



Childrens Workshop Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122593
Inspection date	24 January 2007
Inspector	Patricia Jane Daniels
Setting Address	Methodist Church Centre, Manor Road, East Molesey, Surrey, KT8 9JU
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Registered person	Joan Tait
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Children's Workshop pre-school was first registered in 1970. It operates from three rooms and one main hall in a church community centre in East Molesey. An enclosed outdoor play area is provided. The group serves families from the local community.

There are currently 85 children, aged from two to four years, on roll. This includes 70 funded children. The children are accommodated in two groups. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 12:00, 09:15 until 12:15 or 13:00 until 15:30. There is also an option for children to stay for an extra hour for the lunch club.

There are 21 members of staff who work with the children. 15 staff have a recognised early years qualification. One member of staff is on a training programme to gain a recognised childcare qualification. Staff attend various training workshops all attend in house training sessions.

The setting receives support from an advisor from the local authority. The pre-school are accredited members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff maintain equipment in a clean condition and follow good hygiene procedures to minimise cross-contamination. Children independently use hand gel before they help themselves to a snack and learn about personal hygiene as part of a theme that promotes a healthy lifestyle.

The majority of staff have current training in first aid, so that children have access to appropriate treatment if they have an accident. Staff have specialist training to administer any invasive medications such as epipens. Parents give written consent for staff to administer medication, but the system for obtaining consent and recording any medication given is not completely clear. The policy for excluding sick children ensures that those who are contagious are not a source of infection to others.

A snack bar system for the older children enables them to help themselves when they want. This promotes the children's independence and encourages them to think about their personal needs. Younger children have a snack and drink at a set time. Children in both groups can help themselves to a drink of water whenever they are thirsty. The group offers healthy options that include fruit and non-sugary cereals and encourages parents to provide suitable items for the children to attend the lunch club. These steps promote a nutritious diet for children attending the group. Planned topics about healthy eating promote the children's understanding of this area.

Children have daily opportunities for outdoor play so that they can enjoy the benefits of fresh air and exercise, and develop their physical skills. They confidently run around and pedal the bikes, changing speed and direction to avoid each other. Activities provided indoors help the children to develop the skills needed to use tools such as pencils and scissors effectively.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff organise the available space to be welcoming and safe. Children have plenty of space and move around freely between the activities. The rooms and areas used are prepared well by the staff, with a range of activities and displays that invite the children's interest. The group rents the premises; in some areas the condition of the building and fittings are dated, and not in a good state of maintenance.

All equipment and toys used by the children are safe and well maintained. The group is very well resourced and children have access to an excellent range of toys that stimulate their development in all areas.

A risk assessment has identified potential hazards and steps are taken to keep children safe. External doors remain locked during sessions, so that children cannot leave the premises and unwanted visitors cannot gain access. Children are supervised at all times and staff are aware when older children visit the toilet independently. An area of the outdoor play area has safety flooring to protect children. Fire drills are held frequently, so that staff and children learn how to evacuate the premises quickly and safely. Children develop an awareness of safety for themselves, through the explanations given by staff. As a result of these and other measures children play safely in a secure environment.

Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities to safeguard children. They know the possible signs of abuse and the steps to take if they have concerns. Several staff have attended training in this area and all have instruction as part of the induction process. These actions ensure that the children are protected and that their welfare is promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff value the children and build warm and positive relationships with them. They offer good support and have high expectations of what the children can achieve. The group has a dynamic, energetic atmosphere with children involved in investigation and play. Children enjoy the interesting variety of activities and help themselves independently to the resources. The range of activities promotes all areas of children's development and offers a balance of active and quieter times throughout the session.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff present a range of worthwhile learning opportunities and ask lots of open-ended questions to promote the children's thinking. They are skilled at following the children's interests and at using them to good effect within the learning activities. As a result, the children are interested and concentrate well. For example, the opportunities presented from an overnight snowfall are used to promote the children's learning in several areas. The children speculate about where snow comes from, how it feels and what it is made from. They watch the process as it melts in a jug. They talk about how to make a snowman, and the shapes needed. Plans for activities indicate that children have a rich variety of experiences, which cover all areas of learning. Staff do not consistently use their observations of the children's abilities to identify the next steps in their learning. However, the impact of this is minimal because the staff support and extend activities successfully.

Children make good progress towards the early learning goals. They confidently choose their activities and approach staff for support. Many children have developed the skills needed to operate independently within the group. Children offer explanations about why things happen and use language to anticipate what might happen next. They are beginning to link the sounds

made by letters, and can identify the initial sound of their names. They handle books carefully and write their own names correctly on their paintings.

Children develop understanding of calculation and confidently offer solutions to problems. They show curiosity about numbers and make suggestions about why we need numbers in everyday situations, for example, for the number house we live in, or for birthdays and candles on cakes. They have regular opportunities to count throughout the session and learn to recognise groups with two or three objects.

Children explore objects and living things, and the changes that occur. For example, they plant bulbs in the garden and observe the changes in the life cycle of butterflies. They operate simple programmes on the computer. They learn about the wider world through themed activities such as space and the migration of birds.

Children use their imagination to express their ideas creatively and within their play. They explore a variety of materials during art and craft activities and find out what happens when they mix colours. They join in with songs enthusiastically. They enjoy role-play and spend time pretending to cook for one another in the home corner.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff find out about children's needs and preferences from parents. In this way, appropriate care can be given from the start and children can develop a sense of belonging. Staff offer good support to children with learning difficulties. They work together with outside agencies to provide appropriate support and monitor progress.

The diversity within our society is represented within the resources used by the children, such as books and small world toys. Occasionally a themed activity is provided, such as a celebration of the Chinese New Year. Staff are good role models for children's behaviour because they treat them with respect. The general environment supports positive behaviour because children are interested in the activities and involved in playing purposefully. They are encouraged to share and take turns. Staff gently remind them about the boundaries for behaviour and praise them when they have done well.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents have a high regard for the staff and the service provided. The group invites parents to attend for three sessions initially so that they can become familiar with how the sessions operate. Baseline assessments of children's abilities are completed with parental input, and information about the Foundation Stage curriculum is shared. Parents receive information about the activities within the group and about how the activities link to the six areas of learning. This is supported by suggestions of how parents can help their children's learning at home. Parents are invited into the group to help and for appointments with staff to discuss their children's progress. The owner has instigated a parents' support group. This meets to welcome new parents and plan support activities for the group. A feedback questionnaire seeks parents' views, and the main points

are noted for action. There is an excellent exchange of information about the children's abilities. As a result, continuity of care and learning for children is effectively promoted.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The registered person ensures that staff are suitable through a robust recruitment and checking procedure. Training and qualification requirements are met well, ensuring that suitable staff understand how to meet the children's needs effectively. There is a high ratio of staff, which enables them to offer good support to the children. Staff work effectively together as a team, and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities. As a result, the group is competently organised for the benefit of the children.

All regulatory requirements are met and documentation relating to the safety, health and welfare of the children is in place and well maintained. Children's records are shared with parents and their contributions are valued. The group meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are good. The proprietor and manager have clearly defined roles and they understand the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. They have implemented changes to make improvements to care and education. For example, new computers are provided and a snack bar system introduced. Staff have been sent on a course to learn how to improve the system of recording observations of children. Information is effectively shared through working lunches with senior staff and improvements encouraged through ongoing training. The group seeks support and expertise from sources such as the local authority and meets with other groups in the area to share ideas and good practice.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, Ofsted made three recommendations for improvement. The register of attendance now records the actual times of staff and children's attendance, so that accurate records are maintained. The policy for uncollected children now lists the appropriate procedures to follow. The hot and cold taps used by children for hand washing in the red room are clearly labelled, so that children understand not to use the red tap in case the water is too hot. The temperature of the hot water in the blue room is now regulated, so that it remains at a suitable temperature. These actions taken by the group in response to the recommendations have improved the quality of care for the children.

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):

- improve the system for obtaining parental consent to administer medication, and the system for recording its administration.

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):

- consolidate the system used to identify the next steps in children's learning.

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