



Finchley Reform Synagogue Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	147530
Inspection date	11 October 2005
Inspector	Maggie Thorp / Anne Bernadette Maher
Setting Address	Fallowcourt Avenue, Finchley, London, N12 0BE
Telephone number	8445 6807
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Registered person	Finchley Reform Synagogue
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Finchley Reform Synagogue Kindergarten is run by a management committee. It was registered in 1981 and operates from two rooms of Finchley Reform Synagogue in a residential area of North Finchley. Children attending the kindergarten are from local families in which there is a Jewish parent. A maximum of 42 children aged from 2 to under 5 years may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is not registered for overnight care. It is open each weekday from 09.15 to 14.00 for 36 weeks of the

year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 28 children on roll. Of these 16 children receive funding for nursery education. The kindergarten supports children with special educational needs, but none are currently attending. Children who speak English as an additional language attend.

There are seven staff in total working with the children and a supernumerary head teacher. All staff have relevant qualifications. The kindergarten receives support from the Pre-school Learning Alliance, and an advisory teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The Kindergarten has recently taken part in the Effective Early Learning Programme Quality Assurance Scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn good hygiene practices and how to keep healthy through participating in really interesting projects, and in the way that keeping healthy is skilfully woven into every aspect of the children's day. Most children take a pride in being able to use the toilet, wash their hands and wipe their own noses independently. Low posters showing photographs and captions remind children about keeping healthy. One such says 'I brush my teeth' and another 'I cover my coughs'. The staff make very good use of the 'Happy Projects' promoted by the local health authority and use art work, visitors to the nursery and ideas for parents to follow up to enable children to explore such subjects as dental hygiene and preventing accidents.

Children's wellbeing is extremely well protected by the high level of cleanliness, comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures which are carried out effectively by staff and the high level of staff with recent first aid training.

Children are very well nourished and relish snack and lunch times because they are such positive experiences. In addition, staff put careful thought into meeting children's individual dietary needs. Children chat together as they eat, they enjoy serving each other and pouring their own drinks. At snack time younger children choose from a wide selection of fruits cut into pieces just right for smaller hands and appetites. Older children now have one whole fruit each. This new policy came through feedback from parents that this was expected of children when starting school and that nursery graduates were phased by this, so now they are gradually helped to adjust. Great care is taken to ensure children with allergies do not eat food that would be harmful to them but all children are fully included in meal times, and in celebrations and activities that include food. Tasty alternatives are offered for example, when a birthday cake cannot be guaranteed nut free. Children access drinking water freely throughout the day from a small dispenser.

Superb provision is made to encourage children's physical development. Children move, climb and balance very competently. Younger children play with confidence on

a low level indoor climbing frame, they steer tricycles and other wheeled toys with great skill, helped by sensitive adult support, and the amount of space and time they have to practise and refine their skills. Children enjoy fresh air and exercise every day all through the year and in virtually all weathers. Parents are educated about the value of this and children have Wellington boots at the nursery so they can go out in wet weather. Both older and younger children are able to flow between indoor and outdoor play where they enjoy more challenging climbing opportunities. Excellent music sessions further encourage children's agility and their enthusiasm for dance.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are very safe and happy in the nursery environment which is superbly well organised to maximise children's enjoyment and learning and to foster children's independence. Low posters mirrors and photographic displays make the rooms attractive and welcoming and children quickly get busy with the challenging range of resources provided. The rooms are set out in small bays with very well resourced low-level storage. Children explore and experiment in the art, imaginative play, writing, construction and water play areas with a high degree of concentration. One child experiments with different angles as he tries to use a length of guttering to float objects from one level of water to another. Children know that each type of resource has its place as it is labelled with words and pictures, enabling them to choose freely to develop their game or to build and make things.

Children are extremely safe and secure on the premises and on outings through the rigorous risk assessment and vigilance of staff. However, this is balanced with opportunities for children to take risks, to gain a sense danger and to learn how to keep themselves safe. Staff allow children to use a variety of tools but supervise their use well. A child using a rake was given help to use it safely without his fun being spoilt; children enjoying sliding down a fire fighter's pole had staff nearby to catch them if necessary, but were not over protected. Children also took part in a little project on road safety.

Children's welfare is safeguarded very effectively by staff's secure knowledge and understanding of the signs abuse and what to do about this. Children are cared for by thoroughly checked staff and staff are extremely proactive in ensuring only those people for whom parents have given consent can collect children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The younger children are learning and developing extremely well in all areas. They actively explore, make connections and are imaginative and creative in their play. They love to experiment with the glue and collage materials in the art workshop area and to pretend to cook and iron in the very well resourced home corner. Children are able to express their ideas and are becoming skilful communicators. The interesting projects children and staff do together provide children with lots of new words and

expressions to add to their growing vocabulary.

The 2 to 3 year old children have the choice of indoor or outdoor activities most of the day, and because they also have climbing opportunities and dens to go in and out of indoors, there is no feeling of children being bored, restless or struggling to conform. Children participate with great enthusiasm at circle times. They sing with gusto and enter into the emotion of the songs. There is a real sense of excitement very effectively fostered by the enthusiasm and animated way staff lead this time. Peals of laughter follow the end of a particularly fun song. This is exemplary practice in relation to the younger children, which is aided by staff's thorough knowledge and implementation of the Birth To Three Matters framework, which they use as a basis for their planning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children engage in a wide range of meaningful activities with great enthusiasm because staff have a firm understanding of the Foundation Stage Guidance, how to implement it, and how to ensure the role they play enhances children's learning. Children are challenged by the detailed planning and staff's high expectations of what they can achieve. Staff observe and record children's interests and achievements. They identify the next steps in children's learning and weave this knowledge into their weekly plans. Consequently, children are making very good progress.

Children are confident and greet each other with pleasure. They have secure supportive friendships with the staff and other children. As they arrive they call out to each other and greet adults enthusiastically. Great excitement is expressed when one child, away for a long holiday, is back. Children engage in the experiences offered with interest and enthusiasm and are able to sustain their concentration and to see things through. Children spent a long time making a cinema in the garden. They gave jobs to each other, and at first they couldn't decide how to set out the chairs, but they persisted until they had created a number of rows.

Children communicate really well and children learning English as an additional language make very good progress. Children are able to listen to others and are confident in contributing their own ideas. Children can describe what they are thinking as they work, and tell children who have been absent what they have missed at circle times. They know the names and sounds of many letters of the alphabet and are beginning to write. Their interest in writing is stimulated by writing opportunities being provided all over the nursery. Children really enjoy story times and this generates much discussion. They frequently use the book area on their own and in pairs, and they 'read' stories to each other. Children enjoy the books they have made, factual and story books. Some children have discovered rhyme and have great fun making up rhymes whenever a situation inspires them.

Children's counting and recognition of written numbers is very secure. Many children recognise numbers up to 10 and above. Some children spent a considerable time pegging number cards from 0 - 10 on a line in the correct order, another child lined up and accurately counted 25 stars on the large computer touch screen. Children enjoy doing simple calculations as part of daily activities; for example, to work out

how many more cups are needed at snack time. They explore size, shape and measure as they build and bake. They use technology such as tape recorders and programmable toys very confidently and are gaining skills in using the new large computer touch screen.

Children explore and investigate with great enthusiasm using many different materials and tools. They learn about the natural world through exciting first hand experiences. Children have visited bee hives, picked grapes from a vine and looked after butterfly eggs through to new butterflies emerging from their chrysalises. Children's creativity and skill in building is excellent. Interlocking construction toys become magic belts and mobile phones, and the large wooden blocks become a space ship. These creations give rise to very rich imaginative play.

Children's imagination and creativity, as well as their learning across all areas, is inspired by the skilful support and sensitive role staff play both in their interaction with children and the exciting environments they create.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy and settled, and enjoy close, trusting relationships with the staff. This is greatly helped by the excellent steps staff take to help new children get to know them and the nursery environment before parting from their parents. Children are very confident, independent and involved, and staff are careful to encourage this and not to help when children can do things for themselves.

Children are kind to each other and there are many strong friendships. They are very good and tidy up and love to help at snack time. Some very lively motivated children sometimes get frustrated because they want to achieve so much but they are learning to use words to express feelings, to negotiate, and to exercise self control. This is greatly aided by staff's praise, their very calm guidance and the good role-models they provide. Excellent staff support enables children to learn that delayed gratification does not mean no gratification; even the youngest children are able to wait and take turns with help.

Children are developing a very positive self-image and learning to value those with different ways of life. Staff know the children and their families well and weave activities and information about individual family events, and stories and celebrations from the children's Jewish faith into the curriculum. People of different faiths and cultures are invited into the nursery and children participate in activities with them to widen their knowledge. For example, in this way children discover other light festivals whilst also celebrating Hanukah. Currently no children with special needs attend, however, the excellent systems in place have enabled previous children to thrive in this setting.

The superb partnership between parents and staff further enhance children's experience at the nursery. Parents are involved at every level: on the management committee, helping in the group rooms and bringing in resources from home. Children take pride in the contributions their parents make; for example, by being on

the story reading or computer support rota. Children delight in the use of the large computer touch screen which enables them to display the holiday photos their parents bring in so they can show their friends. Parents praise the activity plans and the suggestions for how they can follow up what children are learning at home that they are given. They say that they really help them understand and contribute to their children's learning.

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

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care and learning is greatly enhanced by the outstanding leadership and management and excellent organisation at the nursery. Children grow in confidence and in enthusiasm for learning through the high quality of teaching. Staff really enjoy what they do and children flourish in their care. The staff team, led by the head, have high standards and are very secure in their knowledge and understanding of frameworks such as the Foundation Stage Guidance and Birth To Three Matters. This underpins their good practice. Children are making excellent progress in all areas of learning and are enabled to move on to school with high self-esteem and appetites whetted for further learning.

The environment and resources both indoors and in the garden are extremely well organised and set out in ways that maximise children's learning. The management committee, which includes parents, take an active role in overseeing the quality of care and education, guided by the head and in fund raising to develop and extend the provision. Clear, comprehensive documentation and sound monitoring and evaluation systems in are place to ensure that children's health, safety and wellbeing is safeguarded. Superb links are made with other agencies such as the local authority to further enhance the provision.

Children benefit from the commitment staff have to continually develop their practice. Staff have recently participated in an accredited quality assurance scheme which has further encouraged them to discuss and reflect on their work. Regular network meetings with other nurseries enable staff to pass on their good practice and to learn from others. The high quality of the nursery means that the needs of the range of children that attend are met extremely well.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection and in the nursery's annual development plan the head teacher identified two aspects of the nursery she would like to develop - the outdoor play space and parental involvement. Both have been achieved to a high level. The outdoor play space is now a really exciting environment for children and parents are involved and contributing at every level. Children take great pride in having their parents' at the nursery and special thought has been given to attracting fathers to participate in the nursery.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk