

Loughborough Community Centre Pre-School
Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	144058
Inspection date	19 March 2007
Inspector	Claire James
Setting Address	Max Roach One O'clock Club, Wiltshire Road, London SW9 7YA
Telephone number	0207-274-6693
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Registered person	Loughborough Community Centre
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 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?

Loughborough Community Centre Pre-School opened in the 1992. It operates from one room in a purpose built building in Brixton. The pre-school serves the local area.

There are currently 18 children from two to four years on roll. This includes 16 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with special needs and the majority of children attending for whom English is their second language.

The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 09:30 until 12:30.

A total of one full time and two part time staff work with the children. All staff members are qualified in early years to either NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA) and from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning about being healthy through their daily routines. The low sink in the playroom encourages them to independently wash and dry their hands after using paint and glue. They understand the need for good personal hygiene when using the toilet and after playing outside; confidently telling the inspector that they must wash their hands before they eat their snack. Children's understanding is consistently reinforced by staff who ensure cloths used for art activities are removed and tables cleaned with anti bacterial spray before children sit down to eat.

The pre-school's effective Health and Hygiene policy fully promotes children's good health. Parents are informed of procedures followed by the setting, as for instance, a large box of tissues is always available to children, who are encouraged by staff to blow their noses and cover their mouths when coughing. Sick children are excluded until they are fit enough to return to the setting, thus minimising the risk of cross-infection.

Children learn how to respond to accidents and display considerable maturity when, for instance, a child playing outside, falls over and reports the incident. She independently soaks a paper towel in water and applies it as a cold compress.

Children bring fresh fruit to share and enjoy other healthy snack items such as toast, hoummus and vegetable sticks or cheese and crackers. They learn about food that promotes their good health during their weekly cookery session and benefit from parents preparing and sharing foods, representative of their cultural traditions, with them. Drinking water is freely available to children who understand that they should drink and rest after exercise.

Children make good progress in their physical development. They access the large outdoor area each day regardless of the weather, as staff are committed to providing every opportunity for them to benefit from fresh air and exercise. An excellent range of large and small equipment offers choice and challenge for children. Older children learn to skip and develop good ball skills as staff patiently turn the rope for them and demonstrate how to throw and catch. Children demonstrate good co-ordination as they hop from square to square on the hopscotch game drawn on the playground and race each other on the huge variety of scooters and two person bikes that promote co-operative play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children recognise their name cards as they enthusiastically self-register on arrival at the setting. They quickly select from the wide range of activities available to interest and engage them and independently access resources provided to promote their development in all areas of learning.

The attractive, spacious playroom is maintained to a high standard and assessed daily for potential risks to children. Equipped with appropriately sized furniture, the room allows children's free movement between well-designated areas. Children's independence and self-esteem are fostered as they reach their coat pegs, painting aprons and choose from the wide range of non-fiction and story books provided. They understand the need to place their paintings in the drying rack and sweep up any sand on the floor, in order to keep themselves safe and the

setting tidy. An older child, for example, directs a younger one to hang up her apron, 'in case someone falls over it'.

Children are cared for in a secure and safe environment. The front door is kept locked and two bolts fasten the gate leading to the playroom. The door to the large outside area is secured unless adults are ready to receive the children for outdoor play. Grassed, hard and soft surfaces provide areas for different types of play. Children demonstrate maturity as they remind each other of 'the rules', concerning lining up to go outside, not pushing one another nor speaking to strangers by the fence. They consistently climb the ladder and sit to slide and keep the bikes away from children playing with small apparatus. The garden adjoins a public park, this does not compromise children's safety, however, as staff conduct a daily risk assessment of the area and keep a diary of any unwanted items found. Staff are particularly vigilant whilst children play outside, ensuring they remain well away from the fences that surround the garden.

Children are well protected from the risk of fire as they quickly evacuate the building during regular fire drills. Fire equipment is well maintained and all exits clearly marked. Mainly satisfactory child protection procedures and the comprehensive policy shared with parents, mean that children are generally safeguarded from abuse. Staff understand the procedure to be followed if a member of staff is accused of abuse, however, the policy does not include this information and has not been updated to reflect recent changes with regard to the regulator's details.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children greet each other and enthusiastically welcome visitors to their setting. They are confident to form relationships within the group and quickly know who is absent at registration. They enjoy talking to adults and tell the inspector that they like the setting and how they have computer at home.

Children benefit from selecting from the wide range of suitable activities provided and sustain good concentration as they fill differently sized containers with sand or water, during independent play. They make red play dough with staff as 'red' is the colour of the week, remembering that they learned about the colour, yellow, the previous week. Children happily recreate familiar scenes in the role play area with staff who effectively repeat and re-phrase their questions. This is particularly well demonstrated by children for whom English is an additional language, who are encouraged to acquire new vocabulary and learn to use full sentences.

Almost all children are in receipt of funded Nursery Education. The setting nominally provides a different curriculum for the few younger children present. Differentiation for the under threes, however, largely consists of easier worksheets for number recognition and letter formation. The younger children enjoy and benefit from the wide variety of opportunities for play based learning accessed through their self-selected activities. They spend a short time engaged in individual structured language or mathematical tasks and are able to remain in dressing up clothes whilst working with a member of staff so that their creative play can continue afterwards. Younger children become anxious, however, when expected to complete a worksheet that requires them to form numerals and colour inside a printed outline, which is inappropriate for them. The manager understands the children's developmental needs and advises that children should not be made to finish the work if they do not want to do it. Circle time is too long for the youngest children or those for whom English is an additional language. Older ones, however,

benefit from demonstrating their sound knowledge of shapes, colours and letters and receiving plenty of praise.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children have a positive attitude to learning and make consistently good progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children benefit from staff's sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the balanced curriculum of activities and experiences planned to interest and engage them. Some children are making progress in mathematics and personal and social education beyond that expected for their age as for instance, in learning about the properties of simple shapes, they comment that 'a square has four sides and a circle has no sides because it is round'. They accurately count and correspond at snack time and know that they need two more cups for the children present.

Children demonstrate considerable responsibility for their personal care and that of others, by for example helping each other fasten painting aprons and helping younger ones find their coats for outdoor play. Children's independence is fostered as they fetch their named placemats and pour their own drinks at snack time. They sustain good concentration when writing with a member of staff and learn to hold a pencil correctly. Children develop good fine motor control by making marks in paint at the easel and cutting and sticking pictures from catalogues. There are few opportunities, however to write for a range of purposes as writing materials are confined to one area.

Children recognise the initial letter of their names and those of others. They name letters as they thread them on a string, showing that they are beginning to link sounds to letters. Individual communication needs are supported by daily sessions with a member of staff who shows children picture cards of common objects. Children who are learning English acquire an increasing vocabulary as dedicated staff encourage them to answer questions about, for example, an egg and a tap.

Children benefit from the large garden which provides numerous opportunities to explore their environment. They comment on changes in the weather and excitedly find a ladybird in the grass. They learn about household technology through role play in the home corner and discuss fruits and vegetables when cutting and sharing them at snack time.

Children are keen to join in music making and singing. They explore the different sounds they can make with a range of instruments. They enjoy performing an extensive repertoire of songs and benefit from the visits to the setting by a storyteller and musician during Black History month. They use their imagination during role play in the role play area and outside, playing games with dolls and pushchairs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are met as staff ensure that all are treated with equal respect and their backgrounds valued. Posters and information in different languages welcome children and their parents. A good selection of books, toys and puzzles promote positive images of cultures, religions, ability and disability. Children's knowledge of diversity is further enhanced by activities planned to support their learning. Visits within the locality, such as a walk to Brixton Market to buy African fruits to share at snack time and to the library for story time provide opportunities for children to develop positive attitudes towards their surroundings. Parents support outings to the seaside and a fun park to enable children to explore the wider world.

Planting seeds and looking after growing plants encourages children to care for their environment. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Good provision is made for children for whom English is an additional language. Individual sessions with staff and support from the Local Authority ensure that children make good progress and are quickly assimilated into the setting. The manager is committed to meeting the needs of each child in her care and recommends that parents seek specialised help for children's specific health, behaviour or learning needs. Staff respond to parents' wishes and concerns by providing opportunities for them to make suggestions to improve the level of care offered. The setting has a thorough complaints' procedure, however, this has not been updated to reflect recent changes with regard to the regulator's contact number.

Children behave well. Consistent messages from staff enable children to learn the rules of the setting and understand the need to consider one another. Children understand how to stay safe in the garden and take turns with equipment. They respond to staff's signals to stop and enjoy helping to tidy the playroom. Staff speak kindly to children and successfully distract them if they become restless. Some sessions, however, are overly long for younger children, which does not fully promote their well-being.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. New parents are invited to a very comprehensive meeting with a member of staff to complete an initial profile for their child. Children's well-being is promoted as their likes, dislikes and particular needs are discussed in confidence. Parents are fully informed of the curriculum their child will be receiving. The stepping stones and early learning goals are explained and staff state how the setting makes a range of long and short observations of children playing and undertaking structured tasks to inform planning for their next steps in learning. Parents and carers are encouraged to support their children's learning, by accompanying them on visits and attending monthly parents' committee meetings. Regular newsletters and planning sheets displayed in the entrance advise parents of activities planned for their children. A written report and observation folder show parents how their children are making progress. Parents report that they are well informed and happy with the education their children are receiving.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by suitable and well qualified staff, experienced in child care. All staff members have an adequate knowledge and understanding of children's developmental needs, however some structured activities are overly formal for the youngest children. Staff work together well as a team, clear about their individual roles and responsibilities. Rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that children are protected from harm. Children benefit from staff's induction, which ensures that records such as the attendance register and accident book are correctly maintained. A range of appropriate policies and procedures detailed in the pre-school's handbook and given to parents, promote children's overall care and well-being.

Leadership and Management are good. The manager is committed to improvement and arranges annual appraisal meetings for all staff. Teaching is monitored by the manager and staff are encouraged to identify their strengths and weaknesses to identify their personal training needs. Staff access a wide range of courses planned for their own professional development and to enhance learning opportunities for children. Children benefit because staff meet regularly to

discuss their progress and plan co-operatively for their next steps in learning. Children, therefore, enjoy a balanced curriculum of activities that supports each area and aspect of their learning.

The manager acts as a good role model for staff and children. She actively supports the work of volunteers by modelling appropriate language that can be understood by young children and this in turn benefits the children in her care.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to devise a system for planning and implementing a suitable range of activities for younger children, which is appropriate for their stage of development and based on individual needs and to provide a suitable range of toys and activities to meet the developmental needs of children from two to three years. The provider also agreed to provide an area where children who wish to relax or play quietly can do so without disturbance. Planning is generally effective for young children now and mostly suitable for the developmental needs of individual children. There is still a dependence on work sheets to teach numbers and letter sounds, however; this is inappropriate for the youngest children and means that their needs are not fully met. Children have access to a wide range of suitable toys and activities and a comfortable area in the book corner where they can rest and relax. This means that their needs are being met.

At the last education inspection the provider agreed to ensure that observation records made on children help staff plan for the next steps in children's learning. Observations of children's independent play are now effectively used to plan for next steps in their learning. Although structured tasks are planned to meet children's particular needs, staff use a generic worksheet to teach and assess number recognition. This does not fully ensure that children have grasped new concepts and enable staff to effectively plan how to move them to the next level.

Complaints since the last inspection

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. Since the last inspection there have been no complaints that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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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):

- ensure the safeguarding children policy contains all necessary information.
- improve staff knowledge of planning for two to three year olds in line with the Birth to three framework
- update the complaints procedure to reflect recent changes

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):

- provide further opportunities for children to write for a range of purposes

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