

Longwood School and Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector

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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

Longwood School and Nursery re-registered under a new partnership in 2011. The nursery first opened in 1990, it is located in Bushey on the outskirts of Watford in Hertfordshire. The nursery operates from five rooms attached to the main school and shares use of the school hall and library. Children have access to outside play areas, including secure play space for the younger children, large grassed areas and adventure play for the older children. The children are given opportunities to take part in music, dance and French classes.

A maximum of 228 children under eight years may attend at any one time, of which 120 may be in the nursery which is on the Early Years Register. Children from a variety of cultural backgrounds attend the setting. There are currently 119 children on roll in the early years age group.

The nursery is open each day throughout the year from 7am until 7pm, except Bank Holidays. The wrap around care club catering for before and after school and during school holidays is registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. They have use of the main hall, a classroom and outside play space. At the time of inspection the nursery and the holiday care club was in operation. The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

The registered providers are involved in the day-to-day running of the setting. They are supported by the Nursery Supervisor who holds a level 4 qualification and who oversees the planning and staffing of the nursery provision. There is a team of 43 members of staff who have relevant experience and qualifications. One member of staff is working towards an early years degree.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff successfully promote children's learning and development to a good level. Most of the information gained through the observations and assessment process is used effectively. The well-qualified and experienced staff team know the children and their family backgrounds well so respond effectively to their individual needs but at times the children's independence is not fully promoted. Children are cared for in a safe and well managed environment. All the required documents for the smooth running of the setting are in place. Highly effective partnerships between the provider, parents and other agencies benefits and enhances children's care and learning. Priorities for development of both the staff and provision are identified through an evaluation process linked to the main school. The systems that are in place reflect on current practice and planning for the future ensures continuous improvements and positive outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review planning for the children's next steps to ensure they are linked to developing their existing talents
- develop children's experiences so they have opportunities to build on ideas, problem solving and every day skills.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety and welfare is promoted through good practice and effective policies and procedures that are reviewed regularly. Children are safeguarded as all adults have the required background checks. A comprehensive recruitment and vetting process ensures all adults are suitable to work with children. There is a designated member of staff to co-ordinate safeguarding training which is mandatory and most of the staff team hold first aid certificates. Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Risk assessments for the building, outings, outside play and the home rooms are effective in identifying and minimising risk to children.

The setting has a highly positive relationship with all parents, carers and supporting agencies. Parents are well informed about their children's achievements and many aspects of the nursery setting. Very effective channels of communication are in place for day-to-day information and an emergency contact as they can text all families instantly when needed. The information gained as the children join the setting is kept with their learning journeys so staff have instant access to the detail of their individual and family needs at all times. Parents contribute to their children's learning journeys, and their comments show they are extremely pleased with the activities the children take part in and the progress they are making. Parents have opportunities to come into the nursery to read and take part in activities. There are regular consultations, key staff are always available to talk to parents. Many families have had several children attending the nursery with some going onto the main school. Designated and trained staff support children who have special educational needs and/or learning disabilities. The setting works with families and outside agencies to ensure all children's individual needs are respected and valued.

Staff are very good role models to the children. Good behaviour is recognised and consistently praised, especially with the young children at lunch time. Clear boundaries are in place with staff giving gentle reminders to the children to pick up toys and not to walk over books and puzzles. Children of all ages are learning to share, take turns and are becoming aware of others playing nearby. Children are co-operative and are confident in accessing the good range of resources and toys that are stored around each home room. The good quality interaction by staff, well managed routines and resources helps all children gain a good sense of belonging and self-esteem.

The registered providers work alongside the staff team on a day-to-day basis.

Regular staff meetings identify areas of their practice that work well and areas to be developed. There is a consistent approach to ongoing training with the setting being involved in local cluster meetings with other early years providers at the local children's centre. Training and workshops are organised on site and accessed through the local authority early years partnership. The setting has systems in place to ensure continuous improvements in all areas of their practice.

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

Children are cared for in a bright and well-managed environment by caring and motivated staff. Children are cared for in rooms that reflect their stages of development. Resources are age appropriate but are shared between rooms to ensure varied and interesting play throughout the year. Within the planning for the nursery and school the younger children have use of the main hall and library. Many of the young children remain in the nursery through to the pre-school sessions. There is a comprehensive process in place to support and monitor their progress as they make the transition to older care groups. Parents are fully involved with comments noted in the children's learning journeys. Comprehensive links between staff, key workers and families ensure children are confident in their developing skills. They have a strong sense of belonging and make a positive contribution to their own learning and development.

Planning in all rooms is effective in ensuring children have a range of free, spontaneous play and focused adult-led activities throughout the day and week. Children have opportunities for physical play within the home rooms and the extensive and well resourced outside play areas. Young children have a soft play area in their room, older children a low level climbing frame and slide with safety mats and plenty of space to play. Staff are well deployed and support the children in their developing skills. The recently refurbished outside play areas leading from the playrooms provide a covered area for younger children for all weather play and impact absorbent surfaces so older children can extend their skills in a safe environment. Story time for younger children is a good experience. Large books are used with puppets to bring the story to life and for the children to join in and share in the discussion about the story line. Equality and diversity is promoted through the varied range of resources and events planned throughout the year. Resources reflect different cultures and family settings, these are incorporated into play with sensitive interaction by the staff.

Observations and assessments are thorough and recorded in the children's learning journeys. Photographs show how children have a wide range of opportunities both inside and in the outside play areas. The parents review form enables parents to share in the learning journeys and share experiences from home. Most of the information is used to show children are making good progress and is linked to the outcomes in Early Years Foundation Stage. However, planning for the children's next steps is not fully effective as they are not linked to the children's individual progress and personal skills and talents. The detail shows activities the children would benefit from but not how their learning is to be extended and promoted.

Children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle is promoted throughout the nursery themes, topics and routines. Menus show meals are well planned taking into account children's different dietary requirements. Most of the staff have attended food hygiene training. Children clearly enjoy their meals, staff are very supportive in talking about what is good for the children and how eating well will help them grow tall. However, at this important social time the children's independence is not fully promoted. At lunch time they do not have regular opportunities to set the tables, serve themselves and each other and pour drinks. This means the older children's everyday skills such as counting and problem solving that they will need as they move to school is not being fully developed. Well rehearsed hand-washing and cloakroom routines ensure children have time and support as they learn to wash and dry their hands properly. The use of hygienic wipes is effective at snack and meal times as the children wipe their own hands and faces. Children are developing a good understanding about the importance of their own personal care.

Children are motivated and interested in a broad range of activities. They are keen and active learners. Children are learning the skills they need to ensure they make consistent progress in their future learning.

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?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

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

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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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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