

Life Bank Nursery at Kensington Children's Centre

23 Quorn Street, LIVERPOOL, L7 2QR

Inspection date	27/08/2013
Previous inspection date	06/01/2009

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection: 4	
	Previous inspection:	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		4
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		4
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		4

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is inadequate

- Monitoring and evaluating systems are ineffective. The manager is unaware of the significant gaps in the observation of children's development and her methods of monitoring staff performance are not robust enough to address the various inconsistencies in practice. As a result, children are not adequately challenged and do not make sufficient progress.
- The manager has not implemented the previous recommendations set. Ofsted have not been informed of a significant event, affecting the well-being of children at the setting.
- Key people are not deployed effectively to ensure that children's learning and care needs are well met. Children have few spaces to relax with cosy, comfortable furniture, and drinking water is not always available.
- Parents are not encouraged to share what they know their children can already do, on entry, or kept well informed about their ongoing progress.

It has the following strengths

- Staff ensure that the environment is safe so children are effectively protected from harm.
- The outdoor play areas offer children plenty of opportunities to develop their physical skills and learn about growing fruit and vegetables.

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
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged 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 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
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector looked at relevant documentation, including planning, observations and assessment records. She also looked at a range of policies, including information used to assess the suitability of staff, attendance registers and the setting's self-evaluation.
- The inspector observed activities and care practices in all playrooms and within the outside play area. She conducted joint observations with the manager, looking at the practice of staff.
- The inspector spoke with the children and staff from each room. She also held a meeting with the manager.
- The inspector also took into account the views of parents and carers spoken to during the inspection.

Inspector

Valerie Aspinall

Full Report

Information about the setting

Life Bank Nursery at Kensington Children's Centre was registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory part of the Childcare Register, in 2008. It operates from several rooms within a Children's Centre in the Kensington area of Liverpool and is managed by Sure Options, a subsidiary of Park Options. The nursery serves the local area and is accessible to all children. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play. The nursery employs 13 members of childcare staff. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3, two at level 2 and one is not yet qualified. The nursery is supported by extra bank staff employed by Sure Options.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday for 50 weeks of the year, from 8am to 5.45pm. The creche is open from 9am to 12 noon and 1pm to 3pm during school term time. It sometimes operates in the school holidays. The out of school club is open each weekday from 3pm to 5.45pm in school term time, and from 8am to 5.45pm in school holidays. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 91 children on roll, of these 76 are in the early years age group. The nursery provides funded early education for two-, three- and four-year-old children. It supports a number of children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that Ofsted is informed of any serious accident to a child while in the care of the nursery, including all actions taken, within 14 days of the incident occurring
- ensure that fresh drinking water is readily available and accessible to all children at all times
- ensure that every child's care is tailored to meet their individual needs, for example, by: ensuring that mealtimes offer all children the opportunity to develop independence and age-appropriate, self-help skills, by encouraging them to serve themselves and offering knives as well as forks so they can feed themselves appropriately
- improve ongoing assessment by: developing the information gathered from parents to include what they know about their child's development in order to identify each child's starting points; providing parents with regular ongoing information about the progress children make and offer suggestions on how parents might extend children's learning at home
- improve the use of observations on children's learning, so that individual children's next steps in their learning clearly inform the planning of activities, so that they make good progress.

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

- encourage children to access the book corners by providing cosy and comfortable furnishings for them to relax on
- develop effective monitoring of staff performance so that: all staff are supported in promoting children's language development and thinking skills; there is consistency on the effectiveness and frequency of observational assessment.

Inspection judgements

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

Assessment of children's learning is too weak to ensure that children are making the best possible progress. While staff observe what children enjoy doing, they do not plan activities with any specific focus on developing the next steps in their learning. In addition,

some children have not been observed or assessed for up to six months. When key people are absent for a significant period of time, there are no arrangements in place for other staff to monitor the learning and development of their key children. Consequently, there is no planning in place to help them make suitable progress. Therefore, children are not learning a suitable level of skills to support their readiness for school. Parents are not encouraged to share what they know their children can already do when they enrol. As a result, there are no effective starting points in place, from which staff can begin to support individual children's development. In addition, parents are not provided with regular updates of their children's learning and so are not encouraged to continue their learning at home.

Some staff teach children through their own initiated play. For example, when making shapes out of dough, staff ask questions, such as 'how many eyes have you made?' They demonstrate how to roll the dough and introduce words, such as 'squash', as children manipulate the dough. In the garden children join in spontaneous singing of 'Incy wincy spider', as staff point out spiders and their webs in the seating area. However, other staff do not engage with children as effectively, focussing on supervising their play, rather than providing direct teaching or support for their thinking.

Staff are more effective when supporting children who have a special educational needs and/or disabilities, or those who speak English as an additional language. Parents are very happy with the level of English their children have acquired and feel the nursery has had a very positive impact on how confidently their children use both English and their home language. Staff know some basic words in languages other than English and use them to support individual children's care and play. Children who struggle with routines and communication are beginning to make progress, as staff work closely with them, sometimes giving one-to-one support.

Children's physical and creative development is soundly supported. Children learn to move in a range of ways as they ride bikes, push prams and confidently use scooters. Planned art and craft activities allow staff to teach children about colour mixing and introduce words, such as 'crinkly', 'shiny' and 'sparkly', as they create an 'under the sea' display. Children have worked closely with the Tate Gallery, allowing children to explore colour, shape and the concepts of light and shade. Children, parents and staff celebrated their artistic achievements in a public exhibition. This collaborative work allows children to work with a range of professionals in the wider community.

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

During the inspection several children were having settling-in sessions in preparation for starting nursery in September. Staff soothe unsettled toddlers by cuddling them and offering toys and activities to distract them. Parents comment that their children 'seem to like' particular staff which shows that secure attachments are beginning to develop. Parents fill in a 'settling-in' booklet that details children's likes, dislikes and care needs, which helps staff get to know new children and begin to meet their needs. However, the key person approach is less effective as several key members of staff are absent, with bank staff covering them. This is most evident in the baby room, where there are no usual

key people present and staff regularly change. While the babies appear calm and the staff present offer interesting activities, new babies have no consistent key person with whom to begin to form a secure attachment. Despite this, parents feel they get a good level of verbal feedback about their child's day and say that staff are friendly, approachable and supportive.

The nursery generally is welcoming and cheerful, with most resources stored at a low level so children can independently access them. The playrooms are arranged in different areas, such as construction, dressing up, messy play and creative areas and children initiate their own play. However, the book corners are uninviting, with no comfortable seating or cosy furnishings to entice children to sit and explore the books. Consequently, children do not use them unless staff are reading to them in a group. However, the outdoor areas are well resourced and children access them freely throughout the day. They run around, making up their own games and challenge themselves by balancing on blocks and crates with the support of staff. Children play cooperatively together and are generally well behaved. Staff encourage good behaviour by reminding them gently, to share, sit still on their chairs and take turns. As a result, children are kind and confident and are learning to take acceptable risks and persist with difficult tasks.

Sustained physical activity, alongside growing and tasting fruit, vegetables and herbs means that children are beginning to learn how to develop a healthy lifestyle. The nursery offers a healthy menu that includes fresh fruit and vegetables. However, during the morning, no drinking water is accessible to children. This is a breach in requirements, as drinking water must be available at all times to promote children's good health and well-being. Mealtimes are not well organised. The cafe area is used by three groups of children, one after the other and so meals appear rushed and are not an opportunity to sit sociably and relax while eating. Some pre-school children attempt to serve themselves, while others are served by staff. This inconsistent approach does not support children in making choices or developing independence. In addition, all children are only offered forks to eat with, and so many use their fingers to help them to eat as they cannot cut up their fishcakes. This does not support their readiness for school.

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

The manager has not effectively addressed a recommendation from the previous inspection; mealtimes are still disorganised with few opportunities for children to make choices, develop independence or learn age-appropriate, self-care skills. Furthermore, the manager has not informed Ofsted of a recent serious accident in the nursery which required a child to be admitted to hospital. To not do so within 14 days is an offence and does not adequately safeguard children. This is also a breach of the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register. The manager has delegated responsibility to room leaders to monitor children's individual learning and development records. However, significant gaps are evident in observing and evaluating children's learning and, where there are planned next steps, they are not always linked to what has been observed, so do not build on what children can already do. The manager is unaware that this is the case as she has not monitored the room leaders' work load. Tracking of all children's

progress is outsourced to a private consultant. Data is available to show if different groups of children are above, in line or below their expected stage of development. However, there is no action plan currently in place, to show how the nursery will address any gaps in attainment.

Some aspects of safeguarding are good. All staff, including bank staff, have a clear understanding of the signs of possible abuse and know who to contact should they have concerns about children's welfare. Risk assessments, medicine, allergy and accident recording are sound. Staff have appropriate first aid qualifications and also have food safety training. These measures help to ensure that children are kept safe from harm. Effective partnerships are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Health professionals and children's centre staff offer support and guidance to staff and parents. As a result, children receive targeted support and so make appropriate progress. Wider partnerships with the Tate Gallery and the adjacent primary school effectively support children to make the transition to reception class. Parents receive daily verbal feedback about their children's day and also get regular newsletters informing them of nursery life and children's centre initiatives. Parents are happy with the care that their children receive and feel welcomed and supported by the friendly nursery team. However, they have too few opportunities to find out how much progress their children are making or share their own observations of their children's development.

Staff have opportunities to develop their professional skills by attending training courses. However, the monitoring of their performance generally is weak. Annual appraisals have a generic company focus, rather than a specific early years focus and so do not identify areas for development that would help staff to support children in making good progress in their learning. Recruitment procedures are sound, the manager ensures that all staff are suitable to work with children by completing the required checks and obtaining references. The manager has the support of the local authority and attends local cluster group meetings to keep abreast of new initiatives and share effective practice.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

To meet the requirements of the Childcare Register the provider must:

- inform Ofsted of any serious accident or injury to, or the death of, any child while receiving childcare (compulsory part of the Childcare Register).

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 action. 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	EY376559
Local authority	Liverpool
Inspection number	914989
Type of provision	
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	84
Number of children on roll	91
Name of provider	Sure Options Ltd
Date of previous inspection	06/01/2009
Telephone number	0151 300 8420

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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, which are usually the childminder's 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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