

Beechwood Schools Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY240642
Inspection date	11 June 2008
Inspector	Josephine Geoghegan
Setting Address	55 Leigham Court Road, Streatham, London, SW16 2NJ
Telephone number	0208677 8778
E-mail	
Registered person	Phillip Marshall
Type of inspection	Nursery Education

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 NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Beechwood School is a privately owned independent day school which was established in 1987. The School is governed by a board of directors and is situated in Streatham in the London Borough of Lambeth. It is accommodated in a large spacious converted house and operates from 09.00 to 15.30 and offers an extended day service from 08.00 to 09.00 and 15.30 to 18.00. At present the nursery and reception classes run concurrently with the rest of the school and children attend for 10 sessions each week during term time only (36 weeks in the year). There are currently 68 children on roll aged three to 11 years, of these 16 children are in receipt of education funding for the Foundation Stage. The setting supports a few children who use English as an additional language or have identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are five staff members who work in the nursery and reception classes, including four staff who hold appropriate qualifications in childcare and education and one long term volunteer who is working towards gaining a recognised qualification.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff make clear assessments of children's learning covering all areas of the Foundation Stage. They use their assessments to identify children's individual next steps for learning and use this information to aid future planning. Staff make clear lesson plans, enabling children to benefit from well organised and focused activities that promote all areas of learning. Teaching methods show a good balance of child initiated play and adult led activities, within which staff promote active learning. For example, while participating in a whole group session aimed at developing children's knowledge and understanding of the world, children are encouraged to look at live mini beasts and discuss how they look and move; they imitate how slugs and worms move and then make their own mini beasts using plasticine.

Children's personal social and emotional development is good. They are able to sit quietly and concentrate during activities and show confidence when speaking in a familiar group. They actively participate in all events of the day with enthusiasm, showing a clear understanding of expectations of their behaviour. For example, they are able to share and take turns during play and follow well established routines, such as lining up to go outside. Children are able to develop their personal independence, for example, while making choices at meal times and using the bathroom independently. Children's communication, language and literacy skills are excellent. Older children show a clear understanding of letters and the sounds they make, for example, they are able to link two letter sounds and discuss words that begin with these sounds; they then join cards with two and three letters to form familiar words. Children are developing good writing skills, with many children able to write their names showing correctly formed letters. Children use books purposefully, developing their reading skills and older children follow recognised reading schemes that are supported by parents reading with children at home. In addition, resources and displays of children's creative work are clearly labelled, helping children to recognise familiar words. Children use language effectively, holding meaningful conversations and developing their vocabulary. Younger children are supported well in developing their language skills and use language to explore real and imagined experiences, for example, during role-play in the home corner and playhouse. All children enjoy stories and actively join in familiar songs.

Children show a good understanding of numeracy. They are able to count accurately during play and benefit from activities that promote active learning. For example, during a group activity children concentrate on the number seven; they clap seven times, line up to form a group of seven and participate in a creative activity by printing patterns of seven mini-beasts. This activity was extended by enabling children to gain an understanding of calculations as they add and subtract bricks and trains to equal seven. Children learn about size and quantity as they use bottles and funnels in the water tray. Older children are able to estimate and compare how full their bottles are and use mathematical language appropriately, for example, discussing how their bottles are empty or half full. Children build towers with large plastic bricks in the outside play area and younger children use peg puzzles effectively, developing their problem solving skills. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is promoted well as they learn about nature and living things, such as mini-beasts. They have good opportunities to design and construct, using a range of malleable materials, such as play dough and plasticine, and a variety of construction sets. Although children have access to computers they are not provided with regular opportunities to use these resources, limiting opportunities to develop

their understanding of technology. Children have opportunities to learn about the environment as they participate in outings relating to topics they have studied. They have opportunities to develop their sense of time, for example, as they talk about past and present events and the timetable of activities for the day. Children are able to learn about cultures and beliefs through planned activities relating to a variety of festivals and celebrations.

Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills. For example, they enjoy using the fixed climbing equipment and slide in the outside play area and show skilful use of wheeled toys such as dolls prams. They participate in planned physical education sessions where they find their own space and enjoy warm up exercises including running and jumping on the spot and stretching. This is followed by use of large climbing apparatus, enabling children to develop their control and coordination. In addition, staff encourage children to move like mini beasts, for example, moving like spiders over the frame, worms through the tunnel and caterpillars along the beam, effectively linking their physical play to the topic focus. Children show skilful use of both small and large equipment, including hand held tools such as scissors and pencil sharpeners. Children enjoy being creative and have good opportunities to use a range of resources, such as paint, collage, drawing and malleable materials. They draw representational pictures of mini-beasts and paint self portraits, developing their free creative expression. Children enjoy being imaginative, for example, while dressing up and engaging in role play with dolls and the doctor's set. Younger children imitate while using play phones and cooking utensils with play-food; they use cars imaginatively in the wet sand imitating car sounds. Children participate regularly in music sessions, enabling them to explore sound while using a range of percussion instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well. Children have good relationships with staff and their peers; they freely engage in conversations and show a clear sense of belonging. Children benefit from clear boundaries set by staff regarding expectations of their behaviour, as a result, children are very well behaved and respond well to the daily routine. Children are able to play cooperatively and share and take turns during play. Children benefit from relaxed meal times where they sit in small groups, engaging in conversations and developing their social skills. Good systems are in place to ensure children's individual needs are known and respected. Children are able to develop their understanding of equality and diversity through use of a range of resources that reflect people in the community and through planned activities. For example, assemblies and activities relating to a variety of festivals and painting self portraits using skin tone paints, promoting their sense of self esteem. Good systems are in place to promote inclusion, for example, staff work closely with parents to ensure any children who are learning English as an additional language or have identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities are appropriately supported.

Partnership with parents and carers is good; they are offered a variety of information about the setting and their child's progress. Parents are provided with weekly news letters keeping them up to date with all events and activities. They benefit from regular opportunities to discuss their child's progress and are provided with a written annual report. Staff also use home/school contact books and encourage parents to be involved in their children's learning by completing activities and reading at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The quality of leadership and management is good. Effective systems are in place to evaluate the quality of education, such as evaluation of staff lesson plans, the school self evaluation document and monitoring sessions conducted by the head teacher. In addition, staff participate in regular team and whole staff meetings, promoting good communication. Staff hold appropriate qualifications and show a commitment to constant improvement of the quality of the service. Staff provide a broad range of activities that support children's learning in all areas of the Foundation Stage. However, children are not provided with enough regular opportunities to use resources that develop their understanding of technology. The time children spend at the setting is well organised ensuring children are purposefully engaged in play. Children benefit from a well organised weekly timetable of activities, providing a good balance of adult led focus activities and free play activities everyday. Staff are confident and work well together; they deliver well planned adult led activities which promote active learning, enabling all children to participate and consolidate their learning. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to improve opportunities for children to develop their physical skills and creativity. They achieved this by providing more opportunities for children to climb and balance during inside and outside play and by increasing opportunities for children to paint by providing paint easels in each group room.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

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):

- provide regular opportunities for children to use resources that develop their understanding of technology.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk