.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- make more effective use of the quiet room (the Den) in the planning programme to ensure that all children have equal access to this facility

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Safeguarding is a prime priority to protect children. The effective policies and first class vetting procedures together with induction for new staff as well as rigorous training means that all staff are very secure in their knowledge on all aspects of protecting children. Robust risk assessments fully support children's safety both inside the building and when they go on outings. Documentation that supports safety, such as fire evacuation procedures, records of children's accidents and medication are maintained and checked thoroughly for accuracy to ensure that no child's needs are overlooked.

The organisation of the nursery is strong. Practitioners are extremely enthusiastic because they benefit from the excellent support from working together, team meetings and one to one appraisals. All staff, parents and children contribute to the self evaluation which ensures that continuous improvement is drawn from a variety of ideas and sources. As a result, considerable improvements have been made since the last inspection. Children now benefit from a vibrant environment where space is plentiful and toys and resources are very well planned to stimulate their curiosity and interest. The quiet room is also used regularly for focused activities which are of a particular bonus to children. However, this facility is not always effectively included in the planning to ensure equality of access for all children. All toys are maintained to a high standard which is supported by the regular systems for checking and cleaning.

The excellent partnership with parents and others who support the children is an outstanding strength. Parents speak about their excitement on how their children are developing and learning. They feel totally involved and eager to contribute as they consider the nursery is part of an extended family. Home visits before children start are worthwhile and meaningful in building strong relationships with parents. Practitioners' show their desire to get it right for the children from the start. This is then followed by regular newsletters and constant encouragement for parents to stay and play with special regard to fathers. The new parents' committee demonstrates the passion parents have for the nursery and their willingness to contribute to the outcomes of their children from the start to when they leave to go to school. Key workers always support children and parents during the transition to school through activities in the nursery as well as planned visits to local schools.

Practitioners promote diversity and inclusion well at the nursery. The setting is rich in diversity with the children from different cultures who attend. These facts are obtained, along with the children's likes and dislikes, during the initial home visit and then built upon over the settling in period. Many practitioners speak other languages and some request key words of children's home language to further support children in this respect making them feel at ease and comfortable.

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

All children and babies thrive in an inclusive play environment which is planned very effectively to meet their developmental and educational needs. The layout of the rooms and resources is a particular feature of this setting as it gives children plenty of space and total freedom to explore and learn at their own pace with the excellent range of high quality toys and resources. This is coupled by the total commitment of practitioners who show passion and enthusiasm for the important work they do. They successfully balance child and adult led activities to provide children with the appropriate challenge yet adapting the teaching approach to ensure that each child feels special. This is helped by the secure key worker system together with the effectiveness of planning covering the six areas of learning. The strong organisation of children's individual learning plans is evident. This is fully supported by thorough systems to observe and assess children's achievements, enabling them to make the best progress. As a result, children are constantly occupied and keen to participate with others in a stimulating environment.

The nursery's quality of teaching and promotion of children's achievement is exemplary. Children benefit greatly from practitioners high level of skill and ability to interact, thus extending learning, planting the seed of ideas for children to build upon. This is shown in many ways. For example, babies and toddlers explore treasure baskets and story bags which support their early communication. Very young children love the feel of the soft persona dolls and relate to them with cuddles and repeating simple words in response to the practitioner's hands on method of telling the story. Older children make up their own stories in their role play in the home setting, cooking fruit and vegetables, counting out the pieces for each other and describing how they are good for them. Children are becoming very independent, developing skills from a very young age in dressing themselves and seeing to their personal needs. Coats and hats are easily accessible on their named coat hooks and they spend time practising putting them on with the gentle support of staff. Children also make many decisions throughout the day which increases their self-esteem and confidence. This is supported by the abundance of high quality toys and resources as well as the complete free flow of inside and outside play. Children feel the exhilaration of the fresh air and make the most of the variations in seasons. They care for plants in the spring and summer, play with autumn leaves and explore the wonder of snow, looking at its consistency as well as having fun playing snowballs. Children love going outside as it is where they are able to take part in activities with children of differing age groups in a totally inclusive environment.

Songs and nursery rhymes are a continuous part of the day. Practitioners sing at any opportune moment. At lunch time they sing to babies whilst preparing them, washing their hands and ensuring they are supported in their chairs. The singing calms babies whilst they wait for lunch to be served. Older children sing a variety of songs which inform them of numbers, colours and new words. The displayed musical instruments mean that children are able to help themselves to accompany songs with percussion rhythm. Children also successfully learn about numbers, shapes and sizes during supervised access to computer games and when using

assembly resources. Children's creative development is a particular strength. This is because children are enthusiastic in the work they do and it is valued. For example, a member of staff introduces a picture of a snowman, using geometrical shapes, children then enthusiastically prepare their own snowman picture, each one unique and children smile with pride as staff wonder at children's inventiveness. Children reflect their understanding of their world through their art work and learn early science in how things change shape. Children marvel as paper goes mushy when water is added and become excited when the addition of glue helps them to build models with Papier-mâché. Children also benefit because the nursery goes on worthwhile outings to places in the community such as Deen City Farm where they learn about the important work as young farmers. In some cases, children take the nursery teddy home and on holiday so teddy is able to bring photos to share with other children.

A very thorough system in place ensures children are secure and feel safe within the nursery. The reception area checks all persons entering the building and the on going risk assessment means that staff recognise the importance of being thorough yet raising children's awareness of their own safety. For example, children learn to play outside on the ice and snow knowing they have to be careful. They are also encouraged to climb the apparatus to extend their physical skills but are guided to think through the best methods to safely achieve their aim. Practitioners are highly effective at providing encouragement, and supporting children's confidence and good behaviour. Many close one-to-one interactions take place to help children feel included and able to explore their feelings. This is shown by the excellent pool of resources that reflect diversity as well as the practitioner's support when playing outside with different age groups. This heightens children's social awareness and ability to consider those who are younger or less able than themselves.

Close attention to promoting children's healthy growth and development means that children learn about personal hygiene by practitioners reinforcing good daily habits. They are also good role models, showing children the importance of cleanliness in all they say and do. For example, the rigorous procedure for cleaning and checking toys means that children have a very bright clean place to play with well maintained toys and equipment. Furthermore, children benefit from healthy nutritious meals which are prepared fresh each day by the dedicated cook. Children become invigorated in daily energetic exercise in the fresh air.

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

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met