

# Barkantine Community Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique reference number** EY288508  
**Inspection date** 22/05/2012  
**Inspector** Susan McCourt

**Setting address** 105a Mellish Street, Isle of Dogs, London, E14 8PR

**Telephone number** 020 7538 8487

**Email**

**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

Barkantine Community Nursery opened in 2004 and is run as a registered charity. It operates from purpose-built premises with childcare provided on two floors. The nursery has reception office and facilities for babies on the ground floor, with facilities for older children on the first floor. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area. The nursery is located on the Isle of Dogs in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. It is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register for a maximum of 52 children at any one time. There are currently 77 children aged three months to four years on roll. The nursery provides funded education for children aged two, three and four years old. The nursery operates each weekday from 7.30am to 6.30pm all year round except bank holiday and Christmas periods. There is also a crche provision which operates alongside internal training courses on Saturdays. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The nursery employs 24 members of staff, all of whom have relevant qualifications. The manager and one other member of staff hold Early Years Professional Status.

## The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Staff create an exemplary learning environment and tailor routines to provide excellent support for children's individual needs. They build excellent partnerships with parents and other partners which results in a truly shared approach to children's care and learning. Overall, the premises are eminently fit for purpose. Leaders and managers set inspirational standards which focus on outcomes for children. Therefore their capacity for continuous improvement is outstanding.

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

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

- strengthening existing procedures to keep all areas clean, with particular regard to the flooring in the dining/messy play area.

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

The nursery staff have an excellent regard for safeguarding children. Staff suitability checks are rigorously monitored with only vetted, experienced and permanent staff taking on the personal care of children. Policies and procedures are robust and all staff understand their responsibilities should they have any concerns about children's welfare. Parents also understand their own responsibilities, such as preventing any visitors following them onto the premises without staff knowledge. Risk assessments are thorough and all staff take children's safety very seriously. They manage children's risk-taking in exemplary ways to support them in learning and exploring their environment safely. For example, children are encouraged to set their own safety rules for the obstacle course. Leaders and managers set very high standards for the staff team and support them with excellent training and mentoring. The whole team continually evaluates the provision and, where members of staff study a particular aspect of nursery life for their qualifications, quickly put into action any improvements they suggest. This evidence-based approach enables the team to focus on the outcomes for children and make extremely well-targeted improvements. For example, after studying exactly how children used the central upstairs hall, they transformed it into another play area which improved the free-flow aspects of children's play.

Resources are managed in exemplary ways and sustainability is a very high priority. Play materials are taken from real life objects as far as possible so the home corner has real pots and pans, spoons and food packets. The den outdoors is made of branches that the children watched being sawn off the tree outside, and they use the logs as steps, seats and stepping stones. Children make their own books to tell the stories of things they have done, such as making story-sack items out of recycled materials. They can move freely between the indoor and outside play areas so they can use the adaptable spaces in ways to suit their interests. However, the shared hall is used both for messy play and as a dining area and the floor is carpeted rather than easy to wipe down. As a result, staff sometimes find it difficult to maintain high levels of cleanliness at all times.

Resources reflect the diverse community and the variety of cultures, languages and religions of families and staff are present in all aspects of nursery life. Children learn about their differences and similarities in authentic and meaningful ways, celebrating a wide variety of festivals. Children with additional needs are given exemplary support so their progress and development from their starting points is excellent. Staff build extremely strong, communicative relationships with parents. Parents can be members of the governing committee and greatly value the influence they have on the nursery's work. Children's achievements and progress are shared between staff and parents continually. This enables them to provide complementary activities and helps to ensure excellent consistency in care. Nursery staff drive relationships with other settings and schools. The transition to school is expertly managed to support children at this crucial time. Staff build on their excellent links with other professionals to provide integrated support for

children which greatly contributes to their well-being.

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

Staff have created a learning environment where children have exceptional opportunities to be active, independent learners. The furniture and play materials are deliberately adaptable so that children can use them in a rich variety of ways. For example, children wanting to do drawing and sticking collect all the materials they need from the drawers and trays. One child chooses to work at the table and sets out their materials there. Another finds a space on the floor where they can work lying down. Both are completely absorbed and relaxed in their chosen activity for lengthy periods. Staff closely observe children's play and organise activities that they show great interest in. For example, a child's request to visit the train station led to activities spanning the whole curriculum. The outing itself led to children exploring the meaning of road signs in their area and creating a record of the people working in their community. Progress is exemplary because staff treat children's curiosity as the most valuable of resources and cultivate it fully.

Children feel extremely safe and secure. Routines meet their personal needs extremely well and they show very high levels of contentment as a result. Children and babies separate confidently from their parents and carers because staff are extremely thoughtful about all transitions that children make. Children have their personal belongings in easy reach, see their work beautifully displayed and have a real influence over their activities. They gain an exemplary sense of belonging as a result. Children learn excellent self-care skills as staff foster their choice and independence at all times. For example, the nappy changing table is designed so that children can climb up safely. Children follow well-established personal hygiene routines and staff are excellent role models. Children eat very healthy, nutritious meals cooked fresh on the premises. They can choose their own portion sizes and enjoy trying new foods. Children enjoy taking responsibility for laying the tables and tidying away their plates and cups. Drinking water is easily accessible at all times. Children enjoy the whole curriculum outdoors as well as inside. They create their own obstacle courses using crates and blocks, and set up a system of gutters to take water to the water tray. They relish mastering the physical skills involved as they move through the soft play area on their regular outings.

Children clearly get enormous enjoyment from being at the nursery and develop excellent skills for the future. Staff are very conscious that communication is crucial for all children and they create a language-rich environment at all times. Babies are excited when exploring sensory materials in a safe and stimulating environment. As children grow, they gain a wide vocabulary, including mathematical and comparative language. Pre-school children are able to express themselves extremely well and are confident, happy and thoughtfully assertive. Children relish solving problems. For example, on finding a snowy footprint, they test their theory that it was a bear by looking at animal footprints on the internet. They make comparisons by measuring and comparing the print and then examine everyone's shoes until the owner is found. Children behave extremely well. They

cooperate in play, negotiate turn-taking and have a clear respect for each other. This is evident in the way they independently learn key words in each other's languages. Even in exuberant role play, they set their own rules and follow them, as they understand that rules support and enable their play. Children enjoy examining how things work and play with an excellent variety of technological toys, including computers. They record their work in photographs and on tape.

## 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

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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

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