



## Poplar Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127462
<b>Inspection date</b>	04 December 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Vanessa Wood
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<b>Registered person</b>	Poplar Pre-school
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Poplar Pre-School opened in 1975. The pre-school operates from a pavilion in a residential part of Maidstone, adjacent to a playing field. The group operates from two large halls and has access to a small outdoor area. A maximum of 46 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:15 until 15:00 for 38 weeks of the year.

There are currently 95 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 58 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from the local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports children with special needs.

The pre-school employs 13 members of staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health is effectively promoted because the staff use daily routines to promote good personal hygiene. For example, children learn the importance of regular hand washing particularly before eating food at snack and lunch time. Clear information is received from parents about children's health and dietary requirements which enables staff to provide the correct care. Staff ensure any accidents are dealt with promptly and appropriately. All staff hold a current first aid qualification so can deal with any emergencies. The building is old and tired in appearance but staff ensure the areas used by the children are clean and hygienic. Children enjoy a range of healthy foods at snack time such as fruit, cheese, bread and raisins. They learn and experience different foods through learning about different cultures. Children experience good outdoor play in a small enclosed area close to the building. Staff provide a range of resources to promote their co-ordination and physical development, such as balancing beams, bikes and a large climbing frame. Children also respond and move enthusiastically during music and movement sessions.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and settle quickly in the spacious, well organised and welcoming environment. They are able to move confidently around the pre-school. Furniture is suitable and arranged so they can safely access play resources and activities. High regard is given to ensure children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Good procedures and consistent risk assessments ensures that all areas accessed by children are safe and any hazards are minimised. For example alarms have been fitted to fire exits so that staff know if children open these doors. However, daily risk assessments are not recorded to show which areas have been checked. Appropriate fire safety equipment is available and checked regularly by the fire officer. Good procedures are in place to evacuate the building in an emergency and regular fire drills are undertaken to ensure staff and children are aware of the procedure. Children are protected from harm because staff ensure their knowledge and understanding of child protection issues is up-dated regularly. They are able to put appropriate procedures into practice if necessary. A clear written policy statement ensures parents are fully informed of their responsibility to protect children from harm.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children make good use of the warm and welcoming environment. They are able to self select activities that interest them and to take part in focus activities supervised by staff. A comfortable space has been created to ensure children and staff can sit and share books. Children enjoy good interaction with a consistent key worker. Lively conversation is used to extend learning as staff and children discuss the decorations children choose to put on the Christmas tree. Children are interested in the computer and learn good mouse control as they investigate the

various programs. They learn about their bodies through topic work and their learning is reinforced during routine activities. Children are encouraged to take care of their personal needs such as putting on their coats and they learn to respect and praise each other's achievements. Staff plan good age appropriate activities for younger children using the Birth to three matters framework. They assess children's abilities using the framework and plan for the next stage of their development.

## **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are experienced and have a clear knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use good teaching methods to develop children's learning. They plan well to include a range of interesting topics which are taught successfully to ensure a balanced programme of activities. Staff make good use of the available space to provide a stimulating environment and are particularly good at enabling children to develop confidence and independence. Good assessments are made on children's achievements and this information is used to efficiently plan the next steps in children's development. The planning system is flexible allowing staff to take advantage of events and children's interests. Children settle well and are confident. They sit quietly to listen when appropriate and are motivated and enjoy new challenges. They show respect and consideration toward staff and one another as they choose their own activities and learn to share and take turns as they play. Independence is encouraged as children choose their play materials and take care of their personal needs.

Children are good communicators. They respond well to questioning which stimulates their curiosity and language skills. They listen well to stories and enjoy sharing books, understanding that print carries meaning. They notice print around the setting on displays and posters. Children are beginning to write and form letters well and to learn the links between sounds and letters. Children count confidently and recognise numbers around the room. They delight in taking part in singing songs that help them understand the concept of simple addition and subtraction. Children use mathematical language to describe size, shape and position. They confidently identify three dimensional objects such as a cube, cuboids, sphere and pyramid and shapes such as oval and octagon.

Children are able to explore, investigate and make discoveries. For example, using junk materials to make models of everyday objects such as a clock, and exploring natural things such as wood and leaves using a magnifying glass. Children enjoy exploring texture, colour, shape and form as they make things out of dough and build and construct with recyclable materials. They express their ideas as they paint and draw freely using a variety of materials. The home corner is used well to encourage imaginative play and equipment is changed regularly to assist in developing new play ideas. Children learn about sound and rhythm using a good collection of musical instruments and enjoy singing well known rhymes and songs.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's sense of belonging is enhanced through good communication between staff and parents to ensure all information is shared. Children benefit from the staff's positive awareness of equal opportunities and inclusion of all children. Children take part in a variety of activities

that inform them about festivals and celebrations that may be different from their own. For example, they learn music and songs from Africa. Children are provided with a range of resources that promote positive images of gender, ethnicity, culture and disability. Good strategies are in place to ensure the needs of all children are met including those with special needs. Children show good respect for others and their needs as they play well in small and large groups. They are supported by positive staff interaction to develop strategies to negotiate, take turns and work together. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. The pre-school has sound procedures in place for informing parents about the daily running of the pre-school, including information about the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. A parents' notice board and regular newsletters inform parents of any changes to the routine, any events taking place and how parents can progress children's learning at home. Parents have access to assessment records kept on children and are able to discuss their progress at any time. A small camera has been installed in each room so that parents can be reassured that children have settled in the pre-school.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by very effective organisation. For example, space and resources are organised well to enable children to move around freely, with access to outdoor play space on most days. Children receive good support from a staff team who plan their day to ensure that the majority of their time is spent working with them. They benefit from a staff team who are trained and qualified and regularly attend training to up-date their knowledge in child care and education. Children's welfare is promoted through the use of appropriate and well maintained records, policies and procedures which are shared with parents.

Leadership and management is good. The committee members and staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the pre-school. An active role is taken by the committee in managing the pre-school and a supportive relationship with the supervisor and staff has been developed. Effective recruitment procedures are in place and a staff appraisal system has been introduced. Regular staff meetings ensure staff plan appropriately to meet the needs of all children. The strengths and weaknesses of the pre-school have been identified and the committee has a clear vision for ongoing improvements, particularly to the building.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the registered provider was required to consider up-dating staff training needs.

Staff are qualified in child care and have attended regular short courses to ensure the care they give meets the National Standards and to increase their understanding of delivering the curriculum for the Foundation Stage.

### **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 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):

- continue to improve the condition of the premises
- ensure risk assessments are in place to show when these are done and any action taken

#### **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 a stimulating range of first hand play opportunities
- continue to develop the outdoor play area to provide for children's physical development

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)