

Chestnut Nursery Schools Ltd

1 Corry Drive, Brixton, Lambeth, SW9 8QS

Inspection date	04/08/2014
Previous inspection date	25/03/2014

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		3
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

- Not all staff are vetted to check their suitability to work with children, including through Disclosure and Barring Service checks. This places children at risk.
- The provider does not ensure that all staff understand their responsibilities to supervise visitors to ensure that they are not left alone with children.
- The staff team does not support children's personal, social and emotional development consistently, in order that children know what is expected of them and learn to respect others.
- Staff do not always use their knowledge of children's interests and observations of them, to plan stimulating challenging activities to support their development.
- Staff do not take all opportunities to fully support children's developing independence.

It has the following strengths

- Staff provide children with enjoyable group activities that support children's language and communication development.
- Staff provide children with enjoyable outdoor activities, and help them learn about healthy living.

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 voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.
- The inspector spoke with some children, parents, staff and managers.
- The inspector observed activities in all areas of the nursery.
- The inspector sampled documents, including children's development folders, staff files and policies.

Inspector

Lesley Hodges

Full report

Information about the setting

Chestnut Nursery School registered in 2013 and is one of 11 nurseries owned and managed by Chestnut Nursery Schools Limited. It operates from a self-contained building, which is situated in a housing estate in Brixton in the London Borough of Lambeth. There are several enclosed areas for outside play. The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register, and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. The nursery is open from 8am to 6.30pm for 51 weeks of the year. It closes for bank holidays and a week at Christmas.

The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language. There are currently 10 members of staff working at the nursery, including the manager. Currently, six members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, including five staff members who hold qualifications at level 3 and one staff member who holds a qualification at level 4. The nursery receives funding for providing free early years education for children aged two, three and four years. There are 81 children in the early years range on roll.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- ensure that effective procedures are implemented so that any persons who have regular contact with children in the nursery's care, including those working on the premises, are suitable, by undertaking effective background checks that include a Disclosure and Barring Service check
- ensure that all staff are trained to fully understand their role in safeguarding children, with specific reference to supervising visitors to ensure that they are not left alone with children
- raise the quality of teaching by ensuring that all staff support children's personal, social and emotional development consistently by being good role models so that children develop respect for others and know what behaviour is expected of them, and why
- respond to children's interests by planning interesting and stimulating activities to support their learning.

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

- help children become more independent through taking on individual responsibilities at mealtimes, such as by giving them opportunities to pour their drinks, as appropriate to their abilities.

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

Children enjoy a range of activities. They are generally well occupied because they choose their play. Staff provide appropriate activities in the various rooms and in the outside area, so that children make steady progress in their learning. Staff have a suitable understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They use their knowledge to help progress children's learning and development. For example, in the baby room, staff encourage children's communication skills. They repeat sounds and familiar words so that babies begin to make links between words and everyday objects. In the toddler room, staff plan successful group activities. Here, children enjoy choosing different items from a treasure box that staff clearly name. Staff and older children sing songs that are associated with objects, so these children make connections between words and objects. These various teaching strategies help the younger children learn to talk, and the older ones to expand their vocabularies.

Staff observe children as they play, but they do not always use their observations well enough in planning for children's individual learning. Furthermore, some staff do not respond to children's interests when children explore different resources. When children showed curiosity in wearing different hats to supplement their play, for example, staff were too quick to pack these away and did not recognise how these might be used to extend learning. This approach shows a lack of flexibility in staff planning and teaching.

Staff promote children's early literacy skills in readiness for the next stage of learning. Children enjoy drawing on paper and blackboards to support their early writing skills. Staff encourage children to enjoy looking at books. They help children understand how books work. Some staff are skilled at recognising opportunities to bring additional language into conversations. For example, when children pointed at an object on the cover of the book and said its name, staff extended what the children said by adding descriptive words. However, not all staff do this, showing that the quality of teaching is not consistent. Nevertheless, children gain the skills and attitudes they need for the eventual move to school.

Staff make regular use of the outdoor area, where they promote a range of activities including children's creative development and physical skills. They provide painting and imaginative play activities, for example. Children enjoy copying what they have seen adults do when they wash dolls and dolls' clothes, and use towels and a clothes lines to dry them. They learn about textures when they play with sand and water, happily mixing the two so that they can feel how the sand changes. Babies enjoy physical play outside. They climb up the steps of a small slide, using their new skills.

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

The staff do not understand, or implement, all their responsibilities for safeguarding children. For example, they leave visitors alone unsupervised with children. Not all staff that work with children have had required background checks about their suitability to work with them. This lack of attention to requirements places children's well-being at significant risk.

Children are forming suitably close bonds with the main adults who care for them. Babies enjoy a cuddle when they are tired, or have just woken. Older children respond well to warm interactions from some staff. This caring approach from staff is not consistent at all times, or from all staff because some staff are not good role models for children. They do not foster respectful and friendly relationships well enough. For example, some staff spoke abruptly when repeating instructions to very young children. When children did not understand or respond, staff were seen to quickly intervene without explanation or a kind word. This action does not support children's emotional security well. The manager and key staff work well with parents and children to encourage children's positive behaviour, but some staff do this less effectively. They do not always explain to children why some behaviour is not acceptable. This means that children are not learning how to manage their behaviour well enough.

Staff help children learn about healthy living. Children enjoy regular outdoor play, and eat healthy meals and snacks. Staff have some expectations of children in regard to their personal development and learning to be independent, but these expectations are not high enough. Older children served themselves extra helpings of pasta at lunchtime, and staff encouraged babies to learn to feed themselves, but staff did not take every opportunity to encourage children's independence further, particularly at mealtimes. For example, they poured drinks for children rather than expecting them to do this for themselves.

Staff support children suitably when they move rooms within the nursery. They spend time with children in their new room while they become familiar with the different environment. This approach means children soon settle in. Overall, staff help children to be ready for the next stage in their learning.

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

The inspection was brought forward following a concern raised about the suitability of staff working with children, and the staff to children ratios used. During the inspection, it was found that the provider has a suitable safeguarding policy. The manager implements a range of procedures to check the suitability of staff. These include keeping suitable records to show Disclosure and Barring Service checks for new staff and references from previous employers, and the interview process covers staff knowledge of safeguarding. However, the manager had failed to carry out the Disclosure and Barring Service checks for one member of staff, in line with the stated procedures. This staff member had been carrying out children's personal care unsupervised for some months. This failure to follow procedures through implementing an effective system for staff checks compromises children's safety. Furthermore, although staff confidently describe procedures for supervising unchecked staff, or visitors, in practice not all staff follow these. For example, they allow visitors to be left alone with children. These weaknesses compromise children's safety, and do not meet requirements. The associated requirements of the Childcare Register are not met.

Staff describe the child protection procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child. They confidently describe signs and symptoms that would give cause for concern, and understand the reporting procedures.

The manager and key staff work effectively with outside agencies to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. They liaise with various agencies to support children's well-being. Parents comment that they receive suitable feedback from staff because they chat regularly with them, and attend meetings with key staff. These communications mean that they know about their children's activities and progress.

The manager and staff evaluate and review aspects of nursery practice. For example, they discuss routines to improve these. The manager identifies staff training needs, and staff have recently taken part in first-aid training. There is always a qualified person to

administer first aid should a child need it. Staff are supported in gaining further qualifications to help drive improved practice. The manager recognises that there are weaknesses in teaching. She has recently visited an associated nursery to learn from the planning processes used there, in order to drive improved teaching across the staff team.

The manager has addressed the recommendations made at the last inspection. These actions, coupled with her action to address areas highlighted for improvement, demonstrate that she has the capacity to make improvements to nursery practice.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

**Not Met
(with
actions)**

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

- ensure that systems are effective to ensure that any person caring for, or in regular contact with, children is suitable to work with children, which must include obtaining effective background checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (compulsory part of the Childcare Register).
- ensure that systems are effective to ensure that any person caring for, or in regular contact with, children is suitable to work with children, which must include obtaining effective background checks through the Disclosure and Barring Service (voluntary 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	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. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of 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		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. 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	EY467391
Local authority	Lambeth
Inspection number	983778
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	66
Number of children on roll	81
Name of provider	Chestnut Nursery Schools Limited
Date of previous inspection	25/03/2014
Telephone number	07515170491

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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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