



St Peter's Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY290731
Inspection date	25 January 2007
Inspector	Teresa Evelina Coleman
Setting Address	Guru Nanak Bhai Lalo Khalsa School, 62 Crescent Road, Woolwich, London, SE18 7BL
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Registered person	The Committee of St Peters Playgroup
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

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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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

St Peter's Playgroup has been registered at the present site since 2004. It operates from a large hall within a Sikh community school in Woolwich in the London borough of Greenwich and serves the local community. The premises consists of the main hall with storage area, an entrance foyer, a kitchen and toilet facilities. There is no outdoor play area at the premises.

A maximum of 20 children aged two to five years may attend the playgroup, and of these, not more than four may be under three years. The playgroup is open from Monday to Friday from 09:30 until 12:00, during term-time only.

There are currently 14 children on roll, all of whom receive funding for nursery education. There are currently no children on roll with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The playgroup supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The current staff team consists of a temporary acting manager and two members of staff, all of whom have appropriate childcare qualifications. The temporary manager is a development worker from the Pre-School Learning Alliance and the group are hoping to recruit a permanent manager in the near future. Three members of staff are present at every session.

The playgroup is part of the Greenwich Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and received support from an early years advisory teacher and early years practitioners.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to play and relax comfortably in an environment where satisfactory standards of cleanliness and hygiene are maintained. Most aspects of children's health are generally promoted, for example, staff clean the tables with anti-bacterial spray before snack time. Children are protected from the risk of illness because there is a written sick children policy which requests that parents should not bring their child if they are unwell. There are effective systems in place for the administration of medication and this helps to ensure children's health and well-being.

Children are beginning to understand the importance of good hygiene because staff encourage them to wash their hands after using the toilet. They ensure that children are able to access liquid soap and paper towels so that they can begin to take some responsibility for their own personal care. Children are also encouraged to wash their hands before eating their snack. For example, there is a sign on the snack table that reminds the children to remember to wash their hands before eating. However, there is some confusion about the routine for hand washing. As a result, some children use a communal towel for drying their hands and this poses a risk of the spread of infection.

Children benefit from regular opportunities for physical play and exercise. For example, they are able to use a climbing frame, slide and play tunnel on a daily basis. This ensures that they are able to develop and practise a range of physical skills.

Staff demonstrate an awareness of the importance of healthy eating. As a result, children benefit from a range of healthy snacks including fresh fruit, breadsticks, rice cakes and crackers with butter or spread. Children have some opportunities to develop their independence because they sometimes participate in preparing their own snacks. For example, they peel satsumas, cut up apples and spread their own butter on their crackers. Snack times are relaxed and sociable and children are able to chat to each other and to staff. Staff ask questions about what the children are eating and this means that children are beginning to learn about where food comes from. For example, they talk about where butter comes from. When children say that it comes from the shop, the member of staff explains that before that it comes from milk which comes from a cow. Children's independence is promoted because they are able to pour their own drinks and to help themselves to a choice of snacks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

The playgroup has a written child protection statement and policy which includes procedures to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff. The manager and staff understand their child protection responsibilities and are aware of the action to take if they have a concern about a child in their care. However, the individual identified as the designated person for child protection issues is not present at every session. This poses a risk of delay when reporting concerns. In addition, inadequate procedures are in place to ensure that all persons involved with the provision of care are appropriately vetted to ensure their suitability.

The children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and generally safe environment. Staff carry out regular written risk assessments and this ensures that most safety risks are identified. This helps to minimise the risk of accidents. Appropriate safety precautions to ensure children's safety are in place and include protected electrical sockets and guarded heaters. The external doors are kept locked throughout the session and parents collect their children from the inner door individually when staff call them out. A visitors' book and a written policy for lost and uncollected children are also in place and this helps to promote children's safety, security and well-being.

Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe because staff consistently reinforce some safety rules. For example, they remind children to sit down until they have finished their snack and to be careful when using the equipment. However, children sometimes use the slide while wearing dressing up clothes. This poses a risk of accident, for example, if they are wearing long dresses. Staff have a sound understanding of appropriate levels of supervision, for example, when children use the toilet facilities. Consequently, children are able to move around the setting safely and confidently. Written fire procedures and regular recorded fire drills also help to promote children's safety, if there is a fire.

Toys and equipment are well-organised and set out in clearly designated areas, including an inviting and attractive book area. Many resources are stored accessibly and this means that children are able to make independent choices. All furniture, toys and equipment are in a good, clean condition and staff regularly carry out safety checks when setting up and putting away. This helps to ensure the children's ongoing safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled at the playgroup and participate confidently and enthusiastically in a varied and balanced range of activities. Staff plan activities that reflect children's interests. An effective key worker system ensures that staff get to know the children well and are aware of their individual needs. Activities are well organised and are set up in clearly designated areas, for example, a home corner and book area. Children enjoy moving freely between activities and making independent choices. Most resources are accessibly stored and this further helps to promote children's independence.

Interaction between staff and children is very good because staff are kind and caring towards the children and interested in what they have to say. For example, as they chat together at snack time and during activities they make frequent use of humour and praise and encouragement. As a result, children's confidence and self-esteem is growing. Staff are skilled at extending children's play and learning through asking questions to make them think. For example, while the children are playing with blocks of ice staff ask the children why the blocks are getting smaller and introduce new vocabulary as they talk about the ice melting.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff follow the children's interests when planning activities. For example, a member of staff collects some snow in a large tray for the children to play with and talk about. They talk about how cold the snow is, how it makes their hands feel cold and compare this to the warmth of their faces. Staff follow this up with lots of activities about snow and ice, snowy weather, and animals that live in cold countries. This includes a range of creative activities, a display of appropriate books in the book corner and snowy stories and songs.

Good planning systems, underpinned by the Foundation Stage guidance, help to ensure that children enjoy a varied, balanced range of activities. As a result, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Plans consist of medium and short term plans and include daily focused activities and learning intentions. Staff observe and evaluate children's progress by recording individual observations. These are then used to plan the next steps in individual children's learning. Plans are flexible, for example, staff spontaneously adapt their planning so that the children can explore their fascination with the snow. The manager is currently working alongside the advisory teacher to fully develop monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure the effectiveness of nursery education.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is very good. Children are becoming confident because staff value them and frequently use praise and encouragement. Children behave very well because staff are good role models for them and treat them with respect and consideration at all times. Consequently, children are beginning to learn right from wrong and to become self-disciplined. They are beginning to share well, be co-operative with others and to show care and consideration for each other. For example, four children share two easels while painting snowy pictures and chat together as they work. Children enjoy good opportunities to develop their independence. For example, they pour their own drinks and prepare their own snacks at snack time.

Children's progress in communication, language and literacy is good. They enjoy listening to and participating in their favourite stories, for example, 'The very hungry caterpillar'. Staff promote children's enjoyment, concentration and listening skills because they are very enthusiastic about stories. This means that children are learning to see books as a source of pleasure and are beginning to develop positive attitudes towards books and reading. They also enjoy cuddling up to staff in the book area as they look at and talk about books together. Book provision is good and staff display books in an inviting way. For example, staff make a display of books about snowy weather and reference books about animals that live in the snow. Children are becoming confident speakers because they have good opportunities to speak individually

and to the group, for example, at snack time and story time. Staff encourage children's language development because they talk and listen to children, ask them questions to make them think and to extend their vocabulary. For example, they talk about the ice and ask the children why they think the blocks of ice are getting smaller. Children have good access to a range of writing materials and are beginning to mark make. However, writing skills are not fully extended for older children. For example, they are not routinely encouraged to write their own name or to make use of name cards.

Children are making good progress in their mathematical development. This is because they have frequent opportunities to learn about mathematical concepts, for example, number, shape, size. These include children sorting by size and colour when playing with the compare bears and talking about colours and shapes during a threading activity. Children benefit from regular opportunities to consolidate their learning through daily routines. For example, they count pieces of apple, divide and share satsumas at snack time and sing number rhymes at circle time.

Children enjoy good opportunities to explore their own creativity, for example, free painting and drawing is available every day. They are able to access some resources for themselves, for example scissors and glue sticks. Staff incorporate creative activities into themes, for example, when following up children's interest in the snow they provide a range of creative activities. These include painting snowy pictures using white paint and black paper, using white sparkly play dough and making pictures with a range of white materials including cotton wool, straws and buttons. Children are able to create their own unique objects and although staff lend a helping hand if needed, they do not take over. Children enjoy a range of imaginative activities, for example, playing in the home corner, dressing up and small world play.

Children are making satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They are beginning to learn about other cultures and beliefs and to respect others in the community. For example, they learn about celebrations and festivals through activities such as making lamps at Diwali. Staff use fiction and non-fiction books to develop children's understanding of other parts of the world. For example, when they are talking about snow and cold countries they look at books about penguins and polar bears. Children have good opportunities to design and build through a range of construction activities and are learning to use simple tools. However, no access to a computer means that children's opportunities to learn about technology are currently limited.

Although there are no opportunities to enjoy outdoor play because there is no outside play area or nearby playground, effective planning ensures that children benefit from good opportunities for indoor physical play. Physical activities are available on a daily basis and this means that children are able to practise and develop their physical skills, For example, they are able to climb, balance, slide, use wheeled toys and join in action songs and movement activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Information is sought from parents relating to children's individual needs and appropriately recorded on the playgroup's registration forms. This ensures that staff are aware of children's cultural, religious and language needs, as well as of any allergies or medical conditions. Staff

demonstrate a good understanding of children's interests and an effective keyworker system helps to promote this. As a result, staff ensure that they get to know the children really well and this means that the children settle well and are happy. There are good systems in place to identify and support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, for example, there is a named Special Needs Co-ordinator who has attended appropriate training. Children with speech and language delay and those for whom English is an additional language make good progress because of the emphasis staff place on talking to the children. Plans include activities that help children to find out about festivals and celebrations. Consequently, they are learning to respect the beliefs of others. The provision of a range of multi-cultural resources including books, dolls and puzzles means that children are developing positive attitudes towards others in the community.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children's behaviour is good because staff are consistently good role models for them. Staff treat each other and the children with respect and give them clear explanations if their behaviour is unacceptable. This helps children to learn to understand right from wrong. Staff frequently use praise and positive language to promote good behaviour. As a result, children are forming caring relationships with staff and each other and are learning to play co-operatively, share and take turns. Children's social skills are developing well because staff are always polite and respectful when they speak to them. They encourage them to have good manners. For example, they praise children when they remember to say 'please' and 'thank' you at snack time.

The partnership with parents and carers is good because parents are well informed about the setting. For example, they have good access to policies and procedures on a daily basis. This includes up-to-date procedures to follow if they have a complaint. A notice board is also provided where information for parents is displayed. Staff enjoy good relationships with parents and are welcoming towards them. For example, staff greet parents in a friendly way and are happy to talk to them at the beginning and end of sessions. Parents provide positive feedback and comment on how happy their child is at the playgroup and on the approachability and helpfulness of staff. Staff organise play and stay sessions and these help to demonstrate to parents what and how the children are learning through the activities provided. Charts giving information about the six areas of learning are displayed in the playgroup room. However, details of planning, for example, short term plans, are not currently displayed for parents to see.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The registered person has not complied with regulations under the National Standards. They have not submitted the necessary documentation to Ofsted to enable vetting procedures to be carried out, in order to determine their suitability to be involved in providing care for children. In addition, recruitment procedures are not sufficiently robust because they do not ensure that effective vetting is carried out, for example, when new staff are appointed. Staff records do not include sufficient information relating to checks that have been carried out.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming environment where space is used imaginatively. Activities are set out in clearly designated areas, for example, a book area and a home corner and resources are easily accessible. Consequently, children are able to enjoy an interesting, balanced range of activities and make independent choices. Good ratios and effective staff deployment means that children are appropriately supported by staff who are sensitive to their needs. Staff are very hardworking, enthusiastic and dedicated and work well together, as a team. There have been some recent changes to the staff team because the previous manager left at the end of last term. The group is temporarily being managed by a development worker from the Pre-school Learning Alliance, until a new manager is appointed. These measures are effective and help to ensure continuity of care for the children.

All documentation, as required by the National Standards, is in place. This includes attendance, accident and medication records. However, the attendance record does not currently record hours of children's attendance.

The leadership and management of the nursery education provision is good. This is because the effective nursery education programme ensures that children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Planning is sound and there are systems in place to evaluate children's progress and staff use evaluations to plan the next steps in individual children's learning. The temporary manager is currently working alongside the advisory teacher to fully develop monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of nursery education.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, care was judged as 'Inadequate'. As a result, ten actions were set to improve the standards of care that the playgroup provides. Considerable improvements have been implemented since this time.

Children's health is now more effectively promoted because a signed medication record which includes prior written parental consent is now in place and there is a written policy and an accident record book.

Children's safety is further promoted because there is now an operational plan that includes written policies and procedures relating to lost and uncollected children, fire procedures and child protection procedures that include procedures to be followed if there is an allegation against a member of staff and a record of visitors. In addition, children are protected if there is a fire because fire drills are carried out regularly and recorded. Written risk assessments are carried out and displayed and this helps to prevent the risk of accidents.

The organisation of documentation has greatly improved and all documentation is up-to-date, accessible and available for inspection. Attendance records now include a record of visitors in the form of a visitors' book. Staff understand that they must inform Ofsted of any significant changes, for example, change of manager. An operational plan that includes policies and procedures ensures that parents are well informed about the setting. Information for parents about how to make a complaint has been improved and up-dated, in line with revisions made in October 2005. As well as the written policy, there is a complaints record book.

At the last inspection, nursery education was judged as 'Satisfactory'. As a result, three actions were set to improve the quality of nursery education. Improved planning now includes daily focused activities and learning intentions. Staff observe and evaluate children's progress by recording individual observations. Evaluations are then used to plan the next steps in individual children's learning. The acting manager is working closely with the advisory teacher to develop systems to evaluate the effectiveness of the overall nursery education programme. Parents are now better informed about what their children are learning through play and stay sessions and charts detailing the six areas of learning that are displayed in the playgroup room. Children's opportunities to reinforce their learning through practical activities have been improved, for example, children practise counting at snack time and circle time.

However, although some challenge is provided for older children, this is insufficient for the development of children's writing skills. For example, children are not routinely encouraged to try to write their own name on their work. A further recommendation has been set against this issue.

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 CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that the registered person, in this case, the parents' committee, submits to a vetting procedure to determine their suitability to be involved in providing care for children.
- ensure that there are effective recruitment procedures in place that include checking that staff are suitable to work with children and that appropriate records are held of all checks carried out.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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):

- ensure that planning, for example, short-term planning, is shared with parents.
- ensure that older children's writing skills are extended, for example, by encouraging them to try and write their own names on their work.

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