

The Mulberry Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 125049
Inspection date 18/10/2011
Inspector Margaret Travers

Setting address 10 Howard Road, South Norwood, London, SE25 5BU

Telephone number 020 8656 4945

Email

Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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

The Mulberry Kindergarten opened in September 1997. It operates from a house located in a residential area in South Norwood, in the London Borough of Croydon. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The kindergarten serves the local community and is linked with the local children's centre. It opens each weekday throughout the year with the exception of bank holidays, staff training days and a week at Christmas. The times of opening are from 8am to 6pm. The kindergarten is registered on the Early Years Register and both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 38 children may attend the kindergarten at any one time. There are currently 42 children aged from six months to under five years on roll. The kindergarten receives funding for providing free early education for all children aged three and four years, and for eligible two-year-olds. The kindergarten supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities as well as those who learn English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions, including part time. There are 14 members of staff employed to work with the children all of whom hold relevant National Vocational Qualifications. Two members of staff hold an early childhood degree. In 2010 the kindergarten received an accreditation award from the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The kindergarten warmly welcomes all families, and children thrive and thoroughly enjoy the happy atmosphere created. The exemplary staff team thoroughly checks that children's welfare is safeguarded effectively. Children make excellent progress in their learning using high quality environments. An excellent key person system is implemented so that inclusive practice is fostered successfully. Exceptional partnerships with parents effectively enhance the quality of children's care and development. The managers and staff work well together demonstrating a outstanding capacity for ongoing 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:

- considering creating cosy book corners that are reassuring and comforting for all children, within each area of the kindergarten.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Arrangements for safeguarding are fully rooted in practice making sure that children are extremely well protected. All staff are trained effectively to recognise any child who may be at risk of harm. Children's safety and security is a high priority. Regular risk assessments and rigorous daily safety checks are completed for all areas of the kindergarten. These allow children to play in secure, safe premises. Highly effective employment procedures are in place that include checking staff are suitable to work with young children.

Staff are actively supported to develop their knowledge and skills through useful staff meetings and by attending external training courses. Managers fully involve the staff team as well as parents and children in highly reflective evaluation systems. This leads to driving ongoing and impressive improvement. For example, extending the staff rest area, adding an entry porch for parents and providing children with an outdoor canopied area.

The kindergarten has highly positive relationships with all groups of parents. Partnerships are excellent and parents are very well informed about the provision. They have regular opportunities to discuss all aspects of their own children's achievement, well-being and development. The highly inclusive systems of communication provide productive partnerships with the parents, resulting in strong levels of engagement with the kindergarten's work.

Children demonstrate clear enjoyment in the environment. Their uniqueness is recognised by the kindergarten staff who know each child extremely well. Resources and activities clearly reflect their varying backgrounds. The environment is planned thoughtfully in all areas, consistent with all children's needs, interests and abilities; this results in positive opportunities that include, motivate and encourage every baby and child. Children feel part of the local community as they visit the library and park. The successful link with the local children's centre results in the kindergarten children visiting there to see baby chicks and participate in a science workshop.

There is a strong commitment to sustainability as children use recycled household materials to make models, and learn how to grow vegetables such as tomatoes and potatoes. Excellent fund raising events are organised by the kindergarten to support local and national charities. Wider partnerships support children well in making the transition to primary school. Children's learning and development records are shared with reception teachers who often report how well the children are doing. Highly effective links with outside agencies support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Staff make every effort to liaise with other settings and schools as necessary, and share development records where appropriate.

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

The kindergarten staff use the Early Years Foundation Stage highly effectively in providing children with opportunities to extend their learning and development. Children are eager to attend the kindergarten and make significant gains in their learning. They often have excellent levels of achievement. Most children demonstrate outstanding progress in developing the skills that will help them in the future. Children show high levels of independence, curiosity, imagination and concentration. The newly refurbished and inspiring outdoor area encourages fascinating and interesting opportunities. Children crawl, walk and run through a mirror maze, build ramps and make dens. For all ages, there is an excellent balance of self-chosen and adult led activities. Children confidently use both the indoor and outdoor environments throughout the day. Across the kindergarten, there is a wide range of high quality play and learning resources. Staff present these resources in innovative interesting ways and encourage excellent engagement.

The highly effective evaluation and planning system for individual children demonstrates staff's extensive knowledge of child development. Assessment through high quality observations is rigorous and staff use the information gained highly effectively to guide planning. Inspirational teaching motivates children. Staff question children very effectively to extend good thinking skills. The children enjoy their time with the staff and this is evident in the way they are keen to share their pictures and talk about their experiences.

The children's welfare and safety is paramount. High adult to child ratios mean children are always supervised. Staff take every opportunity to help children learn about safety, giving reminders about wet grass being slippery. Children use climbing equipment safely. They know how to walk sensibly when visiting the library. Babies and children show they feel extremely secure as they confidently explore their surroundings knowing supportive caring staff are at hand.

Children are developing an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. They enjoy freshly cooked lunches prepared on site each day. Parents are given the menu and special diets are taken into account. Children discuss foods that are good for them and are able to take part in cooking activities to promote healthy eating. Babies maintain their personal routine, including their feeding and sleep patterns. Meal times are a social occasion throughout the kindergarten as children enjoy sitting with their friends. Regular outdoor running, jumping and climbing activities encourage children to see exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. During outside play activities, the babies and toddlers use areas away from the older children for their personal safety.

Behaviour is excellent. Children are encouraged to respect boundaries. They develop excellent relationships with staff and each other. They develop responsibility by tidying up and helping staff to prepare snacks. Every child gets an opportunity to be a daily helper. Staff are extremely good role models and encourage children to say 'thank you' and consider others by sharing. This helps

children to respect, care and make a positive contribution within the kindergarten. Children develop skills for the future as they develop excellent levels of communication and language skills and take part in fun, enjoyable numeracy activities. They show great enthusiasm for playing on the computer and using programmable toys. They really enjoy looking at books and sharing stories with friends although book corners are not cosy. Babies show a strong interest in their surroundings and are actively engaged in their early learning. Children of all ages in the kindergarten are inquisitive and active learners. They investigate resources repeatedly helping them to solve practical problems.

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	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
--	---

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	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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: Met

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