

Rishton Pre-School Learning Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309443
Inspection date	11 June 2007
Inspector	Ann Bamford
Setting Address	Stourton Street, Rishton, Blackburn, Lancashire, BB1 4ED
Telephone number	01254 882 129
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Registered person	Rishton Pre School Learning Group
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Rishton Pre-School Learning Group has been operating for more than 30 years in various locations. For the last 14 years it has been based at the Primetime Centre, a community building adjoining Norden High School. The group has use of a large hall and a smaller hall on a planned basis and enclosed outdoor play area. In addition they use a smaller hall for weekly physical education sessions, and have the use of a shared garden area. The majority of children who attend live in Rishton, which is a large urban village on the outskirts of Blackburn.

The pre-school is registered to provide care for 24 children aged between two years and five years. It operates from 09.15 to 11.45 five mornings a week for three- and four-year-old children, and from 12.30 to 15.00 three afternoons a week for two-year-old children. The group operates during school term times only. There are currently 38 children on roll. This includes 32 children who are in receipt of nursery education funding. The group supports children with additional educational needs and children for whom English is an additional language.

The pre-school is run by a management committee which employs four staff who work with the children, all of whom have a relevant childcare qualification. The manager works alongside

staff at all sessions. In addition, a fifth person is employed for one morning each week to give children individual support in using a computer. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The setting is very clean and has effective processes in place to ensure that this remains so. All children are actively involved in some routines. They are beginning to develop skills in keeping the environment clean as they clean their hands immediately prior to eating and tidy up before snack time. Staff pass their sound knowledge of good hygiene practice on to children in words of encouragement and praise. This increases children's self-confidence to do the job well.

Children's continued good health is maintained well as the setting works effectively to find out about children's individual health needs from parents. The individual plans for helping children with allergies or asthma are supportive of children's individual needs. There are policies and procedures in place to ensure that staff have appropriate and current training on first aid and administration of specific medication. Staff knowledge of health issues, such as childhood asthma and other illnesses, contribute to the setting's overall commitment to ensuring that children have enhanced good health.

Children are nourished effectively as the staff make good use of snack time to encourage children to eat healthily. Children have access to fruit daily. They are developing a good awareness of healthy bodies as they talk about germs and how both good food and exercise affects their bodies.

Children's physical development is good. They enjoy physical activity as they pedal, balance, hop and kick using bikes, large equipment, the climbing frame and footballs. They work effectively and collaboratively to move the climbing frame, which requires balance and manipulative skills. Children have regular use of the outdoor environment which enhances the meeting of children's needs in relation to exercise. Staff plan use of the playground very effectively to ensure all children have regular access to fresh air and the chance to develop pedalling and balancing skills. Most children in the setting can pedal using alternate feet by the time they leave the pre-school. As the setting has limited outdoor space, children are making very good progress with limited access to resources.

Children can rest in line with their individual needs as they use the book area to sit quietly.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are kept safe in the setting. There are well used procedures in place to ensure that this remains so at all times. For example, children are kept entirely safe in the outdoor play area as the staff check it for hazards every time, before children go outside. Staff in the setting are knowledgeable about reducing risks. They improve children's safety by moving trip hazards and tidying away unused toys and equipment during the session. The setting has developed good policies and procedures for keeping children safe in an environment which is partly used by the general public.

Staff have an understanding of risk assessment. They use their knowledge effectively to ensure that children use equipment which is fully safe. Their regular checking of equipment, such as climbing frames, ensures all children use them in complete safety.

Children are developing an understanding of keeping themselves and others safe in the event of a fire as they take part in regular fire drills. Staff regularly involve children in tidying away toys and equipment in order to enhance their understanding of how to keep the play area safe.

Children's continued safety is maintained as staff implement the setting's policy on who collects children with vigilance and care. Their creative approach to ensuring children are collected safely at the end of the session enhances children's safety.

Children are generally well protected by staff's knowledge and understanding of their role in safeguarding children. However, the setting's policy on action to be taken in the event of an allegation about an adult does not reflect the 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused' booklet. This compromises children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to resources and activities which promote their development. They are cared for in a way which encourages them to be confident and settled in the pre-school. Staff know individual children well and engage children in play as they talk laugh and share activities, such as a story and song session together.

Children become competent learners as staff join them in activities and encourage them to persist with a jigsaw or add to a painting. Children are starting to develop independence skills, such as blowing their noses or assisting with tidying up. Children complete these tasks with increasing skill which aids their development of independence skills.

All children are developing an awareness of what is right and wrong as staff gently explain how another child may feel when conflict arises. Apologies are encouraged from one child to another. Children enjoy time spent playing together with staff. Staff listen to them, and usually challenge them to take the next step, such as to add further bricks to a tower or use a different colour when painting.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff hold an understanding of the Foundation Stage and make some observations on what children can do. Practitioners understand children's needs and provide a wide range of activities for the group. Adults have an understanding of how children learn. Children do make individual progress as a result of staff assistance, for example, to develop mark making skills in a sand tray as staff show them how to manipulate the tools.

The setting uses frameworks, such as the Foundation Stage curriculum, to plan what children will be doing. Staff generally make observations on what children can do but have yet to use these observations to consistently plan the next steps in children's individual development. Observations made about what children can do inform planning for the whole pre-school group, as weekly plans take account of what children need as a group. However, the setting does not consistently plan next steps for individual children, which impedes the rate at which individual children develop skills.

Children are becoming confident communicators and readily ask questions of visitors. Many children are beginning to ascribe meaning to marks and listen to stories with interest and understanding. Children are starting to use the book area independently, but the area has many books which are well used and it lacks some comfort.

Children's creativity is developing well as they make collages on the theme of 'under the sea' for the notice board and produce textured wax crayon art work. Children use imagination with assistance from an adult as they use the shop/cafe, initially to sell goods then developing it into sharing out the items and walking around with them in bags and baskets. Children join in songs at circle time and some children know the full song. All children join in the movement to the repeated parts of the story, using their bodies in line with the rhythm with obvious enjoyment.

Children are developing the concept of numbers as they join in songs at story time and complete written tasks. They are able to count the number of objects in pictures correctly. They show increasing confidence with numbers as they independently count the number of objects in a tray and recall how many objects have been removed by the adult. Children show natural curiosity and begin to use tools, such as scissors, for a purpose. They delight in showing visitors their recently completed work on bugs and are looking forward to seeing the animals live at a forthcoming visit to the zoo. All children can use the computer competently. The one-to-one attention from a staff member who is there solely to enhance children's use of the computer ensures all children can use the mouse and operate simple programmes by the end of their time in the setting. This enhances their knowledge and understanding of the world around them.

Older children are developing friendships. They seek out their friends and engage in imaginative play together. All children are developing skills to play collaboratively as they join in imaginative games or await their turn on the climbing frame.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children are happy and settled in the pre-school; they separate well from parents or carers. The setting uses information provided by parents to offer care. Staff know about children's individual circumstances, for example, family structure and use conversations about home to welcome children.

Children have access to a range of opportunities which encourages their understanding of diversity, for example, playing with multicultural dolls and clothes, kitchen utensils, books and jigsaws. Planned activities are provided, such as Chinese New Year celebrations, which look at a variety of aspects of the culture such as the celebration itself and also the food, dress and geography of China.

There is a policy for meeting additional needs. There is a system in place where needs are assessed prior to admission. The setting works with parents and, where needed, can assist parents to seek further advice from other professionals such as health visitors.

Children behave generally well. They are developing strategies for making friendships, taking turns and settling disputes as staff are competent role models who talk about being kind to each other and feelings. However, the long, structured snack time prevents some children from behaving positively through the whole time as they are sat quietly for a lengthy period of time and some children become restless and argumentative. Children are given individual support

to succeed in situations that they find difficult, such as circle time. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are welcomed into the setting. They are given good information about how care is offered to their children in a variety of ways, for example the brochure, the parents' board and in newsletters. The information on the six areas of early learning is satisfactory. The setting has begun to provide parents with information about how they can help their children at home, for example information on how children develop their mark making skills. However, parents are asked for limited information of what their child can do when they enter the setting and they are not currently involved in planning any next steps for children. This impedes the parental partnership in their child's learning.

Parents speak highly of the commitment of the staff in the setting. They tell of their pleasure at the commitment of staff to knowing each individual child.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are recruitment procedures in place to ensure that safe, suitable practitioners work with the children. Documentation relating to this is usually stored on the premises and is available for inspection. Children's constant safety in the setting is afforded by the use of a well implemented recruitment and selection policy. There are checks undertaken on staff to ensure suitability to work with children and that adults hold appropriate knowledge and training to care effectively. The mainly qualified staff team make use of opportunities for training which develop children's care and learning. For example, staff have attended induction training and training in relation to the Foundation Stage curriculum, first aid and safeguarding children. Training is planned to ensure that any requiring updating, such as first aid, is done in a timely fashion. Staff are deployed according to their skills and experience. Records in the setting support safe care of children. They were all current and available for inspection. There are procedures in place for sharing records with parents.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There are clearly defined roles and responsibilities in the pre-school. Staff with individual responsibilities, such as safeguarding children, are able to define their role and its responsibilities when asked. Staff are supported through both formal staff meetings and appraisal meetings. The setting is starting to be able to assess its own strengths and weaknesses as staff have taken part in the completion of the setting's self-evaluation plan. Staff in the setting take responsibility for developing practice and are starting to make effective use of staff meetings to review plans for what the children do as a group. All staff have key worker responsibilities.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was recommended that the setting develop recording procedures to include details of fire drills and that information from the operational plan was made available to parents. In addition it was requested that drinking water was made available to children at all times and that the process for ensuring that children were collected by known adults was fully and consistently used. With regard to nursery education it was recommended that the setting planned to allow children more freedom of choice in activities, and increase opportunities for children to explore music, creative materials and role play.

Since that time the setting has developed a system for recording fire drills. It has reviewed the information available in the operational plan and gives a copy to each child's parents before they enter the setting. Drinking water is available to children during each session and children help themselves to drinks as they wish. The setting has reviewed both the policy for collection of children and the procedures in practise at the end of every session to ensure that staff consistently know who has collected a child. Each of the actions taken in relation to issues raised has significantly improved the quality of safe care for children.

In nursery education the setting has completely reorganised the way that sessions are planned and ordered, in order to allow children continuous access to many areas of play; this includes music, creative work and role play. Each session is now ordered to allow children freedom to access many areas of continuous play, moving to them as children determine. This is now a strength of the setting.

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

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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):

- further develop the processes for the regular exchange of information between parents and staff members (with specific reference to information on what children can already do when they enter the setting and planning next steps for children) This applies to Nursery Education also.
- review the child protection policy to ensure that it complies with information contained in 'What to do if you're worried a child is being abused'
- review the organisation of snack time to ensure that children can manage their behaviour

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):

- continue to develop the reading area to ensure children have full access to it

- further develop planning to increase the use of next steps to meet individual children's needs, including the dating of records to evidence progress

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