

— Magic Roundabout Nursery

— Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	11/11/2009
Inspector	Chris Banks
Setting address	35 Sutherland House, Sutherland Square, London, SE17 3EE
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group).

— The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Magic Roundabout Nursery and out of school club was registered in 2004. It is one of five private settings operated by Magic Roundabout Nurseries Limited.

The nursery operates from a commercial building in in the SE17 area of Southwark. Children have access to a number of playrooms and there is also access to an enclosed outdoor play area. Opening hours are between 7.30am and 7.00 pm. The setting is open all year round with the exception of public holidays. The after school club for older children is currently closed.

A team of 28 staff are employed to work with the children. Of these, 27 hold qualifications in early years childcare.

The nursery is registered on the Early Years Register and both the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to care for a maximum of 117 children under eight years at any one time. Of these, 105 may be in the early years age group. There are currently 104 children on roll. The setting receives funding for provision of free early education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

Children are secure and happy in the relaxed setting. They are cared for by a well qualified and mostly experienced staff team who have formed some close, trusting relationships with children in their care. The combined experiences of children provide them with a suitably balanced range of play and learning activities. There is an effective process of self evaluation with a clear understanding from senior staff as to where weaknesses exist. The commitment to improve outcomes for children is strong.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure books are freely available and made easily accessible to all children
- further develop staff's knowledge and understanding of how to effectively assess and plan for children's next steps
- ensure all staff in the baby room are sufficiently skilled in providing stimulating play experiences for very young children
- improve the overall quality of play and learning resources for children, in particular for those aged under two years.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The overall welfare of children is positively protected because staff clearly understand their roles and responsibilities in regard to protecting children from abuse. They are secure with the process for monitoring, recording and reporting concerns and have clear written procedures to follow. Senior staff understand the role of Ofsted with clear procedures to follow should any allegation be made against a member of staff. Staff are also strongly encouraged to monitor the practice of colleagues and report any concerns.

Improved recruitment procedures with rigorous double checking of staff locally by the manager helps ensure those working or in contact with children are suitable. New staff receive a full induction, are closely monitored during their probationary period and receive regular supervision.

Children's safety is further protected as arrangements for their arrival and departure are closely monitored via an entry phone system. There is a good awareness of parental responsibility issues with decisive action taken should any unauthorised adult attempt to collect children. Suitably maintained records also closely monitor children's attendance.

Children are cared for in safe, secure surroundings. Playrooms are suitably organised in advance of children's arrival with sufficient clear floor space for each age group to explore in safety and relative comfort. Overall, children are provided with an adequate range of play and learning resources throughout the setting. Some age groups are, however, less well provided for than others. For example, children aged under two years are insufficiently challenged and stimulated because the choice of toys and equipment are quite limited.

Written policies and procedures relating to children's overall health, safety and welfare are suitably put into practice by staff with record keeping relating to children's health, safety and welfare mostly kept to a good standard.

Suitable practical safety precautions are taken with all required safety equipment in place. Comprehensive risk assessments are regularly undertaken and reviewed. Where possible, any required maintenance work to premises is carried out when the nursery is closed. In line with an earlier requirement, all fire exits are now unobstructed. In case of emergency, children are familiar with evacuating the premises, as fire drills are regularly practised with them. As a consequence, children are learning about the benefits of keeping themselves safe. They also learn about road safety during outdoor role play using props, such as pedestrian crossings and traffic lights, to raise their safety awareness away from the nursery setting.

Staff are suitably deployed with improved contingency arrangements in place to cover for staff absence and emergencies. This follows an earlier requirement made by Ofsted to ensure ratios are maintained at all times. Throughout the nursery, children are well supervised. They are quietly reminded to take care in avoiding

any accidents when engaging in energetic free play and are encouraged to show consideration towards younger children.

Children are valued and their backgrounds and abilities respected. Through a variety of activities, children are encouraged to learn about other cultures and traditions and to respect people who are different from themselves. Boys and girls take equal part in activities and cooperate well together. Most staff work closely with parents to ensure each child's individual needs are taken into account.

Detailed questionnaires are completed by parents which include children's starting points, previous care experiences and any significant events in the child's life. A suitably managed settling in period for new children helps them feel secure in the unfamiliar setting. The good practice of recording children's daily routines using simple 'diary sheets' is a useful tool in keeping parents well informed.

Effective links with specialist outside agencies combined with ensuring key staff are suitably trained in specific areas, helps ensure individual children are well supported should they require additional help of any kind. Also detailed exchanges of information between staff helps promote continuity of care as children become older and move to new rooms.

Partnerships with schools and parents are positive. Comments from those parents approached were complimentary and indicate they are pleased with the overall care children receive. There are some well established links with local primary schools and parents receive good support from senior staff in preparing their child for mainstream education. Arrangements for each child's key worker to be more involved in the process are being developed. This will strengthen practice in helping to ensure children benefit from a smooth transition.

The overall leadership and management of the nursery is becoming more effective. All actions and recommendations arising from the previous inspection and other visits have been positively addressed with senior staff demonstrating a strong commitment to further improvement. An effective process of self evaluation combined with training and strong local authority input is helping to strengthen practice where weaknesses exist.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Everyone receives a friendly welcome as they arrive at the nursery. The atmosphere is relaxed and children quickly settle into their chosen activities. Children mostly behave very well but some older children still struggle with the concepts of sharing and taking turns. In these circumstances, staff intervene appropriately but a few staff do not explain to older children how their behaviour affects others or offer guidance about the benefits of being kind and considerate.

Children's overall learning and development is suitably supported. Their combined experiences provide them with a balanced range of free play and adult led activities. This helps most children make some steady progress towards meeting their early learning goals. The scarcity of resources for some younger children,

however, impacts on the overall quality of their play and learning experiences. Some staff are also less skilled in consistently providing stimulating and imaginative activities and do not always use good listening or communication skills to extend children's vocabulary. Where practice is good, combined activities contribute well to different areas of children's learning. As an example, children's favourite story about a tiger is successfully incorporated into creative activities. This results in an attractively displayed group collage of the story depicting different animals. Also, some children already very familiar with the storyline are able to enthusiastically recall it with confidence, easily identifying and counting the number of animals involved. Circle times are enjoyed by all children and they enthusiastically join in with action songs, rhymes and counting games.

Since the last inspection, the overall quality of book stock has improved. Not all, however are made easily accessible to children, limiting their capacity to enjoy books independently. For example, in the pre school room, for three- to four-year-olds they are arranged in a side room which is not always used on a daily basis. In one of the toddlers room, a good range is displayed but stored completely out of reach.

Babies enjoy a suitable range of tactile experiences in their comfortable setting. New babies are happy and well settled but not all staff in the baby room provide sufficiently stimulating play experiences. As a consequence, a few babies become frustrated and unsettled. As babies grow, they are accompanied to the pre toddlers playroom where they are introduced to their next new setting. A suitably planned handover to their new key person helps ensure a smooth transition.

Outdoor play and exercise forms an important part of each child's day at the nursery. They enjoy planned access to the safe, well equipped outdoor play area where they practise their climbing and balancing skills. Space is also effectively organised so that children may also enjoy sand/water play and painting.

Overall the key person system is reasonably effective. Many staff know their children well and have formed close, trusting relationships. They are knowledgeable about children's individual care needs, their personalities, abilities and favourite activities. This is not always, however, effectively translated into monitoring how children are progressing. Recorded observations in many cases are patchy and are not sufficiently evaluative. As a consequence, effective assessments and planning for children's next steps are not in place. Parents, however, do receive regular feedback and are given portfolios of children's work at planned meetings during the year.

Children's overall welfare and good health is positively promoted. Detailed information regarding children's medical history are recorded and any changes noted. A clear sickness policy helps ensure the risk of infection and spreading of contagious illnesses are minimised. Improved hygiene standards during nappy changing also helps prevent the spread of any infection. A well managed system for administering medication combined with a carefully maintained record keeping system helps ensure medication is only administered by fully experienced staff. A valid first aid certificate is held by most staff which means the nursery is well prepared in the event of any emergency.

Effective practical steps are taken if a child becomes unwell whilst at the nursery. They are closely monitored and comforted by staff who demonstrate a commitment to act in children's best interests and keep parents well informed.

Children enjoy reasonably healthy meals and snacks hygienically prepared on the premises. These normally include fresh vegetables and fruit. Menus are now prominently displayed throughout the setting to keep parents better informed. Children with allergies are well protected because effective precautions are taken to ensure they do not come into contact with prohibited foods.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	3
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	3
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	3

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

