



R.A.S.C.A. (Royton After School Care Association)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	511718
Inspection date	21 November 2006
Inspector	Susan Elaine Heap
Setting Address	The Old Nursery, Radcliffe Street, Royton, Oldham, Lancashire, OL2 6RH
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Registered person	Rose Lever
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Royton After School Care Association (R.A.S.C.A.) has been established since 1977 and operates from five rooms in a self-contained building. It is situated in Royton, Oldham. A maximum of 65 children may attend the before and after school care and holiday club and 32 children may attend the Young Rascals pre-school at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 07.30 to 09.00 and 15.00 to 18.00 in term time, and from 07.30 to 18.00 Monday to Friday during school holidays, except for bank holidays and one week in September and one week at Christmas. The pre-school operates from 09.15 to 14.45 during term time. All children have access to an enclosed play area.

There are currently 72 children on roll in the before and after school care and 28 children aged from two to under five years on roll in the pre-school. Of these, two children receive funding

for early education. The setting supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 17 members of staff. Of these, 16 hold appropriate early years qualifications at National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 2 or above and six are working towards an NVQ level 3 qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where the staff actively promote good hygiene practice. They follow the setting's comprehensive and effective health and hygiene policies. This contributes to children's health and safety and minimises the risk of cross-infection. Children are learning the importance of good hygiene and personal care as this forms an integral part of the daily routines and is regularly reinforced by the staff. For example, when a child sneezes he is reminded what he must do next. He knows to go and wash his hands 'because of germs'. Children's understanding of good health and hygiene is further supported by visits from the dental health team and through topic work. The arrangements to care for children in the case of accidents and to promote their welfare are good, as a condition of employment is that all staff are required to complete the appropriate first aid training and ensure it is up to date. All the required documentation regarding children's individual needs is in place.

Children's health is successfully fostered through the provision of a substantial, healthy and nutritious snack each day. They happily and eagerly make their choices from a selection of fresh fruit, malt loaf and breadsticks. All children have opportunities to make their own sandwiches or snacks, which develops their independence and self-care skills. They are involved in growing their own fruit and vegetables, such as potatoes, raspberries and strawberries, and make potato or fruit salads from their produce. As a result, they are learning how to grow and make their own foods which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Pre-school children are becoming more independent and are starting to play an active part in the setting. For example, a helper is chosen at snack time, then helps count the plates and cups needed and helps set the tables. Snack times are a social occasion, when staff and children sit together at attractively laid tables and talk about their families or special events.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities indoors and outdoors which are planned into the daily routine and contribute to healthy living. Each day they have access to indoor apparatus to develop their physical skills, such as crawling through barrels, or they take part in music and movement. Pre-school children carefully and successfully negotiate space as they pedal on tricycles and follow a road way outside. Children in the out of school club actively take part in team games, weekly football coaching sessions or learn circus skills, such as juggling or balancing plates. These are all enjoyable and help children develop control of their bodies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure, safe indoor and outdoor environment where the staff give priority to keeping children safe. Visual risk assessments are completed daily and possible hazards are noted and appropriate action is taken. There are detailed and comprehensive written policies and procedures in place which the staff team generally follow in practice. This ensures that children are able to move around safely and freely. Children in the out of school club are able to confidently describe what happens during a fire drill and know that it is practised when new children start. However, records do not always support that this happens in practice.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe through their discussions with the staff and planned activities, such as visits from the road safety team or lollipop person. All children know they must tell a member of staff before they go to play in another room and even the youngest pre-school child knows to put her chair under the table, 'or someone might trip and fall'. Children's times of arrival and departure are effectively monitored by staff, who are vigilant and ensure that the main entrance is locked during opening hours to prevent unauthorised access and keep children safe.

The staff team provide a warm and welcoming environment where parents and children are greeted warmly by name each day. Children's creative work and photographs of their play are displayed attractively, which gives children a sense of belonging. For example, many of the children have older brothers, sisters or parents who have attended the setting and a pre-school child proudly points to the photograph of his older brother on the display board. They are able to move around independently in the environment as the space is well organised to provide different areas for the various activities. Children's play and development needs are met through the provision of a wide range of good quality toys and equipment which also includes positive images of all aspects of diversity.

The staff team are qualified and knowledgeable about good childcare practice and consistently give priority to protecting children and keeping them safe. They have all attended child protection training and have a good understanding of their role within the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled, happy and enjoy their time at the setting. This is due to the good ratios of staff who generally interact well with the children and support their care, learning and play needs. The staff team use the resources well to plan and provide a broad range of activities that support children's play and learning. For example, pre-school children are suitably engaged in the range of activities on offer, such as the role play area, puzzles, construction, art and craft activities or physical play, and the children choose where they would like to play. They enjoy activities, such as sharing picture books, exploring creative materials, playing in the home corner, sweeping the leaves, or making ramps and tunnels to roll the cars in and down. The planning of activities specifically for children under three, following the 'Birth to three matters' framework, is in the early stages of development and staff are not fully secure in their delivery

of this. However, children do have opportunities for sensory experiences, such as exploring natural materials or oiled spaghetti.

Children in the out of school club eagerly come into the group at the start of the session. They are interested and enthusiastic and are consulted about how they want to spend their free time. They make their choices from a broad range of activities on offer and work co-operatively together as they play ball games or negotiate their turn on the computer or games console. They also spend time engaging in creative work or doing their homework. All children are valued and are listened to by the staff team, who pay particular attention to how children want to spend their free time. They have more opportunities for more challenging or interesting play during the holiday schemes, when activities are planned around themes.

Warm and positive relationships are evident between the children and the staff, both in the pre-school and out of school club. As a result, children develop confidence and self-esteem and become confident communicators.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are interested in their play and make their choices from the activities on offer. Most staff ask children questions during their play, which extends children's knowledge and language. The staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of how children learn and are steadily growing in confidence in their delivery of the six areas of learning. A variety of teaching styles are used and children have opportunities to work on a one to one basis with a member of staff, such as reading a story, or in small and large groups, such as creative work or physical play outside. The activities and experiences provided for the children sufficiently cover the six areas of learning and enable them to make steady progress. Planning of activities is in place and staff make observations of children's play. However, these do not show how they plan to extend children's learning, or show how activities can be adapted to meet children's individual needs. The planning is very much in the early stages of development and is not currently used to inform children's assessment in line with the stepping stones. This is mainly due to the fact that the current records of assessment link to the desirable learning outcomes and not to the early learning goals. As a result, there are missed opportunities to plan the next steps for individual children's learning and development.

Children enter the setting confidently, happily leave their parents and quickly settle into the familiar routine. They have happy and relaxed relationships with the staff, who listen to them and respond appropriately. They enjoy daily registration, when they are greeted with 'Good morning' and their name and confidently reply 'Good morning' to the pre-school leader. They behave well and are developing their independence as they put their own coats on and show a willingness to help. For example, children help set the tables for snack time. They use their imaginations well when playing in the home corner, going shopping or making meals while one child pretends to be the family dog. Children's language is developing well. For example, a three year old says, 'I can manage the scissors now' as he cuts shapes for his collage. They are beginning to recognise that print carries meaning as they choose their name card to self-register at the setting and a four year old can confidently and competently write her name when asked. They occasionally visit the book corner, choose a favourite story and follow it by looking at the

pictures while running their fingers over the words. They have opportunities to mark make independently using pencils, crayons and pens, but do not often visit this area.

Children regularly have opportunities to count or recognise and match numbers and shapes in planned activities. They routinely count when counting the days of the month until they reach the correct date. Daily discussions about the weather and seasons develop children's understanding of time. They remember that yesterday was Tuesday and the weather was sunny, and it is autumn because the leaves have turned brown. They are introduced to weight, measure and size when baking or mixing play dough and use mathematical language, such as bigger, taller, high and small, when building in the construction area.

Resources and activities to support children's knowledge of technology are available and planned into the weekly activities. They have opportunities to explore their local community and the outside area through outdoor activities and trips. For example, they dig and plant in the garden or go shopping to the local supermarket for food to celebrate Chinese New Year. They benefit from visits from 'Zoo lab', who bring in a selection of animals for the children to handle so that the natural world becomes a tangible experience.

Children have opportunities to explore a variety of media, such as sand, water and paint, but these are not always available on a daily basis. However, they have free access to creative materials to allow them to explore and develop their own ideas. For example, a three year old concentrates for a long time decorating a cardboard tube with a variety of collage materials. A range of tools requiring hand-eye co-ordination allow children to demonstrate good levels of skill and control, such as using scissors to cut paper for their collage or cutting around the shape of their name. They can judge their body space accurately as they adjust their speed and change direction when pedalling along the cycle track, and line up to go outside taking care not to squash anyone.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued as individuals and the staff team work closely with parents to ensure each child's individual needs are met and they are able to play an active part in the setting. There is a good range of toys, equipment and activities which contribute to increasing children's awareness of diversity and the wider world. All children are developing caring and positive relationships with the staff and other children, which ensures they settle and enjoy their time at the setting. The staff place emphasis on children's emotional well-being, behaviour and manners. As a result, children are consistently praised for their help, good manners or achievements, which develops children's confidence and self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers regarding nursery education is satisfactory. There are no systems in place to involve parents in children's learning, such as topic work or activities they can try at home, sharing assessment records or information on the nursery education curriculum. However, the completion of a child profile enables staff to find out children's starting points. There is a variety of written information available for parents via the policy and procedure file, newsletters and noticeboard. Parents praise the staff team highly for the care,

support and activities they offer their children. They feel their children are well cared for, safe and secure. Children's individual needs are identified during the settling-in procedure as parents and key staff complete relevant documents together.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the nursery education within the setting is satisfactory. Children are cared for by a staff team who have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities in helping children enjoy and achieve. However, there are no systems in place to monitor and evaluate the delivery of the nursery education to ensure continuous improvement.

The daily routines and deployment of staff are effectively organised to provide children with a wide range of activities when playing and ensure their safety. Children in the out of school club have opportunities to mix both with older or younger children, with their peer group and with children who attend different schools, which enables them to develop relationships and their social skills. The staff work well as a cohesive team to promote children's health, safety, emotional well-being and ability to enjoy and achieve. There are effective systems in place to support staff, such as through thorough recruitment and selection procedures and appraisals, when additional training and development needs are identified.

Records detail the individual requirements of each child and include relevant consents and contacts. All the legally required documentation and policies and procedures are in place which promote the safety and well-being of the children present. These are very comprehensive and monitored and reviewed annually. This ensures that they continue to be appropriate to the needs of the setting, are in line with changes to legislation and that the quality of care is continued. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

A the last inspection the setting was asked to ensure that all accident records were signed by parents and to develop resources which promote positive images of disability.

These have been completed and have improved the quality of children's care and learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. The concerns were in relation to National Standard 5: Appropriate equipment. The Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement Team contacted the provision. The provision provided an investigation response regarding the concerns raised. Ofsted are satisfied the provider remains qualified for 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.

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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 fire evacuation drills are recorded and practised regularly
- develop planning activities to help children's development in line with the aspects and approach of the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- ensure that observations of what children do are used to plan the next steps for their play, learning and development.

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 teaching strategies by increasing staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals to ensure they are able to challenge and interest children
- improve systems for planning activities and evaluation, ensuring that observations of children and their individual assessments are used to inform future planning to effectively support the learning needs of each child
- improve partnership with parents by involving parents in their child's learning providing information about the curriculum followed within the setting and by sharing assessment records on a regular basis
- improve leadership and management within the setting by implementing a system to monitor and evaluate the success of the educational provision.

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