



Splash and Dash Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118187
Inspection date	05 February 2007
Inspector	Christine Bonnett
Setting Address	Kingsdown Avenue, Ealing, London, W13 9PR
Telephone number	020 8566 2182
E-mail	
Registered person	Splash and Dash Pre-School 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

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Splash and Dash Pre-School Playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children attending the group. It opened in 1996, and operates from Kingsdown church hall in Ealing, in the London borough of Ealing. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open each Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 09:45 to 12:00 during term time. Children have access to a secure, covered outdoor play area.

There are currently 29 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, six children receive funding for nursery education.

The pre-school employs five staff, including the manager, of whom three hold appropriate childcare 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 promoted as the premises are maintained to a satisfactory standard of cleanliness. Children develop good self-care skills, as they are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times, and understand why this is important. Effective policies and procedures are in place for administering medication and managing accidents. Two staff members hold current first aid certificates to ensure children are well looked after.

Children enjoy healthy snacks at refreshment time. Fresh fruit and plain biscuits are routinely available and milk and water is provided to drink. Children's individual dietary needs are known and catered for. However, the refreshment session is too long. Children's independence is not promoted by enabling them to participate in the preparation and serving of the fruit, and pouring the drinks. Children are required to sit and wait to be served by one staff member handing out plates of prepared fruit slices. This procedure is time consuming. Consequently, a relaxed and social occasion is not created as children become bored and disengage from the activity as the noise level rises.

Children benefit from having regular opportunities to play outdoors. The covered outdoor area allows children to ride bikes and play ball in all weathers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit as the hall is satisfactorily maintained to ensure they are not endangered. Appropriate security measures are in place on the doors to the hall to further promote the safety of children. All play equipment has to be set out each morning. Staff work hard to ensure a welcoming environment is created, and resources are displayed attractively and appealing for the children. Because the storage areas for equipment are limited, children's independence is not promoted by enabling them to choose their own play materials throughout the session from accessible storage units. However, the wide range of resources set out each day provides sufficient choice. In addition, should a child request a particular item to use, it will be made available for them.

Children's health is compromised as the toilets used by them are not maintained to an adequate temperature throughout the session. For reasons of safety, children are escorted to the toilets in small groups. They remain there until every child has used the toilet and washed their hands. Consequently, a child may be in an area with no heating for 10 minutes or more. Children who are partially dressed because they are using the toilet become cold. This is also the case for children requiring a nappy change on the changing mat.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have a sound knowledge of the signs and symptoms that may indicate a child was being abused. However, their knowledge of the procedure to follow to report concerns is limited and needs to be updated.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at pre-school. They arrive happily and confidently, and quickly settle at their chosen activity. Younger children benefit from activity planning that follows the Birth to three matters framework. This means that activities are meaningful and appropriate.

Children profit from warm and caring interaction with staff. Staff offer appropriate support to children who are unsettled. This positive interaction, and the use of the key worker system, helps to secure relationships between children and staff, thus developing a strong sense of belonging and trust.

Children concentrate well, showing good perseverance with activities, such as painting their models for the transport theme. This was so enjoyed by the children, that they finished them off the next day. Children enthusiastically join in with action songs, and squeal with excitement as they anticipate what comes next! When singing songs they are less familiar with, they listen attentively and concentrate.

Nursery Education

The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff generally have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage, and a satisfactory understanding of how children learn. Consequently, children make satisfactory progress in the Foundation Stage. Children are observed to identify their achievements, and the information gained is evaluated and used to plan the next individual step for each child.

Children have good opportunities to develop their creative skills. They initiate their own play with the puppet theatre and enjoy model making and painting. Staff extend children's vocabulary by asking questions to make them think, and respond appropriately. For example, while washing his paint-covered hands, a child was asked "what colour will we get if we mix together the yellow paint on this hand with the blue paint on this hand?"

Children do not have regular contact with programmable toys, such as tills and basic computers to enable them to understand how they operate, and their purpose. Mathematics is well supported in daily routines. Children count how many of them are sitting at the table, and join in enthusiastically with number songs. Mathematical language is also heard at the weighing scales, such as heavy and light, full and half full.

Children enjoy, and benefit from, physical play with the parachute indoors, and the trampoline in the garden. However, there is no large apparatus to challenge and dare the older and more able children. They have no opportunity to practise balancing, climbing, tumbling and scrambling. In addition, children's access to musical instruments is limited, which curtails their understanding of how the instruments work and sound, and also prevents them beginning to learn about simple rhythm.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. They receive kindness and care from staff who act as good role models, and meet their individual needs. Children receive appropriate praise and encouragement to enhance their self-esteem and confidence. Age-appropriate and positive strategies are used to manage any behavioural difficulties that may arise. Consequently, the concept of right and wrong is reinforced in ways the children understand.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are welcome in the group. Staff have attended training in the area, and work closely with other childcare professionals to ensure the individual needs of the child are met. The manager has a sound understanding of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 and the duties it imposes upon service providers. Children develop an understanding of other cultures and faiths within society as they have access to a satisfactory range of resources that give a positive reflection of diversity. Resources include books and puzzles. In addition, a variety of world faith festivals are acknowledged, such as Chinese New Year, Christmas and Diwali. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents are able to discuss their child's progress with staff at any time and read the observations made. In addition, should they identify an area of development that they feel needs some support, they are welcome to bring this to the attention of the child's key worker. A plan is then devised to promote this area within the group. This effective partnership is beneficial to the child as it ensures that parents and staff work together to achieve a successful outcome. All parents and carers have access to a wealth of information displayed on the notice board. Although a complaints procedure is available, it does not contain up-to-date information about how Ofsted can be contacted. The well supported parent's rota means that parents are able to involve themselves fully in the pre-school day and observe for themselves what the group has to offer their child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The Manager works directly with the children and provides a good role model to staff. She is aware of her staff's individual strengths, and any areas that need enhancing. She monitors their work and encourages them to attend appropriate training to build upon their skills. Good support is given to staff, both informally on a daily basis and formally through regular one-to-one meetings. In addition, the manager works closely with the active management committee to develop and promote the work of the group. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to ensure that all staff are suitable to be in contact with the children.

Children benefit from being cared for in a well-organised environment. It allows them space to explore the play equipment in hygienic and safe conditions, which adds to their sense of security and well-being. Staff are motivated, and work well as a team as they focus on the needs of the children. Their deployment around the hall is good. Children's well-being is further

promoted as all required documentation is maintained and policies and procedures used effectively.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the group was required to enhance the safety of children by developing the staff's awareness of child protection issues. This was carried out at the time through their attendance on appropriate courses. However, their knowledge and understanding now needs up-dating once again, to ensure it is in-line with current procedures. All staff and parent helpers are now familiar with the emergency escape plan to ensure the safety of themselves and the children in the event of an emergency.

As a result of the last inspection, the policy and procedure file, which includes the behaviour management policy and the child protection policy, are available for parents and carers to consult. This ensures parents and carers are aware of the practices that operate within the group. Children's health is now promoted as children clean their hands before eating their snack. In addition, one member of staff holds a food hygiene certificate.

At the last inspection, the group was also required to make improvements to the provision of nursery education. The programme for communication, language and literacy has been developed by enabling children to have routine access to paper and pencils to develop their pre-writing skills. In addition, staff regularly link sounds to letters to enable children to understand that print carries meaning. Mathematical development has been enhanced, as children have greater opportunities to practise counting, both formally and informally throughout the day. In addition, a nature table and transport theme enables children to learn about the natural world and their environment.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 satisfactory.

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):

- reorganise snack time to encourage children's independence, create a social occasion and incorporate aspects of the Foundation Stage (applies to nursery education also)
- ensure the toilets are maintained at an adequate temperature
- ensure all staff gain up-to-date knowledge of child protection issues and are able to implement the policies and procedures in the absence of the designated member of staff
- update the complaints procedure to ensure accurate contact details for Ofsted are available for parents and carers.

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):

- develop the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world to enable children to have routine access to information and communication technology and programmable toys
- develop the programme for physical development by providing apparatus to challenge and dare the older and more able children
- enable children to have routine opportunities to use musical instruments to explore their sounds and how they 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