

# Abacus Nursery School

Abacus Nursery School, Laitwood Road, LONDON, SW12 9QH

<b>Inspection date</b>	18/12/2013
Previous inspection date	13/09/2012

<b>The quality and standards of the early years provision</b>	<b>This inspection:</b>	2
	Previous inspection:	3
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		2
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		2

## The quality and standards of the early years provision

### This provision is good

- Staff foster strong relationships with their key children and help children to develop similarly relationships with each other. Children behave exceptionally well.
- Staff make very good use of the local community and public facilities to support children's learning
- Children's confidence, physical development, ability in music, and progress in literacy is very well supported by qualified teachers
- Staff work very well as a team. They are enthusiastic and create a fun and caring environment for children and parents.
- Management are committed and proactive in driving improvement.

### It is not yet outstanding because

- Staffs planning for younger children to learn and develop through sensory and pretend play is not fully developed
- Staff do not fully exploit opportunities to provide resources and activities to promote children's home languages and to help them settle in to nursery life.

## 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.

## Inspection activities

- The inspector observed child's play and staffs interactions with children in all three base rooms. The inspector observed children age over two during outdoor play.
- The inspector spoke to parents during the inspection taking full account of their views.
- The inspector carried out joint observations of children's play and staff interactions with both the provider and deputy manager.
- The inspector sampled a range of records and documentation relating to staff suitability, safeguarding and risk assessment.
- The inspector held meetings with the provider and management team.

## Inspector

Amanda Tyson

## Full report

### Information about the setting

Abacus Nursery School opened in 1994 and re-registered under the same ownership in 2008 due to a change of company name. It is located in three rooms on the ground floor of a church building in South London. There are two enclosed outdoor areas for play and gardening activities. Access to the building is level and there are toilet facilities for the disabled.

The nursery cares for children aged from nine months to under five years and operates between the hours of 8am and 6pm for 48 weeks of the year. There are currently 66 children on roll. The nursery receives funding for nursery education for children age three and four years. Children attend for a variety of full and half day sessions. The nursery supports children learning English as an additional language. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. The provider employs 12 permanent members of staff, and a variety of specialist teachers to lead music, French, literacy and drama and dance activities for children in all age groups.

### What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- extend opportunities for children to hear and use their first language in the nursery, for example to listen to stories and to sing rhymes in their first language
  
- supplement the toys provided for babies with a variety of natural, real, and open-ended resources to encourage their creativity.

## Inspection judgements

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

Staff have secure knowledge and understanding of the seven areas of learning. They use this well to plan for and support children's progress in all areas of learning and development. Children are extremely happy in this friendly and stimulating nursery. All children make good progress in their learning and development, based on their starting points when they enter the nursery. Children are well prepared for starting school. Staff complete regular and astute observations on children. Staff use these well to complete the statutory progress check and written summary report on children age two years. Assessments on children age under two and over three are less precise, but nonetheless effective in identifying areas where children need or would benefit from extra help. Staff use what they know about children's interests and learning needs to plan exciting activities. Often these are instantaneous for example, when they discover a spider's web

while exploring the common, they return to nursery to make spiders out of construction equipment and creative media. Staff are currently striving to involve parents more in children's learning. For example, by asking them to bring in photographs of children's engagement in family activities for discussion; to help children understand about each other's' lives and cultures. This is proving to be very successful, for example children learn about caravans, see the amazing modal railway in a granddad's back garden, observe another child' on his granddad's boat, and see what an unborn baby looks like as they look at an x-ray of a baby scan.

Children age over two years old are based in rooms that are well presented and resourced to stimulate children's thinking and creativity and to challenge their ability. Toddlers are able to act out their real experiences in the generally well-presented and equipped home corner. They move freely around initiating their own play and investigations and make amazing modals from empty food packaging and creative media. However, staff do not always create opportunities for the youngest children to engage in creative, particularly sensory, play. The garden, with its innovative terrace of four play houses/shops provides amazing opportunities for children to act out their understanding of their real and imaginary world. They send letters in the post office, wrap presents in the grotto, and sell vegetables and cakes in the grocers and bakers. The full potential of this delightful resource is not currently being fully realised by staff, but secure plans are in place to make this a feature of excellence. Staff take children to the theatre every term and frequently to museums, parks, and the library to support their learning and development in all areas. All children have access to high-quality technology equipment, which they use competently. For example toddlers use a touch screen computer. Younger children are provided with a wide range of mark making and writing tools and older children use pencils and the white board competently.

Children are taught how to link letters to sounds and how to pronounce words and sounds properly by a visiting teacher. They learn to read music and represent notes, such as a quaver with two quick claps. The drama sessions help children develop the confidence to express how they feel through facial expressions. For example, they show the difference between worried, angry and sad. Permanent staff manage group discussions and stories very successfully. For example, a story about an 'ugly bug' prompts discussions about feelings, and what a vegetarian and vegan eats. Staff encourage children's critical thinking skills by asking open-ended questions, for example as they experiment with water. Staff make good use of creative play opportunities to encourage children's mathematical skills. For example, preschool children learn to name the three dimensional shaped empty food packaging they use to make models.

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

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming, clean and well maintained environment. The nursery is well equipped with good quality play and learning resources. Squabbles between children are rare because there is plenty to do. Staff establish a strong and trusting relationship with their key children. Children show a strong sense of belonging and security in the nursery. Babies, for example, quickly settle into nursery life because

they are sensitively supported by their key-person through a gradual parent-separation process. Staff have started to ask parents, although not all, for photographs and a recorded message to help older children settle into nursery. Staff have also introduced a picture timetable to help children who are learning English as an additional language understand the routine of the day, such as 'when mummy is coming'. However, while the nursery is very well equipped with lots of stories in English there is less opportunity for children who are learning English as an additional language to see or hear their home language. Babies spend time in the large main play room when toddlers go on outings or into the garden. Toddlers and preschool children often join together for lunch and special activities and outings. This prepares them well for when they move rooms permanently. Throughout the day older children take part in group activities that require listening and attention skills. They serve themselves lunch portions and learn to manage their own personal care. Staff teach children road safety when they are out and about. This is reinforced by visits from the police, and when staff engage children in role play in the garden. Staff ensure children are well prepared for starting school.

Babies are able to sleep at times consistent with their home routines. Staff gently soothe them to sleep with calming music in the background. Babies enjoy lovely 'snuggle times' with their key-person, for instance when sharing a picture book together. The foundations for children to adopt healthy and active lifestyle habits are being firmly laid by the educational programme for physical development. Toddlers enjoy 'diddy dance' sessions. Older children take part in football, tennis and a range of music and movement games, cultural dance, such as 'jam time', ballet and tennis. Children enjoy trips to the local park and common where there is plenty of space to run around.

Staff help children develop understanding of healthy food by growing their own vegetables which they then pick and use to make juices and other recipes. Children are taught the importance of following good hygiene rules, such as for washing hands, which staff demonstrate when they change nappies. Children all enjoy the nursery's home-cooked meals. Staff sit with children to the table and engage them in sociable conversations. Children's individual dietary needs are conscientiously met by staff and the nursery cook.

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

The management team demonstrate clear understanding of the safeguarding and welfare, and learning and development requirements. Risk assessments, which have recently been strengthened, ensure that the premises continue to provide children with a safe and hygienic play and learning environment. For example, the cook and staff carry out opening and closing checks on the premises and the cleaner understands the importance of a thorough clean at the end of the day. The provider is proactive in addressing any issues with the premises that, as it's an old church premises, do arise from time to time. For example, recently the nursery had a problem with their boiler resulting in intermittent loss of hot water over a week long period. The provider called the plumber out three times in the week. The problem was eventually sorted by a replacement part. The provider has a secure contract with a pest control company which carry out a check on the premises

every month. There are good procedures in place for keeping children safe on outings. For example, children wear high visibility vests over their coats with the nursery name and telephone number on. Parents say they receive regular comments from friends, who see children out and about on outings, about the vigilance of staff and sensible behaviour of the children. That said, the staff are not complacent. They carry out a risk assessment of the places they take children to and there is a clear procedure in place for responding to a lost child situation.

Children's welfare is safeguarded well by staff's secure understanding of the procedure to follow if they become concerned about a child's welfare, or behaviour of a colleague. Child protection and behaviour management training is mandatory for all staff who update this every three years. Management take on the role of designated officer for safeguarding and complete a higher level training. There are effective procedures in place for recruiting, vetting and inducting staff, supporting staff professional development and for managing any underperformance. New staff do not start work until their Disclosure and Barring Service check has been completed. Staff receive regular one to one supervision and a yearly appraisal. They have generally good access to external training, such as for developing leadership skills. Staff are supported to achieve higher level qualifications and to develop their knowledge and skills through mentoring and coaching.

The provider has good procedures in place for monitoring the settings' overall effectiveness. Self-evaluation processes involve parents, children and staff. Management work closely with the local authority to drive consistent improvement. They demonstrate good understanding of the settings' strengths and weaknesses and this is reflected in their action plan for improvement. For example, the garden and row of terraced play houses are going to be revamped and equipped with realistic resources. The team are working hard to involve parents more in children's learning. A parent committee is being considered and parent consultations are being formalised. Management are clear about their responsibility to establish strong partnerships with external agencies and this is beginning to be achieved as they work with professionals such as speech and language therapists to support individual children's progress. Since the last inspection planning for the educational programs has improved considerably. Staff have high expectations of children and ensure they are consistently challenged. Play and learning activities are exciting. Staff deployment has also improved; staff supervise children well and ensure they receive good levels of support.

Parents say they like the 'family feel' to the nursery. They are particularly impressed by children's rapidly gaining knowledge, for instance about the weather, staffs use of the community and places they take children to, and the teaching methods for literacy. They also greatly appreciate the range of outings children go on. Parents are particularly pleased that the staff team are consistent. They talk fondly about their child's key-person and are pleased that, since the last inspection, the provider has become very actively involved in the running of the nursery.

## 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	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected within twelve months of the date of this inspection.
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 monitored and inspected again within six 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

<b>Unique reference number</b>	EY369276
<b>Local authority</b>	Wandsworth
<b>Inspection number</b>	948029
<b>Type of provision</b>	
<b>Registration category</b>	Childcare - Non-Domestic
<b>Age range of children</b>	0 - 5
<b>Total number of places</b>	50
<b>Number of children on roll</b>	66
<b>Name of provider</b>	Abacus Kindergarten Ltd
<b>Date of previous inspection</b>	13/09/2012
<b>Telephone number</b>	0208 6758093

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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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