

The Grove

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	14/06/2012
Inspector	Jennifer Beckles
Setting address	Shepperton House, 83-93 Shepperton Road, LONDON, N1 3DF
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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 Grove Day Nursery is a nursery run by two private individuals. It opened in 1999 and operates from a two storey premises in a renovated factory building. It is situated in a residential area in Canonbury in the London Borough of Islington. A maximum of 78 children aged under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time, of which up to eight children may attend the out of school provision at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 8am to 6.30pm for 51 weeks of the year. The out of school care provision is open each weekday in term time from 3.30pm to 6.30pm and during holidays from 9am to 6.30pm. There are 110 children in the early years range on roll. All children have access to a small secure outdoor play area.

The nursery is funded to provide some free early years education to children of three years of age. The nursery mainly provides care for children in the local area. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs 36 members of staff. Of these, 30 staff are qualified, one staff member holds the Early Years Professional qualification, and one staff member has qualified teacher status. The remaining staff members are working towards further early years qualifications. There is a Montessori-trained teacher who offers specialist support. Teaching methods are based on the philosophy of Froebel, Montessori, and Reggio Emilia. The nursery receives support from a mentor from the local authority. It is registered on the Early Years Register and on both parts of the compulsory Childcare Register.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

The nursery offers excellent organisation and wholly specific plans that meet the needs of children exceptionally well. Children are robustly safeguarded because of thorough recruitment practices and excellent implementation of policies and procedures. Resources are of high quality and serve to promote children's learning extremely effectively. Excellent partnerships with parents further support their learning, although some partnership work with others is less well established. A high level of awareness of strengths and weaknesses from thoroughly-reflective self-evaluation identifies highly-appropriate targets for future. The setting has excellent capacity to improve future outcomes for children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person

should consider:

- building on existing partnerships, continue to develop partnership with other settings, namely schools, to support children's transition into school.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff work diligently to provide the highest level of protection for children. They have excellent knowledge and understanding of all safety policies and procedures and are wholly committed to the protection of children. Staff assess routinely all areas of the nursery for safety, both in and out of doors, resources and equipment. They use comprehensive risk assessments to keep children extremely well protected. Enhanced recruitment procedures that involve rigorous checks on staff mean that staff are vetted as being highly suitable to work with children.

The nursery is intelligently organised to provide dedicated, engaging areas for different types of play. For instance, most group rooms contain ball ponds, large soft play areas or a tree house to enable children to explore and develop excellent physical skills. Book corners are attractive, colourful, comfortable, and well stocked with a wide range of books by popular children's authors. Creative areas contain a diverse range of tools and materials to enable children to fully explore shape, colour, texture and form. Interactive displays engage children and provide excellent support to their understanding of scientific and mathematical concepts. A dedicated teaching room allows for one-to-one specialist work by a Montessori teacher to improve outcomes for children. Staff and management regularly and keenly reflect on the provision and set high ambitions for the future of the nursery. For instance, they plan to develop a sensory room for children under two years of age to enhance their learning.

Staff have high regard for the views of parents and regularly elicit their views on the provision. Suggestions by parents have led to policy changes, such as an environmentally-friendly policy which includes the choice of organic cotton nappies for babies. Previous recommendations from the last inspection have been met, such as the development of activities under the Early Years Foundation Stage to support children's learning further. Management is wholly committed to quality assurance of the provision and they regularly observe staff as they care for children, carry out regular, comprehensive staff appraisals, and send all staff on highly-relevant training courses to update their skills.

Staff provide excellent opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning. For instance, a 'Wow' board contains notes from parents on any area of their child's achievement at home to share and celebrate with the nursery. Also, regular letters go out to parents so that they can update staff on children's interests and skills. This information is frequently used by staff to make highly-appropriate individual plans for children. Staff also present valuable workshops on different aspects of child development and other early years matters for parents so that they have insight into how children learn and best care practice. Excellent systems are in place to keep parents informed of their child's progress. For

instance, daily report sheets provide detail on activities and skills as well as comments on children's well-being. Each term parents are invited to meetings with staff to discuss children's progress. In addition, they see folders that contain beautifully-annotated samples of their child's work and photographs of their skills, detailed observations and valuable summaries of their child's development. Parents are extremely happy with the provision and comments among those spoken to at the time of the inspection include, 'the nursery is just brilliant' and 'it is so well organized and staff are completely trustworthy.'

Excellent partnerships exist between the nursery and community health professionals, which help to promote exceptional outcomes for children. Staff from community health teams, such as speech therapists and occupational therapists work very closely with nursery staff. This produces highly-appropriate individual education plans for any child with special educational needs and/or disabilities. These professionals regularly visit the nursery to observe children and provide specialist advice to staff on care and education so that children make excellent progress in their development. The nursery is beginning to form good partnerships with some schools to support children when they start school. For instance, some teachers visit the nursery to get to know the children before they join the class. However, links with schools are not yet fully formed to be of optimum benefit to all children who are due to start school. Staff offer excellent support to children with English as an additional language by learning key words in the child's home language and by using a wide range of high-quality visual resources and games to develop strong language skills.

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

Children are full of joy and delight. They have strong attachments to staff that result in deep feelings of security. Staff provide highly-appropriate routines that help babies to settle very well. Children show great signs of independence and happily and confidently initiate their own ideas while playing. They are very effective communicators and show great enthusiasm for learning. Children consistently display excellent behaviour while young children are supported extremely well by staff to behave in acceptable ways. Children behave in very safe ways and take care of each other. For instance, a child alerts an adult to a younger child biting a knife at lunchtime, and they notify adults if they see any children travelling down the slide in unsafe ways. Children handle tools with great competence. Children demonstrate deep levels of understanding of how to be healthy. For instance, during a story about green vegetables a child comments that, 'the green ones are good for your tummy.' They select eagerly from a selection of nutritious snacks. Children wash their hands readily and independently at appropriate times and show awareness that 'washing makes them clean and stops bugs.' They take delight in a wide range of engaging physical activities, such as regular yoga sessions, weekly fun group games organised by a physical development specialist, and creative use of the small outdoor area to climb, ride and move in different ways. Children enjoy being outdoors and have daily

opportunities to get fresh air by going for walks along the canal, to the local park and farm, and other places of interest.

Staff provide active exploratory experiences for children and place high priority on the development of children's self-esteem. This is because the nursery provision is influenced by the work of Reggio Emilia, Montessori and Froebel, early years philosophers. For example, staff display spontaneous comments made by children throughout the nursery which provide great insight into their understanding of different concepts. Staff keep meticulous records of children's ideas for play activities and provide them with space and resources to actively explore and extend their ideas.

Children make exceptional progress across all areas of learning. They have a deep interest in books and happily look through their favourite stories, chanting familiar refrains. Children have secure knowledge of letters and their corresponding sounds; many write simple words and are beginning to write short sentences. They recognise their own names as they register their attendance each day and write their names on their work. Children show excellent mathematical skills as they count meaningfully, recognise and write numbers, and add and take away two amounts from each other. They use mathematical language with confidence and know a wide range of shape names. Toddlers confidently sort items in order of size and use appropriate language to describe and compare size.

Children's paintings and drawings show thoughtfulness and great detail. They have excellent understanding of the world around them, such as the features of volcanoes and life cycles of living things. Children are competent with technology and operate this with great skill. Babies explore a wide range of movement as they happily clamber over large soft play cushions. They learn about body parts as they sing along to nursery songs with great delight. Babies learn very effectively about shape, colour, texture and form as they explore a wide range of interesting natural resources. Children attending the out of school club learn much about the world around them. They show lots of interest in world maps and enjoy the challenge of identifying countries that have wild animals. Children work extremely well together as a group and develop conversational skills as they enjoy long discussions. Staff plan highly-appropriate, varied, fun and challenging activities, from craft making to organised physical group games.

Children have firm friendships with each other and they treat each other kindly. Overall, children behave exceptionally well. Younger children respond positively to excellent and consistent methods used by staff to manage their behaviour. They learn about other ways of life and to value difference because staff plan full learning experiences for children. These are based on countries from all around the world including food, music and lifestyles. Parents from different cultures visit the nursery to talk about their culture. For instance, a Scottish father dressed in a kilt read a story by a famous Scottish children's author to the children. Staff tackle areas of children's underachievement well because their progress is audited and relevant steps are taken to address any areas of inequality.

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	2
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

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

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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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