

# Seahorse Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number**

123161

**Inspection date**

11/10/2011

**Inspector**

Linda Close

**Setting address**

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**Telephone number**

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**Type of setting**

Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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*.

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.

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## **Description of the setting**

The Seahorse Nursery School opened in 1997. It is located on the ground floor of a private house, in a residential road in the Southfields area of Wandsworth. The ground floor area is largely open plan although children do not have access to the kitchen. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register to care for a maximum of 18 children aged from two years to under eight years at any one time. The nursery is open every weekday morning from 9.15am to 12.30pm during term time only. Some afternoon sessions are offered to older children who may bring a packed lunch and stay from 9.15am to 3pm. There is an enclosed outdoor play area accessed directly from the playroom.

There are currently 22 children aged from two years to under five years on roll.

The nursery is eligible to receive funding for nursery education. There are several children on roll who are learning English as an additional language.

The nursery school provider leads the staff team and she is appropriately qualified. There are four other members of staff, two of whom are qualified at level two and level six respectively.

## **The overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Children are very happy and safe in the care of nursery staff. They enjoy their play and learning and all children make very significant progress given their age and starting points. Nursery staff have established an exceptionally strong partnership with parents and carers and together they successfully support children in their development and progress. The provider and her staff focus sharply on every aspect of their work and they constantly strive to enrich children's learning experiences. They are determined to strengthen any area of their work that is identified as in need of improvement.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- developing further the use of information and communication technology and programmable toys to support learning.

## **The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision**

Safeguarding is prioritised in the nursery. A senior member of staff has attended safeguarding training for leaders and an assistant has attended a relevant course and they share their learning at staff meetings. The provider regularly reminds staff about child protection matters and what to do if they are concerned. Rigorous checks are made at the time of their employment to make sure that staff are suitable to work with children. This work, the very strict security at the nursery, and the excellent daily checks and risk assessments conducted by the staff, helps to keep the children safe.

The provider compiles a detailed self-evaluation of the provision, with contributions from the children, their parents and all members of staff. She is very keen to take the setting forward and has embraced new systems of organisation and planning within the nursery, which are very successful. The system is based on observation, listening to children and consulting the children, which help them to feel respected, involved and in charge of their learning. Every recommendation for improvement that was made at the last inspection has been well met. The provider and her staff share the same determination to provide a high quality learning environment for the children and their teamwork and drive for improvement is exemplary.

Staff deployment in this small group is very effective. Staff agree on their roles and responsibilities before the children arrive and the smooth running of the sessions shows that their work is successful. The nursery is very well equipped and the outdoor area is popular and stimulating. The children requested a large sand pit and a large gravel pit when the refurbishment of the outdoor area was at the planning stage and their wish was granted. The nursery has many books, a wide range of good quality dressing up clothes and good quality toys. The resources for information technology are generally good.

The nursery focuses sharply on the individual needs of each and every child who attends. Children's key workers compile a 'white book' of observation notes, children's remarks, photographs and comments from parents. The information is used to shape the learning experiences that are offered to individual children beside and within group activities. The provider has forged strong links with local authority advisory staff and, with parental permission, she can seek specialist support if children need it. The provider gets to know the teaching staff in local schools and she invites them to visit the nursery and get to know the children who will move to their schools. Parents heartily approve of this arrangement and they say that children slip smoothly from nursery to school and they thrive when they get there. Parents speak very highly of the nursery staff. They say that their children love to come here and they feel respected, well informed and fully involved in their child's learning.

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

Children show that they feel very safe and secure in their happy smiling faces, their confident behaviour and their eagerness to participate in all of their activities. Staff greet the children warmly and they are skilled at reassuring those few children who are a little upset when leaving their parents. Parents comment that the gentle settling in policy is very successful. Children learn all about road safety from staff explanations, role play activities and visits from police officers.

Children gain an exceptionally good grounding in learning to adopt a healthy lifestyle. The nursery supports a 'Walk to School' campaign and actively promotes energetic play outdoors. Children know that you 'might get germs in your tummy' if hands are not washed before eating. They relish eating their fresh fruit snacks and healthy packed lunches, for those who stay. Parents willingly cooperate with the nursery healthy eating policy in the provision of food and drink. Children learn about how their body works through discussions with the staff. They know that their heart beats faster after energetic exercise and that dashing about makes you hot. Children find out about dental hygiene from planned activities involving toothbrushes and a visit from a dental specialist.

Children are actively encouraged to contribute to the life of the nursery. They meet with staff every morning to discuss what activities and resources should be put out. They take it in turns to 'take notes' at these meetings and feedback the quality of their experiences later in the day when a brief review meeting is held. Children have easy access to a wide range of excellent resources for mark making and they show pleasure as their work is praised and displayed, which raises their self esteem. They successfully learn to recognise their own names and some can already write them using correctly formed letters. They learn about the sounds and names of the letters of the alphabet through songs, action rhymes and matching games. Staff teach children to count, sort and match through play and discussion. and the children have such fun they learn without realising it. Staff provide some good quality battery operated resources, including remote control toys, and there are a few interactive labels on displays. The children are gaining the skills that they will need for future learning.

The staff speak to the children extremely kindly and politely and the children respond to this role modelling very well. The children's behaviour is exemplary. They play happily together, they take turns with favourite toys and they are far too busy to misbehave. Children are actively involved in fund raising initiatives. They visit charity shops to donate things they have grown out of and they make cakes and biscuits to sell. Children enjoy taking turns to ring a little bell to tell everyone it is time to tidy up. They all help to put toys away and they are very efficient. Every child is encouraged to make a positive contribution to life in the nursery group.

Children gain a mature general knowledge from the many discussions and interesting activities they enjoy at nursery. They learn about pullies in the gravel pit, they explore the properties of ice, they see how food changes when heated and they have excellent fun making model volcanoes erupt. Staff share interesting

news from the daily paper as children eat their lunch and children are enthralled.

## 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

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

### The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

<b>The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	1
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

<b>Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage</b>	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	1
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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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