

Arc Nursery

39 Crosby Row, Southwark, London, SE1 3YD

Inspection date	29/01/2014
Previous inspection date	01/03/2013

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	
	Previous inspection:	
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		1
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		1

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is outstanding

- The nursery is vibrant and busy, as children are highly motivated and interested to learn.
- All aspects of the educational programme are implemented very successfully by staff, ensuring children have excellent opportunities to make significant progress in all areas of learning.
- Robust and comprehensive systems of self-evaluation ensure improvements identified by staff are well targeted and measurable.
- Children are happy and extremely settled, as they have excellent relationships with staff and each other. Older children establish strong friendships and play together cooperatively, showing excellent personal, social and emotional skills.

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 activities throughout the nursery and outside play area.
- The inspector had discussions with parents, staff and children.
- The inspector undertook joint observations with staff and sampled children's assessment files.
- The inspector sampled a range of documentation including children's records, safeguarding procedures and parental consent forms.

Inspector

Josephine Geoghegan

Full report

Information about the setting

Arc Nursery was established in July 2002. It was registered again in 2009 when management of the provision was transferred to a parent-led charitable trust. The setting operates from purpose-built premises in the SE1 area of Southwark. It is close to all main transport links for London. Children have access to a number of playrooms and there is a secure enclosed garden for outdoor play. There are pets such as chipmunks, terrapins, a rabbit, rats and a crab. Operating times are between 8am and 6pm. The setting is open all year round, with the exception of public holidays. A team of 26 staff work with the children. Of these, 21 hold qualifications in early years childcare. The manager holds a foundation degree and five members of staff hold a level 4 qualification and are working towards a foundation degree. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register. Children may attend full or part time sessions. There are currently 59 children on roll. The setting receives funding for provision of free early education, including funding for two-year-old children. The setting supports children who speak English as an additional language and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- enhance opportunities for younger children to use equipment to extend their physical development indoors.

Inspection judgements

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

Staff provide an excellent educational programme that promotes all areas of children's learning and development. The assessment cycle is fully embedded in staff's practice. Staff gain valuable information from parents about children's individual needs when they begin, they use this very effectively as a starting point to measure children's progress. Staff make clear, and consistently high quality observations, that are clearly linked to the areas of learning and stages of development. They highlight each child's individual learning styles and identify their priorities for learning. Staff use this information successfully to plan activities that are skilfully tailored to meet children's individual needs. Furthermore, the organisation of the assessment cycle is excellent, because the key person system is fully embedded in staff practice. The key person observes each child in turn and informs parents so that they are aware of their children's progress each week. As a result, parents actively join in and share information about children's learning at home. They then have a meeting with their child's key person, to discuss children's achievements and areas for development and to reflect on their last learning goals. This approach promotes excellent partnerships between parents and staff as well as highly consistent

care and learning for all children. Consequently, children's individual learning needs are supported exceptionally well. In addition, staff ensure the progress checks for children aged between two and three years, are completed with parents. This enables them to assess together whether their children are reaching the expected levels of progress for their age range.

Staff provide an excellent balance of learning opportunities throughout the day and fully embrace children's independent learning. Whilst they offer plenty of opportunities for children to engage in adult-led activities if they wish, children are also free to choose toys and books from the storage units and to follow their own interests. As a result, children are very productive and purposefully engaged in play. Older children are busy and highly motivated to learn. Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour and, consequently, children take responsibility for their learning environment.

The quality of teaching is exceptional and adult-led activities with small groups of children are extremely well planned at a pace that suits the children's learning. For example, during a role-play, a baby dolls' bathing activity, staff ensure all resources are available before they begin. Children learn about health and self-care as they bath their dolls and use toothbrushes to brush their teeth. Staff talk to children about their tooth brushing routines at home, developing their language skills and their sense of place. Children enjoy using the bubbles to wash their doll's hair and staff encourage them to identify the parts of the body they are washing. Staff skilfully teach children about their own safety during the conversation and children talk about how it feels if they get shampoo in their eyes. Staff then give children plenty of encouragement and time to solve problems: how to dry their dolls and put on the nappies and clothes. Children are continuously absorbed throughout the activity, showing very good levels of concentration because staff successfully engage and motivate children to learn.

Staff give high levels of support in developing children's language and communication skills. The focus on language development throughout the nursery is extremely strong. Staff talk to babies at eye-level, using positive facial expressions and language, encouraging them to babble and make sounds. Older children engage in meaningful conversations with each other and staff during play. They talk freely about what they are doing and staff ask questions that make them think, to effectively extend their learning. Staff working with babies help them to learn new words by reading books and pointing to the pictures. They ask children if they can find things and use lots of repetitive language and praise to consolidate children's learning. Younger children also enjoy lots of songs, joining in the actions and jigging along as staff sing. Older children develop their literacy skills as they snuggle up to staff in the cosy book corner and listen to numerous stories. The rich learning environment further promotes children's literacy and early writing skills. For example, children are surrounded by text and writing materials for them to use, and they take every opportunity to do this. They recognise and find their names to register as they arrive. These activities enable children to be extremely well prepared for their next stage of learning.

Staff provide a broad range of equipment to help children develop their physical skills and they plan outings to local parks, so that children can use more challenging play equipment. Babies and younger children confidently use the soft play equipment indoors,

enabling them to develop their physical control as they climb through the tunnel, up the steps and slide down the ramp. However, younger children have fewer opportunities to use sturdy toys to push or pull along, or upon which to sit and ride during indoor play, to further promote their walking skills. Staff encourage children's mathematical skills very effectively during all aspects of their play. They count with children, and ask questions that help them think and solve problems, for example while fitting the train track together. Younger children sort the animal puzzle parts with staff and confidently fit them together. They then make the animal sounds, because they are happy with their achievements. Staff provide frequent cooking activities for older children, enabling them to effectively develop their awareness of size, weight and measure, as they take turns to add the ingredients. Staff enable children to gain first hand experiences of nature, which develops their understanding of the world exceptionally well. For example, children help to care for and enjoy watching the numerous pets kept in the nursery. Younger children put their fingers on their lips to indicate that, 'Snap', 'Crackle' and 'Pop', the nursery rats, are sleeping. Children help to feed the rabbit and enjoy watching the movements of the chipmunks and terrapins. Staff also develop children's understanding of the world through regular and meaningful outings in the local community, and activities relating to festivals and events. Staff provide a wide variety of exciting creative activities. They are highly committed to making activities inviting for children to explore, such as different colour spaghetti, pasta, foam and glitters. Younger children enjoy experiment with paint and materials of different textures. Staff also ensure children can explore a variety of malleable materials, including the mud kitchen on the roof garden and the indoor sand pit for younger children. Staff have developed a sensory room, enabling children to use a range of resources to investigate lights and sounds. Younger children thoroughly enjoy re-enacting real life experiences, as they play with staff in the home corner. Staff encourage older children to freely choose from the wide variety of small world toys, and children become engrossed as they play imaginatively, with pirate ships, for example.

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

Strong bonds and excellent relationships between staff and children ensure children feel safe and secure in their learning environment. Parents settle their children gradually and share information with staff about their care needs and daily routines. As a result, staff promote consistency of care by following babies' individual sleep and meal time routines. Parents report how staff take their views into consideration as they plan together how, and when, their children will move on to the older children's group room. Staff promote the key person systems exceptionally well, so that children's care needs are met by their key person or buddy key person. This ensures children build a strong relationship with familiar staff, to enhance their emotional security.

Staff provide a welcoming learning environment where children are actively encouraged to develop their independent learning skills. Vast displays of photographs of children participating in activities, shown along with displays of their creative work, provide a strong sense of belonging for children. Resources are of good quality and well organised, and staff make good use of the time that children attend. As a result children are happy, settled and purposefully engaged in play.

Children are extremely well behaved. They freely approach staff: older children talk to staff about what they are doing, and younger children climb on staff and enjoy hugs and cuddles. Older children show a strong sense of belonging, forming close friendships with other children. They play cooperatively, taking turns and showing high levels of care and consideration for each other during play. In addition, some older children show strong leadership skills, as they beckon the other children to the cooking table and ask them if they have washed their hands. Staff show high regard to helping children to learn about healthy eating habits. They provide a range of fresh fruits and healthy snacks for children to choose. Staff promote relaxed and sociable meal times as they sit and eat with children. They talk about the foods they like and events of the day. Staff encourage older children to serve their own meals, pour their own drinks and use cutlery appropriately. This enables children to develop their self-care skills and gain an awareness of their own needs, as they choose the amount of food they would like. Staff help children learn about the ingredients of foods, during frequent cooking activities. Older children can look down through the hatch into the kitchen, to watch the cook prepare the foods. Frequent outdoor play and physical play activities ensure children gain regular exercise and fresh air, and meet the learning needs of children who learn best outside. Staff show high regard to maintaining effective hygiene standards at all times. They work with parents to promote effective toilet training routines and support all children in developing their self-care skills. Staff promote children's personal, social and emotional skills exceptionally well. As a result, children are very confident and independent learners, with good self-care skills, which promotes their readiness to move on to school.

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

Excellent leadership and management mean that children's welfare is promoted exceptionally well. Staff successfully implement a comprehensive range of policies and procedures aimed at safeguarding children and promoting their welfare. Staff have completed safeguarding training so that they have a secure understanding of what to do if they have any concerns relating to the children in their care. Staff implement their safeguarding procedures effectively and consistently. They liaise with other agencies as needed, if any concerns arise. Robust and rigorous systems are in place to check that all staff are suitable to work with children. This includes staff vetting checks, induction programmes and on-going systems of supervision and appraisal. This approach supports children's well-being effectively. In addition, managers observe staff's childcare practice on a regular basis, and they use video recordings so that they can evaluate their teaching practice together. Managers then devise personal development plans with staff, so that they are up to date with current practice and to further enhance their skills. Staff keep accurate records relating to the children in their care, which are shared with parents, helping to further safeguard their welfare. This includes records of attendance for children, staff and visitors, along with records of any accidents, incidents or medication administered. Staff prioritise children's safety and, as a result, children know to walk sensibly in single file and hold onto the rail as they walk up the stairs to the roof garden or down to the sensory room. Staff practise evacuation drills with children on a regular basis,

so that everyone knows what to do in an emergency. Staff also conduct thorough risk assessments relating to the premises, furniture, equipment, activities and outings, promoting children's safety effectively. Strong partnerships are established with local schools, enabling staff to take children on visits, to help prepare them to move on to school. Staff support children who have identified additional needs, exceptionally well. They use communication aids, such as picture cards, to help children understand the routines of the day. They encourage children to be independent learners and make choices during play. Consequently, all children are enabled to meet their full potential. Staff establish very strong partnerships with other professionals who support the children with additional needs; this ensures information is shared effectively and promotes consistency of care for children.

Partnerships with parents are excellent. Staff provide a wide range of information for parents. This includes daily written feedback for the parents of younger children so that they are kept well informed about all events of the day. Staff implement a collaborative approach to assessing children's learning needs, and fully engage parents in the cycle of observation, assessment and planning priorities for children's future learning. Parents spoken to during the inspection, explain that they value the support offered to them by staff, including the flexibility in the times their children attend, to reflect their work patterns. Parents explain that they also attend parents' evenings and they welcome the communication through newsletters and emails. Parents praise staff highly, stating that their children's key person is 'great' and that 'she knows exactly where my child is at and where she needs to go'. Many parents spoken to, explained how their children have attended the nursery since they were babies, that their older children previously attended, and that 'staff continuity is brilliant'. Parents say that their children have 'wonderful relationships with staff' and they like the homely feel that the nursery has. All parents stated that their children are happy, well cared for and always enjoy the wide variety of activities and outings.

Staff complete an on-going system of self-evaluation and set action plans for improvement, so that they monitor and review their practices throughout the year. Staff also seek parents' views on a regular basis through questionnaires, and they use this information to aid their planning. This means that their methods of evaluation are robust and effectively targeted to further improve their practice. Staff provide an excellent educational programme, which is monitored effectively. Consequently, children flourish in this environment and make significant progress in their learning and development.

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

Unique reference number	EY391949
Local authority	Southwark
Inspection number	945615
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	59
Number of children on roll	79
Name of provider	Arc Community Trustees
Date of previous inspection	01/03/2013
Telephone number	02073787532

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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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