



The Roche School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY316609 |
| Inspection date | 29 June 2006 |
| Inspector | Linda Close |
| Setting Address | All Saints Hall, 70 Fulham High Street, London, SW6 3LG |
| Telephone number | |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | The Roche School Ltd |
| 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 good. 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?

The Roche School is located in the Fulham area of southwest London. The Local Authority is Hammersmith and Fulham. The building used by the school is the All Saints church hall which is set back from the main road. The nursery is part of a group of three settings and was originally established in 1997. There are two main classrooms at the setting and two smaller rooms for group activities. A kitchen and toilet facilities are adjacent to the classrooms. Extensive outdoor space is located

beside the building. This area is securely fenced and is used as an outdoor classroom when weather permits.

There are 92 children on roll at present and 71 of these are three or four years old and in receipt of Nursery Education Grant (NEG). Children attend either part-time or full-time. A small number of children have identified learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Several children on roll speak more than one language. Ten members of staff work with the children and additional support is provided by the head of the school. All members of staff are qualified to a minimum of level 3. Several hold Montessori diplomas and one holds qualified teacher status. The school follows some of the principles and systems of the Montessori philosophy of education woven in with traditional teaching methods. Student teachers from the Montessori Centre International work beside the school staff.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is safeguarded because there are trained first aiders on the school site at all times. Children are given medication with written instructions and permissions from parents. Medication is stored with care and doses and times are recorded correctly. Allergies are well known to all members of staff and those children who are affected are closely monitored. Children are not exposed to unnecessary infections because parents know they must keep children away from the nursery until they are fully recovered.

Children who stay to lunch enjoy their food in clean surroundings and they wash their hands before they sit down together. They bring food from home packed with ice packs to keep it fresh. Children help themselves to a drink and a biscuit mid-session. Staff do teach children about good hygiene but some children forget to wash their hands before taking a snack and this is not monitored closely. The school has recently taken advice from a nutritionist about healthy eating for children. Plans are in hand to improve the range of food provided for snack time.

Children enjoy daily opportunities for energetic play in the extensive, secure outdoor area at the nursery. Staff take children outside for free play sessions and for planned sporting activities. The children play enthusiastically with a good selection of small equipment including space hoppers and hoops. They run fast and show increasing accuracy and skill in kicking, throwing and retrieving balls. Children take part in worthwhile activities that improve their balancing skills. They also enjoy climbing, although the climbing equipment lacks challenge.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are warmly welcomed each day into a pleasant, well prepared nursery

environment. Staff ensure that all resources are ready for use before the school day begins. Children enter a prepared environment in keeping with the Montessori philosophy of education. They can access their toys and resources easily and the range of toys and equipment is good. Children's tables and chairs are the correct height for them to sit, play and eat in comfort.

Nappy change facilities as well as hand washing and toilet facilities are clean and suitable. Children bring their own bedding from home and it is kept for their sole use. The accommodation is spacious, level and allows children ample space to move about easily. The main room has more than enough space for music and movement activities. The outdoor area is securely fenced and set well away from the road nearby. It provides a safe, level grassy play area for free play, nature study, planned sporting activities and school social functions.

Staff assess risks in the nursery accommodation and they take steps to avoid potential hazards. They ensure that there are no sharp or dangerous objects accessible to children and staff have all hot drinks in the kitchen to avoid accidents. The fire evacuation procedure is displayed in several places around the nursery and the staff and children practise it regularly. Outings are planned with care to ensure that hazards to children are avoided. The outdoor area is visually checked for safety daily before children use this space. However, a few clumps of stinging nettles are growing in the garden area.

Children are safe in relation to child protection issues because the manager is well informed. She ensures that staff are aware of their responsibilities through training and discussion.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The younger children are fully involved in a good range of worthwhile activities in the lower nursery room. Their learning experiences are carefully planned to meet their needs in all areas of their learning. Many staff are qualified Montessori teachers and they are well informed about the Birth to three matters framework because they have attended valuable training courses. Children are calm and content and they enjoy each other's company. They make choices and decisions every day in their prepared learning environment where resources and toys are easily accessible to them. Staff take responsibility for specific groups of children. Children's responses to their activities are carefully noted and next steps are identified. Staff spend time with each one of the children in their group helping them to learn and make progress. Children enjoy imaginative play in the home corner which is currently a farm shop. They create models and scenarios on the carpet area with construction toys. Children are learning to be independent. They pour drinks of water with care whenever they feel thirsty and they are helpful at tidy up time.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff observe each child and they make useful notes about children's development and their response to their activities. They

refer to these notes when planning tasks so that the work helps each child to move on in their learning. The atmosphere in the nursery is one of mutual respect. Staff are good role models. They teach pleasant manners and politeness by good example and the children are well behaved. Children are forming firm friendships and they greet each other with obvious pleasure. They are interested in both adult-led and self-chosen activities and they remain involved for considerable periods of time. Children demonstrate a growing sense of independence which they show when they open packets and boxes with the minimum of assistance at lunchtime and they take responsibility for hanging paintings up to dry after they have removed them from the easels.

Children talk freely with staff and their peers. They are beginning to express their ideas, needs and feelings clearly. Staff give valuable support to those children who are learning more than one language and to those who have difficulty with clarity of speech. Children easily find their own labelled trays to store completed work. They see their names on display and many can write their own names legibly and without assistance. The sounds and shapes of the letters of the alphabet are covered systematically over the year. Children can recognise upper and lower case letters and they form their letters with growing accuracy using a firm pencil grip. Writing materials are freely available and children make good use of them. Children often enjoy books individually and in small and large groups. They handle the books correctly and know that pages turn in order as the story unfolds. They show good listening skills at story time and when working with staff in such activities as movement to music.

Children are gaining accuracy and expertise in counting aloud up to and beyond 10. Well prepared activities involve children in counting using real objects and matching objects to figures. Staff adjust the number work very effectively for individual children and some have moved on to the preliminary steps for addition and multiplication. However, the displays of work and visual aids to learning do not include sufficient examples of numerals in the main hall to underpin the good work that takes place in the nursery. Children gain a good understanding of ordinal number, size, shape and measure through their use of Montessori equipment. They learn about length and the associated vocabulary through well planned small group activities.

Varied and interesting topic work extends children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They learn about the local area and about places of interest in and around London through an exciting range of outings. They have visited a local theatre, a football stadium and more recently they enjoyed a trip to Legoland. Staff invite interesting adults to the nursery to share their knowledge and expertise with the children and staff. Police officers explain 'stranger danger' and they bring their horses to greet the children. A mother and her baby came to the setting and an airline pilot visited to tell the children about his work. Children make good use of technology to support their learning. However, the children who use, or avoid using, the computer are not clearly known as the use of this tool for learning is not recorded.

The nursery provides children with a good range of materials for their art and craft work. Staff encourage the children to use the materials in their own way. Many colourful displays of children's art work are arranged on the walls or hung up as mobiles. The displays enhance the nursery environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual requirements are shared at registration including dietary needs, health issues and details of their home language and cultural background. Staff and parents sustain their liaison very effectively throughout the child's time in the school to ensure that their needs are fully met. Very valuable cultural activities are planned to promote children's understanding of diversity and staff ensure that the background of the children is reflected in the programme. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Every child in the nursery is regularly observed and their progress is very carefully noted. Children's needs are assessed with care and attention to detail. Staff then make plans for each child to ensure that the work meets their individual requirements. For example, children who are making great strides with areas such as mathematics are given specially planned work that meets their needs very well. Children work with their special key worker individually and in small groups. Staff seek advice from the area special needs co-ordinator to assist and advise them if any child has difficulties with their learning. Well thought out individual education plans (IEP's) are devised and pertinent targets are set and reviewed on a regular basis. The staff do their utmost to ensure that children are making the best possible progress. Parents are consulted, invited to meetings and kept very well informed throughout the process. Staff ensure that parents know their views are valued. The adults also work exceptionally well together to identify the best educational setting for children to attend at the end of their time in the nursery.

Behaviour management is an area of strength in the school. Staff are calm, consistent and very effective. They are particularly good role models. Every member of staff is pleasant but firm. They treat the children with politeness, warmth and respect and the children have delightful manners as a result. Any minor disagreement is managed in a way that does not embarrass the children involved. Children know what is expected of them and they are happy to follow simple basic rules for fairness.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are kept unusually well informed about the day to day running of the school. A useful starter pack is provided at the time of registration giving details of the work of the school and its policies and procedures. Separate notice boards for the lower and upper nursery classes display details of what will be covered each week in each class. Interesting ideas are included to assist parents in working with their children at home to promote their learning outside school. Parents are respected as their child's first educators. Parents work hand in hand with the staff and they know exactly where their children are in relation to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. They know how the activities are linked to the stepping stones in each area of learning. They can take an active part in creative activities in school if they have the time to spare. Parents visit to share stories with the children and they also visit to tell children about their own work. Well attended social events, delightful school outings and charity fundraising activities provide further opportunities for their involvement. Parents speak very highly of the school and its staff. They report that their children are very

confident and make the move to primary school with ease because they are well prepared in the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provider ensures that all members of staff are checked for suitability at the time of their employment. Until clearance is received new staff do not take responsibility for children or assist them with personal care which promotes children's safety. The manager ensures that the classrooms are well resourced, attractively decorated with children's work and made ready before the children arrive each day. Displayed work is colourful and attractive and supports children's learning in most respects. The setting is spacious and comfortable for the children. They have good quality toys and equipment for most activities although the climbing apparatus outside is not very challenging. The garden area is an asset to the school and is in daily use for the children. The safety and security of the garden is checked daily although there are nettles growing in some places in this area. All of the necessary policies and procedures are in place to support the smooth running of the setting and most are up to date. Children's attendance is carefully recorded. Medication and accident records are kept appropriately.

Leadership and management are good. Induction procedures are thorough. New staff are given job descriptions and they are systematically introduced to all of the policies and procedures of the school. Most staff are qualified appropriately. Staff attend regular meetings to ensure that all can give their ideas to future planning and that all are working together as a team. All staff are encouraged to attend ongoing training courses to enrich their work with the children. They are well informed about the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage for 3 and 4 year olds. A development plan is compiled which shows details of future improvements. The provider and manager of the school are fully focussed on meeting the developmental needs of every child who attends. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last registration. 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 good. 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 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):

- monitor handwashing for children more closely before they take their snack
- ensure that the children do not access harmful plants growing in the outdoor area

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):

- display more numerals in the main hall to underpin the good work taking place in mathematics
- record children's use of technology to support their learning

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