

Little Unicorn Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 119631
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Inspector Shaheen Belai

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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

Little Unicorn Day Nursery registered in 1998 and is part of a chain of nurseries operated by a private company, Fran n Bru Ltd. The nursery is situated in Columbus Courtyard, in Canary Wharf and within the London borough of Tower Hamlets. Children have access to eight rooms, of which five are base rooms and associated facilities.

The nursery provides full and part-time nursery care Monday to Friday from 7.30am to 6.30pm throughout the year except bank holidays. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register, the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 100 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 100 children in the early years age group on roll, attending on both full-time and part-time basis. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 26 staff including the manager and they all hold relevant early years qualifications and childcare experience. The setting does not receive funding for the provision for free early education.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The children are settled, happy and are cared for by staff who have developed positive relationships with them and their parents. Children's individual needs are well known to the staff. Children access a range of resources to contribute to their learning and development. Most documentation is in place and helps underpin the service offered and contribute to children's welfare satisfactorily. Staff have some familiarity of using the systems in place to assess children's learning. Management evaluate the practice of the setting and are able to identify areas for improvement. Previous recommendations have been met satisfactorily.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- keep a consistent daily record of the names of the children looked after on the premises, their hours of attendance and the names of the children's key workers (Documentation) (Also applies to the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register)

01/07/2011

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

- provide children with opportunities to make additional choices in their play and develop self-help skills at meal times
- review the current system of observational assessment in children's profiles to include detailed information on children's starting points and identifying realistic next steps in line with the area of learning
- review the organisation of children's toilets, to ensure privacy of children is respected

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's welfare and safety is promoted appropriately. The nursery has all required policies and procedures in place in the interests of the children's welfare. Children are safeguarded as a result of staff induction to the nursery policies and procedures and attendance at relevant safeguarding training. The manager and designated staff within the company take a lead to address issues of safeguarding and all staff are aware of the nursery's policies and procedures should they be concerned about a child's welfare. Regular risk assessments are carried out for the premises, equipment and outings. Children benefit from the deployment of staff allowing for them to be supervised carefully, with consistent agency staff used for staff absences. These measures contribute to children's safety. All required documentation is in place to support children's health and welfare, however, records of children's attendance are not maintained as required at all times. This impacts on children's safety and is a breach of a legal requirement. Children's good health and well-being is promoted by staff, for example, ensuring all staff are trained in first aid, a record of accidents is maintained, medication is only administered with parental consent and written parental consent is in place for seeking emergency medical treatment should the need arise.

Management and staff as key persons work well in partnership with parents, a friendly, yet a professional relationship is in place. A number of methods are used to keep parents informed about their child's day and their learning progress. For example, parents have access to the nursery's policies and procedures, their child's learning profile, newsletters distributed regularly, asking parents to complete parental questionnaires and seeking parental feedback through a monthly focused question listed on the notice board. Daily communication is supported via verbal discussions at handovers and the use of a daily diary system. Management works with the local authority advisors for seeking training and general advice. The support of health professionals has been sought for meeting the needs of children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery promotes inclusive practice and staff know the children well as individuals, via the exchange of relevant information with parents and implementing arrangements to ensure individual needs are addressed to promote children's health and well-being. The staff team are diverse and reflect the backgrounds of the children attending. This supports the children to develop a sense of belonging and a strong self-identity.

The nursery is spacious and organised generally well. Management have reviewed the use of space since the last inspection and have begun to use additional rooms effectively to promote children's learning experiences. The premises are very welcoming and promote a strong sense of inclusions, as aspects of equality and diversity are strongly emphasised throughout in a very positive manner through the range of resources on offer and the decor. Play rooms are stocked with safe and quality resources; these reflect the children's stages of learning in all six areas. However, the current storage of play resources does not allow children to make free and additional choices in their play. The arrangements of the nappy changing areas allow for children's privacy, yet this is not the case in all the toilet areas.

Since the last inspection management has taken adequate action to improve the operations of the nursery. The action taken has contributed to children's health, learning and ensuring documentation is in place as required for medication and accidents. Staff training is explored for all staff to benefit from, many of which is delivered to the whole staff team. Management have identified their strengths and areas for improvement through self-evaluation; for example they would like to review the observational assessment systems used, increase child-led activities, explore children's views about play experiences and increase opportunities for parents and carers to get involved. The nursery demonstrates a capacity for maintaining continuous improvement.

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

The staff team have received training in the Early Years Foundation Stage Framework and they work together to develop plans for daily activities based on their knowledge as key persons of their key children's individual learning. A record is maintained of children's individual progress to reflect their interests, the range of activities they engage in and the individual progress being made in their learning journey. However, not all staff are skilled in exploring relevant details of children's starting points from parents in all six areas of learning to support initial learning. In addition, information gained from observations is not used effectively to identify realistic next steps in children's learning towards the early learning goals. This impacts on their learning not being supported effectively.

Children happily explore their environment engaging and settling into activities quickly on arrival. They play well on their own, seek out friends or allow staff to support them. For example, the cosy book areas organised throughout the nursery rooms are explored well by children who enjoy being read to by staff. The range of messy activities and creative play allows children to use a range of tools, mediums and to be imaginative. For example, young babies explore playing with jelly, toddlers enjoy wheeling cars in shaving foam and older children create collage pictures using a range of textures. Children have regular opportunities to use the computer, use digital cameras, torches and young babies show great interest in resources that light up and make sounds. Children are confident to solve problems, such as sorting by colour, sorting animals and completing puzzles. Young babies are interested in the movements of mobiles and exploring their reflection in the

mirrors. The provision of tactile, exploratory and heuristic resources supports the development of children's sensory skills, for example the opportunities for babies and toddlers to explore bottles with different contents and the treasure baskets containing a range of natural resources. Children enjoy the physical challenge of the climbing frame and slide and to steer bikes and pushchairs around friends and furniture. Organised visitors coming into the nursery provide children with knowledge of the wider world. For example, the local police and their police car, and reptiles and furry animals brought in by their owner. Children are making progress in their learning and developing a range of skills for the future.

Steps taken to promote children's safety include children participating in emergency evacuation drills and consistent reminders from staff. For example, children are reminded not to rock on the chair when sitting down or run indoors. Children enjoy healthy, nutritious snacks and meals. Inclusion is supported by ensuring individual dietary needs are catered for. Young babies sleep and are fed according to their individual routine. Mealtimes and snack times are a very sociable activity; however staff do not explore opportunities for children to serve themselves to promote their self-help skills. Children have opportunities to be active and rest, young babies settle down to sleep in equipment appropriate for their age. Children behave very well and this is promoted by close staff supervision and the consistent feedback children receive for their achievements. Strategies that are reflected to age and understanding are used to promote children's understanding of right from wrong, for example children receive achievement certificates for their positive behaviour or achievements made in their learning. Children play well together, with strong friendships developing which is evident as they engage in activities together. Children take on responsible roles when asked to by staff, such as helping to clear away play materials. Although the nursery does not have an outdoor area, regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise are included in the daily routine to contribute to children's health. For example, children have opportunities throughout the week to be taken to the local park, use the forecourt at the front of the setting for some outdoor play and take young babies out for a walk along the wharf.

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?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
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	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	3
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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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) 01/07/2011

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) 01/07/2011