



## Colden Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY241127
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 February 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Committee
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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 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?

Colden Play Group and Colden Children's Club is a registered charity and is managed by a committee. It opened in 2001 and operates from one classroom in a purpose built early years unit, which is shared with children attending the reception class and year one at Colden Primary School. The building is owned by the play group and children's club committee, and is situated in the grounds of Colden Primary School.

A maximum of 16 children may attend the play group at any one time, and a maximum of 16 children may attend the children's club at any one time. The play group is open each weekday during term time only. On Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays children aged from two and a half years to under five years attend from 09.20 to 11.50. On Tuesdays and Thursdays children aged from three years to under five years attend from 09.20 to 15.30. The children's club is open each weekday during term time only from 07.45 to 09.15 and from 15.40 to 18.15. All

children attending the play group and the children's club share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 17 children aged from two and half years to under five years on roll in the play group. Of these, 16 children receive funding for early education. There are currently 44 children in the out of school club, of whom, 23 are under 8 years.

The play group employs three members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications. The children's club employs two members of staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualification and one is working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are gaining suitable independence in personal care and are aware of how to maintain their personal hygiene. They remain healthy because staff follow adequate hygiene routines consistently. They are adequately protected from infection because staff are knowledgeable about maintaining appropriate hygiene standards. For example, new staff undergo a suitable period of induction so that they understand how to promote children's good health and prevent the spread of infection.

Children's welfare and well-being are adequately protected through the appropriate maintenance of documentation regarding their health, and through adequate numbers of staff holding current and relevant first aid certificates. This means that they are able to administer first aid promptly in the event of an accident because they have up-to-date knowledge.

Children are suitably nourished. They benefit from a balanced diet which includes plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables daily, as well as suitable access to fresh drinking water from a drinks dispenser. School aged children receive a substantial breakfast consisting of toast, cereal and fruit juice or milk. Children who remain over the lunch time period have the option of selecting a meal from the school canteen or bringing a packed lunch. School aged children receive an evening meal, which is satisfying. For example, a small sample of the menu consists of pizza and salad, pasta and tomato sauce, hot dogs with spaghetti or jacket potatoes with a wide choice of fillings. Children's special dietary requirements are noted and any allergies are suitably monitored.

Children are encouraged to be active through regular physical play in the enclosed outdoor play area or in the school playground. They participate in activities that are suitable to their age and stage of development, and which encourages the development of their physical skills. For example, they practise jumping, balancing and climbing. They enjoy hand-eye coordination games, which are adapted to suit the range of capabilities of the children who attend.

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

The provision is good.

Children play safely in premises that are very well maintained. They enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities that keep them highly involved. Space is used well, in almost all areas, to encourage their independence and to promote their all-round development. For example, children under three years demonstrate a good understanding of their own personal needs and use the well-maintained toilet facilities independently.

Children use furniture, equipment and resources that are safe and suitable for their purpose and which are well maintained. Child height tables, chairs and equipment allow children to move furniture and resources easily to enhance their own play. For example, pre-school children move chairs and arrange furniture in the home corner to suit themselves. Larger tables and chairs are provided for the school aged children who demonstrate good spatial awareness and dexterity as they set up the miniature snooker table.

Children benefit from good risk assessments, which provide a good balance between freedom of movement and supervision to protect them. For example, children move freely indoors and outdoors, which enhances their play and provides greater stimulation. Good safety procedures on outings involves using extra staff to maintain a ratio of one adult to two children. Children are protected from unwanted intrusion through good door security and all visitors are monitored. Children demonstrate a good awareness of how to keep themselves safe as pre-school children explain the emergency evacuation procedure and the rules on waiting in a line outside until the register has been taken.

Children are well protected from abuse because staff understand and follow the correct child protection procedures. They retain the appropriate guidelines and are knowledgeable about the potential signs and symptoms that would cause concern. The relevant local child protection contact details are retained. This means that they can act quickly in the child's best interest to safeguard children's welfare.

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

The provision is good.

Children are highly involved in a wide range of activities. They are happy and settled as they have made friends and they relate well with each other, so that their cooperative play is meaningful. For example, three and four year olds consult with each other about how to construct a train track, thereby successfully achieving their common goal. Their role play is dynamic as they use the resources well to improvise on a theme.

Children under three years benefit from good implementation of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Their activities are well planned to suit their ages and stages of development. For example, they engage in simple dressing up that is easy for them to wear and their tactile play is well suited to their abilities. Three-year-olds engage in sustained cooperative play as they move purposefully from one area of the setting to another.

Children attending the out of school club demonstrate high confidence and self-esteem as they arrange their own resources to suit their particular needs. For example, they set up, arrange equipment and engage in activities inside and outside the setting freely. Alternative activities include watching their favourite television programme, reading a book or participating in games with rules.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The quality of the learning opportunities provided for children is good. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and deliver a varied and interesting range of activities so that, overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children receive appropriate challenges in almost all areas. They benefit from effective planning which is informed through continuous and reliable observation of the children and monitoring of the setting. This means that, over time, all areas of learning are covered. Children play with resources that are age-appropriate and which are readily accessible to them in almost all instances. They learn through first hand experiences so that their play is meaningful and dynamic. Children's behaviour is very good; they respond well to high expectations from staff who give them clear explanations and acknowledge their efforts with praise. There are currently no children with learning difficulties or disabilities being cared for. However, staff are suitably trained and experienced in providing inclusive provision.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. They are eager to engage in new experiences and demonstrate high self-esteem and confidence. Children have developed strong friendships and relate well to each other so that their cooperative play is exciting. They are very interested in what is going on around them and are highly involved in their play. Children demonstrate good self control and understand why they must follow certain rules because these are explained to them clearly.

Children's progress in communication, language and literacy is satisfactory. They use writing materials skilfully, make themselves understood easily and their vocabulary is wide so that it enhances their role play. For example, they organise their games, re-enact scenes and follow instructions from each other. Children enjoy listening to stories and looking at books independently. However, opportunities for the more able children to make use of writing for different purposes in their spontaneous play are not provided.

Children's progress in mathematics is good. Four-year-olds demonstrate a reliable understanding of number sequence. All children gain a sound understanding of mathematical concepts as they engage in mathematically related activities through organised games and planned activities. Opportunities for them to learn through first hand experiences consolidate their understanding. For example, they play games with rules so that they gain a clear understanding of sequencing and turn taking. They learn about quantities and density through play with tactile materials, such as clay, water and sand. Children make size comparisons through play with shape sorters, construct three dimensional objects using large and small junk play and measure their own height using a wall chart. Children learn to recognise numerals through visual cues around the setting. They are gaining a sound concept of numbers through stories and action songs involving addition and subtraction, such as five speckled frogs and 'Goldilocks and the Three Bears'.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is good. Their understanding of nature is promoted well through good use of their own outdoor space, which they use freely. For example, children move in and out of the setting to explore the nature garden and to hunt mini-beasts, which they investigate with magnifying lenses. Children collect natural materials on nature walks and encourage wild life into their garden with bird cake. They are learning about their environment and the local community through visitors to the group. Children are beginning to understand the passage of time through activities that involve recalling significant events, and they are supported in this through the use of photographs. They are beginning to know about their own cultures and beliefs, and are learning about those of other people. This is achieved through looking at a range of festivals from around the world. Their awareness is fostered even further by the contribution of parents who talk to the children about celebrations, such as Hanukkah. Children understand the uses of modern technology and its use is time-tabled into the curriculum. However, children do not receive sufficient opportunities to consolidate their understanding through spontaneous play as some equipment, such as the cassette recorder is not accessible to them.

Children's physical development is good. They take advantage of easily accessible outdoor play, in almost all types of weather, to practise running, climbing, balancing and to develop their hand-eye coordination skills. Children have a good understanding of how to keep themselves healthy through eating the right food, such as fresh fruit and vegetables. They understand the dietary needs of others as they explain the allergies of other children and why they must not eat certain foods. Children are well supported to recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are cold, hungry or thirsty and what this means. For example, three year olds understand that they must wear coats to go outside when the weather is cold, and come inside to take off extra clothing when they have become too hot from running around outdoors.

Children's creative development is good. Three and four year olds explore colours, shapes and textures as they use a range of tactile materials, such as clay, sand, water, rice, pasta and salt dough. All children express themselves creatively through activities, such as gluing and sticking, mixing colours and painting. They print using a variety of different mediums including feet and hands, and create three dimensional objects with junk. Children are learning to recognise sounds through listening to music and singing songs from memory. Their imagination is fostered well through activities, such as role play and using puppets to express their ideas and feelings. Most children understand the changing properties of food as they all participate in activities to promote this. These include cooking and baking and looking at the seasons through food, such as fruit. For example, children have tasted exotic fruit, such as dragon fruit and star fruit.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the setting and look forward to attending. They are confident, happy and feel a sense of belonging. For example, when given the choice, school aged children prefer to attend rather than go home. They are learning to respect the needs and feelings of others as they are treated with respect. All children are encouraged to be polite and use the example of staff as positive role models.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are happy with the provision. They express positive opinions of the staff whom they feel are kind and friendly. Most parents are happy with the level of information they receive and most parents are knowledgeable about the activities and topics in which their children are involved. Parents receive regular verbal information about their children's progress and the opportunity exists for them to view their children's records. Appropriate use is made of the parents' notice board to inform parents of the topics children are looking at and provide information about current events. However, the written policy regarding children who are contagious does not give parents any guidance on what the setting considers contagious or how long to keep children away from the setting.

Children are well behaved. They are encouraged to take responsibility for their own actions by making decisions for themselves. For example, children under three years are encouraged to tidy up after themselves and use the toilet independently. Pre-school children select resources for themselves and explore the setting independently. For example, they decide whether they play inside or outside and engage in activities that suit their own agendas. School aged children are involved in setting up their own rules for the club, help to design the menus for their meals and snacks and set up a rota for the use of the computer. As a consequence, all the children attending the provision are responsive to staff expectations of good standards of behaviour.

Children are valued and included because the staff listen to their ideas and value their opinions. Their individual needs are met because staff work with parents to ensure appropriate continuity of care. There are no children with disabilities or learning difficulties currently attending, but provision is made for their appropriate care through suitable policies and adequately trained and experienced staff.

Children benefit from activities and resources which help them to value diversity. For example, they learn about the variety of beliefs and cultures of others through looking at festivals from around the world, such as making clay candle holders for Diwali and participating in food tasting. They are learning to value the differences in society through a suitable range of resources that reflect positive images of cultural diversity and gender. However, there are insufficient resources to help children gain a positive awareness of disability.

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

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are suitably protected because the adults who care for them are appropriately trained and have a thorough understanding of child development. Children feel secure and confident because staff put their needs first and give them individual attention.

Children's welfare is adequately promoted through documentation which is, with a few exceptions, appropriately maintained. For example, the policies relating to the children's club and those for the play group are maintained separately and are unique to each setting, which promotes the safe management of the provision. However, the policies relating to the contact details of the regulator do not provide parents with up-to-date information. Children benefit from appropriate organisation of their day to allow them freedom of movement, suitable access

to resources and plenty of choices. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. Staff are clear about their role and understand their responsibilities. The setting has systems in place to monitor its own strengths and weakness. For example, the setting values the opinions of parents and follows advice from early years professionals to improve the care and education provided for all children.

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

At the last inspection for the care of children in the play group and the out of school club the provider was recommended to improve children's safety by ensuring that wheelchair access is free from obstruction.

They were further recommended to improve the organisation of the setting by developing appropriate systems and policies with regard to the induction and supervision of new staff, the storage of documentation relating to staff, the shared use of the premises and to keep themselves abreast of current legislation.

They were also recommended to foster children's well-being and self-esteem by reviewing the medication policy and procedure and consult with school aged children regarding the development of their own menus and their expectations of behaviour. The setting was also recommended to develop resources reflecting positive images of disability for all children.

Children's safety has improved through the proper use of space and resources to ensure that wheelchair access is unobstructed. The improved organisation of the setting promotes children's welfare through the implementation of a secure system for the induction and supervision of new staff and, in most areas, the setting keeps itself abreast of current and relevant legislation so that records are maintained appropriately. Children's health and well-being is fostered through an improved medication policy. School aged children are consulted about their ideas for menus and their expectations of behaviour. However, children's positive awareness of people in society is not raised in all areas as they do not have resources reflecting positive images of disability.

At the last inspection for nursery education the provider was recommended to improve the organisation of equipment and resources to help children gain independence and confidence. They were also recommended to use practical activities to help children understand mathematics and language concepts. Children benefit from improved access to resources in almost all areas, which promotes their all-round development. Their understanding of mathematics is promoted well through their participation in practical activities, such as counting songs and rhymes, and their use of language is promoted satisfactorily so that children communicate with each other effectively.

### **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 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 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 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 information provided for parents about the policy regarding contagious ailments
- develop resources reflecting positive images of disability
- develop systems to keep policies, procedures and information from the regulator updated more frequently.

#### **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):

- improve the organisation of resources to allow children greater access to every-day technology
- provide greater opportunities for children to use writing for different purposes in their spontaneous play.

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)