



Bemerton Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY291873
Inspection date	12 September 2005
Inspector	Vivienne Rose
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Registered person	LB Islington Education Department
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Bemerton Children's Centre opened in 2004 and operates from a newly refurbished building. It is situated off the Caledonian Road in the London Borough of Islington. A maximum of 80 children may attend the centre at any one time. The centre opens each weekday from 07:45 to 17:45 for 48 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 45 children aged from six months to 5 years on roll. Of these, 25

children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel into work in or around the area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 20 members of staff. All of the staff including the manager hold appropriate Early Years qualifications. The centre has two qualified teachers as part of the staff team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene and understand why they need to wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating. Parents give prior permission to administer medication that ensures children receive the correct dosage according to their needs. Generally first aid needs are well met.

Nutritious healthy meals and snacks help children develop healthy eating habits from a young age. Practitioners encourage children to try new food for example, "you may like it if you try it". Children's dietary needs are considered to ensure that their needs are met. Children move confidently and in a variety of ways. Children show a strong body awareness and ability when using a wide range of physical play equipment for example, when gardening, swinging and climbing. Children play and extend their physical skills and sense of space outside throughout the nursery day.

Children's gross motor skills are developed well. They are competent when selecting and using small equipment such as beads, brushes, scissors and glue.

Babies and toddlers are beginning to develop their own preferences and make choices for themselves as they move confidently around the nursery. Children's physical strength and co-ordination skills are developed through balancing, climbing, and making good use of the outdoor area for play. Young children are encouraged to feed themselves which helps them to gain independence and self-esteem.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe, well designed environment which is carefully assessed and checked each day. Staff have good procedures for the arrival of children and this is safely monitored. However, at present there is no procedure for recording the arrival and departure times of staff to ensure the security of the children.

Children enjoy the free flow play inside and outdoors which encourages them to

develop their independence and decision making skills. However, this practice means that younger children have access to resources which contain small parts for example, a child observed putting beads into her mouth. Staff need to be more rigorous in their supervision to ensure children's safety. Staff generally explain safe practices, such as why children should pick up items from the floor so that other children do not fall and hurt themselves. This helps older children to take responsibility for their own safety. There are clear procedures for outings to ensure the children's safety.

The children are well protected by the staffs understanding of what to do if they have a concern about a child 's well being. However, the procedure for child protection needs to be updated in line with local child protection procedures to enable staff to be clear about their roles and responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies and young children gain a lot from being together in the free flow play environment.

Staff question young children to express their thoughts and feelings. Good questioning and repeating children's responses encourages good use of language. Staff make good use of the Birth to Three Matters framework to encourage children's learning and developmental progress.

Babies receive lot's of cuddles and have a strong bond with their key worker which helps to increase their sense of well being. They benefit from routines which are consistent. They enjoy the textures of natural materials which helps to develop their senses. Children between the ages of one and three are confident in their relationships with practitioners . They begin to play happily with adults enjoying music, and resources such as puzzles, small world toys and outdoor equipment.

Nursery education

Staff have a good understanding of how children develop and learn. Staff observe the children in free play activities and use their notes to assess children's achievements. Written plans are linked to the six areas of learning and make clear what children are expected to learn from activities. This helps the staff plan the next steps for children's learning. However, this planning is not always consistently applied for all children and as a result some of the more able children are not sufficiently encouraged to fulfil their full potential in some areas of mathematical development and communication, language and literacy.

Children learn from a stimulating range of activities which are easily accessible. Children are extremely motivated and involved in their learning. They are confident, work well independently take initiative and show high levels of concentration. Children speak very confidently to peers and adults. They talk openly at circle time about themselves and their families. They express their ideas and experiences well using good vocabulary. Children who are less confident writers and practitioners

often miss opportunities to encourage the more able children to write for a purpose within imaginative play activities. The children are learning to link sounds with letters of their names for example, T for Tyrone.

Children are learning about, size, shape and using appropriate maths language through practical activities however, less emphasis is placed on children's learning about addition and subtraction and problem solving. Children are confident in using information communication and technology. They demonstrate good mouse control when playing games on the computer. They use telephones and calculators during role play to support their understanding.

Children use a range of equipment and tools to explore their surroundings, for example, when digging and planting seeds in the garden. Children enjoy music and respond enthusiastically during music sessions when they are accompanied by a member of staff on the guitar. They express themselves creatively through a wide range of mediums. They paint draw and make collages that represent their experiences.

Staff offer good support for children with special educational needs, and are secure in their understanding of the code of practice on the identification and assessment of special educational needs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children talk about their home life and things that are important to them. Children learn to accept differences and resources and displays reflect disability and a wide range of diversity. Constant praise and encouragement help children develop a positive self-image. Staff offer good support for children with special needs and there are comprehensive systems in place. Staff adapt activities for children with special needs so that they can experience a wide range of stimulating activities appropriate to their level of ability.

Staff make expectations of behaviour clear and give reasons for requests ensuring children understand why certain behaviour is unacceptable. Children learn important social skills such as listening to each other.

This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Parents contribute to the initial assessment of their child. This ensures that staff have a good knowledge of individual needs and achievements. Staff need to ensure that this information is used effectively along with their observations to support the planning for children's next steps. Parents receive good information about the foundation stage, this information outlines what the children will learn. This ensures that parents understand that play has an important role in developing young children's skills for the next stage of learning. There are regular informal discussions with parents ensures continuity of care for children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from qualified and experienced staff who are very caring. The premises layout is appropriately organised and children are able to play outside throughout the day which encourages independence and physical well being. Children are well grouped and the key person system ensures appropriate support and care for all children. Children enjoy the security provided by most of the groups policies and procedures. However, some policies and procedures need to be re-visited to ensure the safety of the younger children.

Leadership and management is satisfactory

The management are committed to developing good practice. There are clear aims for the provision and staff are made aware of these at induction and at staff meetings. The manager has a clear understanding of the strength and the weaknesses within the provision. Children are busy and focussed throughout the session and are making good progress. The Manager and deputy are addressing key issues, which include, observation and evaluation of children's play and more training and mentoring to support for less confident staff. This will ensure that children's learning is maximised. The staff are committed to attending further childcare training and development courses. In-service training is a regular feature of the nursery.

Most mandatory records are in place, and are confidential and well maintained. There are effective local authority recruitment procedures but these were not available at inspection. Plans to improve the organisation of this procedure are being discussed. Overall, needs of all the children who attend are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

This is the settings first inspection visit since registration.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 Ofsted has received two complaints relating to National Standards 1: Suitable person 2: Organisation; 3: Care learning 11: Behaviour 12: Partnership with parents and 13: Child protection.

The complaints related to the minimum ratios not being maintained; partnership with parents and creative development.

On both occasions Ofsted visited the nursery. On the first visit the nursery was found not to have breached the National Standards.

On the second Ofsted required the registered person to carry out two actions. These were to review and improve the behaviour management procedures and the child protection policy regarding allegations against staff. At this visit a recommendation was also agreed to notify Ofsted of all staff changes and their details. The provider

agreed to implement these actions and recommendations immediately.

The registered person remains qualified to provide day care.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that children under 2 years are safely supervised at all times during free flow play
- make sure that all staff working directly with children are suitable to do so

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop a consistent approach to the method of recording, evaluating and planning the next steps for children; increase the opportunities for children to consolidate their understanding of simple adding and subtraction and mathematical problem solving in every day situations; and writing for a purpose.

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