

Rockingham Community Pre-school Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	107642
Inspection date	21 February 2007
Inspector	Josephine Geoghegan
Setting Address	Rockingham Community Centre, Lower Hall, Off Rockingham Street, London, SE1 6QN
Telephone number	020 7403 0795
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Registered person	Rockingham Community Pre-school
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Rockingham Community Pre-School Playgroup is a voluntary playgroup run by a management committee and funded by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The group was registered in 1975 and operates from the ground floor of a community centre in the Elephant and Castle area of Southwark. Children have direct access to an enclosed area for outside play. The Pre-school is registered to care for 16 children at any one time. The group opens five days a week, from Monday to Friday during term time, between 09.30 and 15.00.

There are currently 19 children from two to five years on roll, including 12 children aged three and four years who are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions, including morning, afternoon and all day. The setting currently supports a few children with special needs and most children who attend use English as an additional language.

Three staff work directly with the children and all hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from Southwark Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and Sure Start.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have good opportunities to gain exercise and develop their physical skills. For example, they enjoy outside play and show confidence as they use the fixed climbing equipment and slide. They are able to develop their spatial awareness as they freely run around and use a range of wheeled toys appropriately.

Children benefit from sociable snack and meal times. They are supported in learning about healthy eating as staff discuss the foods children have brought in for lunch. Children enjoy the variety of fresh fruit offered at snack time and have constant access to drinks, helping them to develop healthy eating habits. Good systems are in place to ensure staff are aware of children's dietary needs and good standards of food hygiene practice are promoted. For example, staff ensure parents are informed of appropriate foods for children to bring in their packed lunch; they ensure lunches are stored and heated appropriately and keep a record of foods that children have eaten.

Good systems are in place to help stop the spread of infection. For example, children know to wash their hands before snack time and staff help them to develop their self care skills when dealing with coughs, colds and toileting skills. Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff use documents appropriately to record any accidents or medication.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright open hall that is decorated with lots of children's creative work, photos and posters, creating a welcoming environment. They benefit from lots of clear open play space, enabling them to move freely between activities. Children have access to a wide range of resources that promote all areas of learning. They make choices from the toys set out and some children know to ask staff if they wish to use resources that are stored in the cupboard. However, children are not provided with enough opportunities to work independently and select resources, as they are unable to make informed choices. Toys and equipment are of good quality and well maintained.

Positive steps are taken to promote safety within the setting. For example, children participate in regular fire evacuation drills, risk assessments are completed and good systems are in place to promote security. However, not all risks have been minimised as a fire blanket is not present in the kitchen.

Good systems are in place to help safeguard children's welfare. For example, all staff have attended safeguarding children training courses; they ensure relevant information and policies and procedures are easily accessible. However, the child protection procedure does not show the contact number for local police and social services.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are provided with a good balance of activities throughout the day, enabling them to engage in adult led activities, such as stories and songs at group time and cooking and creative

activities; they make good use of free-flow play choosing between indoor activities and outside play. Younger children are supported well by staff who encourage them to join in activities. Younger children especially enjoy outside play, developing their physical control. They use the group see-saw with enthusiasm and show confidence as they climb the steps and use the slide, developing self assurance as they gain awareness of their own abilities.

Good systems are in place to ensure activities are planned that are suitable for the ages and abilities of all children. For example, staff use their assessments of children's learning to plan appropriate activities that help them make progress; they focus on a topic over a few weeks and incorporate all areas of learning for the Foundation Stage and aspects of the Birth to three matters framework.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Overall, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They are happy, settled and purposefully engaged in play. Good systems are in place to ensure children's progress is monitored and activities are planned that promote all areas of learning. Children make choices and move freely, however, not all resources are easily accessible, limiting opportunities for children to work independently. Children have good relationships with each other and staff; they participate well at group time, actively joining in songs and story lines, developing their language skills. Children show an awareness that print carries meaning as they attempt to write letters and numbers in the foam, developing their writing skills.

Children are developing good maths and problem solving skills. For example, they skilfully fit pieces of the train track without adult support; they show persistence while completing puzzles and recognise and match numerals. Children have good opportunities to design and construct. For example, they use a variety of construction sets to build towers and make mobile phones that they use imaginatively. Children learn about their environment while participating in local outings and regular events within the community centre, such as the weekly music and movement group. Children learn about nature through adult led activities, such as planting flowers. However, they do not have enough opportunities to explore objects and learn about nature independently. They are able to develop their awareness of technology as they use the computer and electronic games.

Children have good opportunities to use a range of paint, collage and malleable materials, enabling them to explore and develop their creative skills. They become absorbed in role-play as they use the home corner and imitate while using the play food and equipment cooperatively. Children have good opportunities to develop an awareness of their senses as they participate in cooking, music and dance activities. They show skilful use of hand held tools, such as scissors and sand play equipment. Children enjoy outside play and develop a range of physical skills as they use bikes, scooters, climbing equipment and stilts appropriately.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well. Children are very well behaved and respond positively to the daily routine. For example, they know to tidy away toys at the end of the session, developing their sense of responsibility. Children show a sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff as they arrive. They benefit from the clear boundaries and consistent approach by staff, helping children to learn good codes of conduct.

Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from staff during play; their own creative work and drawings are displayed, including abstract drawings and emergent writing, valuing their efforts and achievements.

Good systems are in place to promote equality. For example, children are able to learn about cultures and beliefs as they use a range of resources that reflect people in the community, such as dolls, play food and dressing up clothes that reflect a variety of cultures. Books and posters show positive images of people in the community, along with writing in a variety of languages; photos of children participating in activities and outings promote positive self image. Good systems are in place to ensure all children's individual needs are known. Children who have disabilities and/or learning difficulties are supported well within the setting. Staff work closely with parents and relevant professionals to ensure children's needs are met.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Effective systems are in place to ensure information is shared. For example, parents complete an entry profile when their children begin; staff regularly discuss children's progress and parents are offered a written record of achievement. Information is displayed regarding key worker groups and relevant information. Parents have good opportunities to become involved in the life of the nursery as they attend open evenings and coffee mornings with guest speakers such as the speech and language therapist.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are able to play in a well organised environment, with ample space for play. The time children spend at the setting is well organised, enabling them to have access to a balance of interesting activities. However, not all resources are easily accessible, limiting opportunities for children to make choices and gain independence.

All required documentation is in place and a comprehensive range of policies and procedures are available to support the management of the setting. However, not all documents are well maintained. For example, children's hours of attendance are not continuously recorded on the signing in/out sheet. Some policies and procedures do not show all relevant information. For example, the safeguarding children's procedures do not show the contact details of local police and social services and the complaints procedure does not show the contact details of the provider. Good systems are in place to promote safety, although not all risks have been minimised as a fire blanket is not available in the kitchen.

Sound recruitment and vetting procedures ensure staff are suitable to work with children. The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications; they show a commitment to developing the quality of the service as they work closely with other professionals, such as speech therapists. Staff have worked at the setting for many years, promoting continuity of care for children and families. Effective systems are in place to assess children's progress and staff work together to plan an interesting range of activities that promote all areas of learning. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to improve organisation by developing a written induction procedure for new staff and to provide an effective system to ensure that the entrance door is secure to help keep children safe. The Pre-school Learning Alliance policies and

procedures are available to support new staff induction and the entrance door is kept locked after children arrive.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted have received one complaint relating to Standard 2: organisation and 12: partnership with parents. We carried out an investigation on 20th July 2006. The complaint related to ratios not being met at all times and a complaints log not being available. We found that at one time the number of children present exceeded that of the pre-school registration and that a complaints log was not kept on the premises. The provider ensures that ratios are met at all times and that the complaints log is available on the premises. 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):

- improve fire safety: provide a fire blanket which conforms to BS EN safety standards in the kitchen.
- ensure all documents are appropriately maintained

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):

- extend opportunities for children to select resources and develop their independence (also applies to care)
- extend opportunities for children to explore and investigate objects and learn about nature.

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