

Little Unicorn Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	152800
Inspection date	25/05/2011
Inspector	Shaheen Belai
Setting address	2 Westferry Circus, Canary Wharf, London, E14 4HD
Telephone number	02075196519
Email	
Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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

Little Unicorn Day Nursery registered in 2001 and is operated by a private company, Fran n Bru Ltd. The nursery is situated in Canary Wharf, within the London borough of Tower Hamlets. Children have access to four rooms and associated facilities.

The nursery operates Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6.30pm. It operates throughout the year except bank holidays and is closed for one week at Christmas. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register, the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 26 children under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 29 children in the early years age group on roll, attending on both full-time and part-time basis.

The nursery group employs nine staff, including the manager and they all hold relevant early years qualifications and childcare experience.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff work with a good understanding of the individual needs of children. This helps to ensure that their learning and welfare needs receive good attention. Children enjoy their time in the nursery as they access a range of play opportunities and are able to make some choices and show some independence. The nursery has good partnerships with parents and recognition is given to working with other professionals. Documentation is generally well maintained, this includes a full range of policies and procedures. The provider employs effective self-evaluation which enables the nursery to understand its strengths and what areas may need to improve. This gives it a good capacity to enhance its level of provision and outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- maintain a consistent daily record of the names of the children looked after on the premises, their hours of attendance (Documentation) (Also applies to the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register). 26/05/2011

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

- improve the availability of books to increase children's spontaneous interest in books and literature.
- review the current systems of observational assessment to match children's progress to the expectations of the early learning goals, identify learning priorities and to assist appropriate learning experiences for each child.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding the safeguarding of children in their care, and children's welfare is given high priority. There are robust systems in place to ensure the suitability of adults working directly with the children. Visitors to the nursery are asked to identify themselves and sign the visitors' book. Regular risk assessments and safety checks of the premises and additional risk assessments for outings contribute to children's safety. Appropriate staff deployment and the use of consistent agency staff cover ensures that ratios are maintained and children are suitably cared for at all times. Documentation to support the smooth running of the nursery is generally well maintained. The current system for recording children's hours of attendance is usually effective. However, several instances were noted in the daily register where children's times of arrival or departure have not been recorded. This results in a breach of a specific legal requirement. Children's good health and well-being is promoted by staff. For example, staff adhere to the nursery's medication and accident procedures and implement hygienic daily routines. In addition, the children's health is further supported as the majority of staff are trained in current first aid practice.

Management shows a clear understanding of the need to use self-evaluation to understand about the nursery's level of provision. Management use various methods for identifying improvement that may be needed. For example, the regular use of parental questionnaires, observations on children and contributions from staff identify areas for improvement. In addition, the development of staff skills and knowledge through additional training and updating qualifications further enhances children's care and well-being. There have been positive improvements made since the last inspection. For example, the nursery has addressed the safety and security of children by addressing how visitors and parents access the premises and ensuring staff have an understanding of child protection procedures via training and reviewing the nursery policies and procedures. Partnerships with parents are supported fully to promote a good working relationship. Communication with parents is carried out on a daily basis through the use of various methods, such as the provision of diary sheets to reflect their child's day, verbal communication at handovers, newsletters and the use of emails. Periodic meetings allow for parents to spend time with their child at 'Fun Days' or parental meetings. They are also encouraged to spend time with their child spontaneously if their work commitments allow for this. Parental feedback on the service is 'brilliant', 'supporting children's independence', 'children developing new skills' and 'staff are informative on a daily basis'. The nursery understands the importance of wider partnerships, for example, with professionals to support the learning and development of children requiring additional support.

Children use a well-resourced and organised play environment. It is attractively maintained, spacious and interesting to children. Staff respond very well to the needs of children and make a very positive contribution to the effectiveness of the nursery. Staff facilitate child-led play well, as well as adult-led activities. They stay within reach to provide support and guidance. The nursery promotes inclusive practice as all children are considered to be individuals who are able to build on what they can already do. Children have a range of opportunities that enable them to understand about their diverse world, for example, dressing up clothes, the celebration of festivals and the range of posters and photographs on display throughout the nursery. Effective systems are in place for supporting children who may have English as an additional language, such as ensuring a list of key words are sought from parents to support communication with the child.

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

Most children make progress as they access appropriate learning opportunities which are both child and adult-led. The staff understand children's starting points and interests and key persons use observations to gain an understanding of the progress that they make. Staff generally use this information to plan future learning intentions and to collate records of achievement which are regularly shared with parents. This approach, together with flexible weekly planning support their ongoing learning needs. The staff have all attended training in the Early Years Foundation Stage and demonstrate an understanding of how children learn through play. However, the current observational assessments undertaken are not employed sufficiently rigorously to fully inform planning intentions or track progress towards early learning goals.

Children enjoy a range of activities to explore creative and messy play, which enable them to learn through hands-on experiences. For example, they explore water play, collage work, free drawing, sticking activities and hand painting activities. Young infants are encouraged to use their sensory skills as they touch, feel, look and listen. A range of interactive resources initiate early learning for young babies. Children face challenges and learn how to resolve with adult support, as they learn to stack shapes, count out items and sort shapes. Children love singing and are quick to join in with actions, they are confident to make choices of their favourite rhymes. Musical instruments are enjoyed by children who develop an early sense of rhythm and music making. Large print in English and community languages is used throughout nursery as well as some picture labelling to introduce an understanding of the value of print for communication. Although the nursery has a range of quality books, these are not positioned to the best advantage or arranged to be accessible to allow children to access spontaneously or initiate staff to use with young babies. Children show good levels of independence as they feed themselves, help clear away resources with adult guidance and remove their socks and shoes prior to resting. Role play is enjoyed by children allowing them to interpret their ideas and life experiences. Outings to the farm and using the riverboat allow the children to explore their local area.

Children develop an understanding of nature and nurturing responsibilities, as they grow plants and monitor the hatching of chicks in the nursery. Children have access to a range of resources to enable them to develop skills for the future, such as using voice recorders, a camera, keyboard and calculators. Children generally acquire skills and abilities which are appropriate to their age and their progress ensures that most children are prepared for future learning needs.

The children generally play well together. Children at the nursery are supported to present good behaviour as children of all ages are given recognition of their achievements. For example, they receive consistent explanations on why specific behaviour is not allowed and certificates for their achievements. Staff teach children about keeping safe, whilst at the nursery, such as reminding them not to crawl under the table as they can bump their head. The practice of regular fire drills contributes to children developing an understanding of how to keep safe. Children benefit from healthy nutritious food which is attractively presented and takes account of their individual dietary needs. Snack times and mealtimes are a sociable time, whereby staff use this time to promote children's understanding of healthy eating. Children can see life-sized pictures of various foods on display, reflecting different cultures and they participate in cooking activities. Regular outdoor activities contribute to children developing a healthy lifestyle. Staff follow young baby's individual patterns for them to sleep and be fed.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
--	---

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
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	3

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

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

Not Met (with actions)

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

Not Met (with actions)

The registered provider does not meet the requirements of the compulsory and or voluntary part/s of the Childcare Register.

To comply with the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Records to be kept) 26/05/2011

To comply with the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register, the registered person must take the following action/s by the specified date:

- take action as specified in the early years section of the report (Records to be kept) 26/05/2011