

Octagon Nursery School

Octagon Nursery School, St. Saviours Church Hall, Eton Road, LONDON, NW3 4SU

Inspection date

26/09/2012

Previous inspection date

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

3

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend 3

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children 3

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision 3

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is satisfactory

- New children are supported in settling into the nursery as staff organise opportunities for them to visit the term prior to starting. They are afforded time to settle at their own pace and are making friends with their peers
- Parents are happy with the nursery and have a friendly relationship with staff. They like the homely feel of the nursery and find staff approachable.
- Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to safeguard children and know how to proceed if they have any concerns.
- There is a suitable range of resources that support children's learning across all seven areas of learning in the indoor environment. Staff work hard to set out the environment each day to provide different areas within the room to support learning.

It is not yet good because

- Although there is a range of activities across all areas of learning the planning of opportunities and experiences both indoors and outside is not fully effective in extending children's learning. In addition, staff do not fully guide parents and carers in how to support their children's learning at home.
- Documentation is not available as required in order to demonstrate the manager holds a relevant qualification for her role.
- Snack time is not used effectively as an opportunity for children to develop social skills and gain a secure understanding of why they need to make healthy choices in eating.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are scheduled:

- at least once in every inspection cycle. The current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged as inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage; or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised for inspection where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities in the main playroom and in the garden.
- The inspector spoke with the provider who was working in the nursery as part of the ratio and discussed joint reflections on an activity she carried out with children.
- The inspector looked at children's assessment records, evidence of suitability of staff working within the setting alongside a range of other documentation.
- The inspector also took account of the views of parents spoken to on the day of the inspection.

Inspector

Helen Steven

Full Report

Information about the setting

Octagon Nursery School registered in March 2012 and is privately owned. It operates from a church hall in Hampstead in the London Borough of Camden. Children have access to the hall and an enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and currently has 15 children on roll in the early years age range. It is open Monday to Friday from 9am to 12noon during term

times. The nursery also operates a lunch club until 1.30pm for the older children up to three days each week. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. It receives funding to provide free early education for children aged three and four years. The nursery supports children who speak English as an additional language.

A team of four staff members including the manager work with the children each day, with an additional two staff members available for cover to maintain ratios. Of these six, two hold suitable level 3 qualifications and one is working towards a level 2. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To meet the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage the provider must:

- provide evidence that the manager holds a full and relevant level 3 qualification as defined by the Teaching Agency
- develop the methods for promoting children's progress by using the observations more effectively to identify children's next steps in learning and guiding parents and/or carers in ways they can support learning at home
- strengthen and deepen children's current learning and development both indoors and outside by: a) planning first-hand experiences and challenges that extend children's knowledge enabling them to explore rather than directing the activity; b) encouraging children to think critically by asking questions such as 'What else is possible?'; c) using routines effectively as learning opportunities

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- review the organisation of snack time to promote children's social development and independence by, for example, encouraging them to be involved in food preparation and sitting in small groups. Review the food that the setting encourages children to enjoy and the ways they are informed about and choose healthy snacks.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Children have access to a suitable range of activities and learning experiences across the seven areas of learning. As a result, they are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Staff talk to parents when children start at the nursery to establish children's interests. Staff do not establish children starting points in learning until later in the term. Children arrive at the setting and enthusiastically write their names and place their name cards on a board to demonstrate they are present in the nursery. Although not

consistently applied, this type of activity enables children to learn there is a purpose to the marks they make and recognise their names. Children's home languages are known by their key person and there are some resources and displays that reflect their individual backgrounds.

On occasions, staff spontaneously follow children's lead to support and extend their learning. They talk to children during their activities, but do not always ask questions to encourage the children to think more deeply. Children notice a spider, which provokes staff to incorporate 'Incy wincy spider' into circle time. However, staff do not take all opportunities to extend children's interests. Children adore the home corner and many spend lots of their time in the area engaging in imaginative role play based on their first-hand experiences. They cook and feed their dollies and then take them for a walk.

Children have opportunities to grow vegetables in the adjacent garden; they will collect their crop in time for harvest festival. Outings within the local environment, for example, to the fire station, and visits from parents with interesting jobs help children gain an understanding of the world and benefit from inspiring role models.

Activities such as cooking and sand play support children's knowledge of measuring and volume. Children develop understanding of numbers, as they are encouraged to count at circle time and engage in singing favourite number songs. A project based on a story book about a caterpillar is used to help children understand numbers as they observe different amounts of fruit. However, they do not have the opportunity to handle the fruits to touch and smell them or to sort or count them independently. Staff talk to children about concepts of position as they discuss a toy crocodile being under and over a table. A book corner is available which is well resourced and has cosy cushions, although on the day of inspection children did not make good use of this. A large group story is organised weekly and other storytelling takes place spontaneously. Some children listen to a story to inspire them to create items for an adult-led display based on the book.

Children have access to the outside area at set times each day. This is usually in dry weather as the ground is somewhat muddy and not all children have suitable footwear available. The outside space has been used for growing and there is a playhouse and kitchen for role play, which children request resources for. The space largely provides physical play where children climb on milk crates and on a low wooden structure. There are large push-along toys that children manoeuvre around the space and tyres for stepping in and balancing on. The provider has identified that this is an area for development and has plans for the design of the area. However, day-to-day plans lack inspiring learning opportunities across all the areas of learning. There are electronic toys available for children, although staff do not take care to ensure they are functioning correctly.

Parents enjoy taking home their children's profile books during the holidays to read at their leisure. Records do not currently include parent's observations or specifically inform parents and carers how they can support their children's learning at home. Parents feel able to speak with all staff and are aware that their children have a key person, but are not all sure who the current person is due to changes over the summer.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Children are happy within the nursery and have friendly relationships with their key person and other staff members. The provider has bank staff available that can cover at short notice, who are aware of the nursery's routine and know many of the children. A number of visits before the summer holidays have made settling into the nursery a smooth transition for new children. Parents and carers are welcome to stay so children settle at their own pace. Children have developed friendship groups and share ideas with each other. At times some children behave in a way that is unwanted and staff are calm in their approach in talking to the children. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for jobs such as 'washing up' and being the 'apple boy/girl' at the end of the session.

Staff support children's well-being by maintaining required records, such as medication and accident reports. They know and adhere to children's dietary requirements. Children have snacks at a set time in the day and not as and when they identify they are hungry or thirsty. It is a large group activity and although children have the opportunity to pour their drinks from a jug this is under the direct guidance of adults. In addition, adults have prepared the foods for children and hand the bowls round to each child. Children have biscuits each day as well as fruit and vegetables. However, when children ask for another biscuit staff tell them it is not very good for them. This gives children conflicting messages. Chocolate milk is on offer during the week which staff report encourages children to drink milk. However, the foods on offer may hinder children from adopting healthy eating habits and the organisation of snacks does not fully promote children's self-care skills and independence. Children demonstrate suitable awareness of hygiene procedures as they are keen to hand wash prior to handling food and after toileting.

Children receive gentle reminders about safety during the day and twice-termly fire drills introduce them to how to keep safe in an evacuation. The provider is planning a new strategy to focus on this over the period of one week when the children have all settled. This will ensure that all children have the opportunity to take part and the repetitive practice will provoke discussion and help children embed their knowledge of the procedure. As a result, the provider aims to reduce the time taken to evacuate to keep children safe. Children develop awareness of the importance of exercise. They have fresh air and physical activities daily and regular sessions where they can move their body to music and learn specific dances.

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

Although this is the first registration since registration, the new provider has strong links with prior owner and aims to continue the ethos of the previously established nursery. She is in the process of reviewing the nursery's policies, procedures and systems for recording information with the support of the local authority. There is evidence that all staff hold Criminal Record Bureau checks. However, historical records about other checks undertaken when staff were employed by the previous owner are not available. Required

evidence that the manager holds a relevant qualification is not available for inspection. This is a breach of a specific legal requirement. The provider is aware of how to implement robust procedures for recruiting and vetting the suitability of any new staff. Two members of the staff hold a valid paediatric first aid certificate in order to treat children appropriately in the event of an accident.

The provider has kept herself up to date of current practice by attending a training session on the revised Early Years Foundation Stage. She is reviewing and adapting her systems for recording children's progress across the seven areas of learning. However, delays in implementing planned improvements are due to the focus being on settling children into the setting at the start of term. Staff record their observations in a number of ways, for example, in a log book, in individual notebooks for each child, in the children's profile books and on tracking sheets. Parents adore the profile as it shows examples of their children's work and beautiful photos of their activities. However, primarily the notes are narrative and do not effectively analyse the observations to highlight levels of achievement and learning styles. The provider reports that staff discuss planning with only a brief overview record of any projects being kept. However, as a result, activities are not always well organised and learning intentions apparent. For example, children drawing their faces do not get to look into a mirror until they have already drawn their picture. Interesting activities that are not planned well result in the children losing interest in the task, getting down from their chairs and laying under the table. Self-evaluation focuses on improving the resources, reorganising the key groups and changing the flooring in the garden area to make the space safer for children. The provider has not yet established a systematic process for fully monitoring the effectiveness of the educational programme to identify gaps in practice.

Procedures for carrying out risk assessments are suitable; the provider has adopted the system from the previous owner and has plans to update the assessment this month. Staff are aware of how to implement the safeguarding policy in order to protect the children. This includes keeping staff telephones in a box during the session and not using them to take photographs. Parents talk about the nursery positively. New parents feel staff support their children when settling in and parents of established children state that their children have made progress at the nursery. Systems are in place to liaise with local schools and to share information to support children's transitions. Staff recognise the need to work alongside agencies and other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage involved in children's learning.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets

		the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	Satisfactory provision is performing less well than expectations in one or more of the key areas. It requires improvement in order to be good.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be inspected again within 12 months of the date of this inspection.
Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not Met		The provision has no children on roll. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY443642
Local authority	Camden
Inspection number	786192
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	2 - 5
Total number of places	20
Number of children on roll	15
Name of provider	Janette Margaret Holding
Date of previous inspection	Not applicable

Telephone number

02075863206

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises that are usually their own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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