



Redditch YMCA Pre-School and Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY338265
Inspection date	28 February 2007
Inspector	Christine Lynn Williams
Setting Address	Church Hill Community Centre, Loxley close, Church Hill, Redditch, B98 9JL
Telephone number	01527 61643
E-mail	
Registered person	Redditch YMCA
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?

Redditch YMCA Pre-school and nursery originally opened in 1978 and moved to its current premises in 2006. It operates from a self-contained nursery unit within a community centre in the Church Hill district of Redditch. A maximum of 35 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 49 children aged from three months to five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from the local area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs a total of 12 members of staff of which five are full time. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications and one who is working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from a local authority mentor teacher.

The nursery is on the site of a proposed designated Children's Centre which is expected to be operational by mid 2007. The nursery will form part of a range of integrated services offered to the local community including a parent and toddler group, holiday play schemes, after school club and health support services such as speech therapist, midwife and health visitor clinics.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is protected because staff recognise and reduce any possible risks and help children to develop an understanding of how to lead a healthy lifestyle. Effective daily cleaning routines are used to prevent the spread of infection. Staff wear gloves during nappy changing and ensure food is prepared hygienically. Older children within the nursery develop independence as they use child-height toilet facilities and are well supported in understanding the importance of hand washing. They are encouraged to wash their hands frequently throughout the day and simple explanations are used to help them link this with good health. Babies and toddlers are also beginning to understand about keeping themselves healthy. For example, they know not to put things in their mouths and learn to use baby wipes to clean their hands and faces.

Children's health and medication needs are clearly recorded and staff talk to parents daily to share health information and observations. Two first aid trained staff are present on site at all times and the manager is a qualified paediatric nurse, who ensures that minor accidents are dealt with effectively and in a timely manner.

Children get plenty of fresh air and robust physical exercise. Babies are frequently taken for walks around the area, while older children enjoy playing in the nursery garden and outdoor classroom. Staff understand the physical needs of the youngest children being cared for and provide plenty of space for babies and toddlers to roll, crawl and kick. Large arm chairs are used to encourage babies to pull themselves up and staff sensitively support early crawlers and walkers. Rugs are placed in the outdoor classroom area to allow babies to crawl safely outside during good weather and soft play cushions are frequently used indoors to help toddlers learn to scramble and climb. Lots of natural materials, shape sorters and sound toys are also used to help babies learn to grasp, hold and use their fingers and hands effectively. Three and four year-olds use the outdoor facilities with real enjoyment and have good control over their bodies. They develop confidence in moving their bodies in different ways as they use slides, rockers, bikes, balls and hoops and enjoy meeting the challenge of scrambling over and jumping in and out of car tyres. They show a keen sense of personal space as they skilfully peddle their bikes, learning to control their speed so that they do not bump into their friends.

Mealtimes are relaxed, social occasions when children and adults sit together around the table to enjoy their food and each other's company. Parents provide main meals and the nursery has worked closely with them to ensure that children have plenty of nutritionally balanced foods

in their lunch boxes. Staff provide healthy snacks, including a variety of different fruits, and healthy eating messages are promoted well through discussion, topics and cooking activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a colourful and stimulating atmosphere where indoor and outdoor space is organised effectively and they can learn, explore and develop safely and with close adult support. Colourful displays, children's craft work, posters and topic themes are displayed around the room and many of these are placed at a low level, within easy sight of very young children. This creates a very stimulating and child-friendly environment. The nursery is well resourced with a wealth of different playthings provided, natural as well as plastic. These are regularly checked for safety and laid out attractively and within easy reach so that children can freely choose what they want to play with.

Children are well supervised at all times and learn to keep themselves safe through general discussion, topics and gentle reminders. Pre-school aged children are encouraged to learn self control when playing outside and babies and toddlers are gently prevented from putting items into their mouths. They play safely, both indoors and out, due to the high priority given to ensuring that any possible risks are minimised by effective safety measures. For example, the outside play area includes a safety surface; safety gates are used to keep children away from kitchen areas, and all heating radiators are covered and protected. A detailed risk assessment has been completed, with safety checks carried out at the beginning of each week to ensure the premises, toys and equipment are safe for use by children. Safety relating to children's sleep times have been particularly carefully considered. For example, babies sleep within the main room so that staff can monitor them constantly and best practice advice is followed regarding placing babies on their backs and with their feet to the foot of the cot. There are good arrangements concerning the arrival and collection of children and lost and uncollected child policies enable staff to respond appropriately should either incident occur.

Staff have a good understanding of how to protect children and recognise that this is their first priority. They are vigilant, aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and know the appropriate procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff develop warm and caring relationships with the children in their care. A keyworker system is used effectively and provides a continuity of care that ensures children feel secure and nurtured. Child profiles are completed with parents to gain early information about young children's starting points, individual routines, needs and preferences and children are cared for within age specific rooms that allow them to develop a sense of belonging with familiar and trusted adults.

Children benefit from staff's attitude and enthusiasm. They plan and provide activities to help children's development in line with the 'Birth to three matters' approach and the Foundation

Stage curriculum and staff regularly observe and assess children's progress and share these developmental milestones with their parents. Within the baby room children are happy, settled and involved in a broad range of planned and spontaneous experiences which support their development and overall learning. Toys are placed within easy reach and they are encouraged to use their senses as they play with sound toys, jelly or water play and discover the delights of treasure baskets. This stimulates their senses and helps them to explore the world around them. Babies and toddlers learn to imitate sounds and words through playful interactions with adults and each other and staff playfully respond to the sounds children make, their actions and expressions. Most two year-olds are cared for in the pre-school room where they play alongside three and four year-olds and enjoy watching and learning from their older friends. They join in with all the activities on offer, choose what they want to do and take part in creative, physical and imaginative play. Staff do take the age of younger children into account when organising activities and lower expectations to meet the concentration and ability levels of two year-olds. However, these are not included in the nursery activity plans and so the specific learning needs of two year-olds are sometimes overlooked.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff form close relationships with the children, working with them in small groups and using an effective keyworker system to aid this. A varied educational programme is offered with staff showing a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and providing effective support that helps three and four year-olds make good progress overall. Children are encouraged to be independent learners and are given a high level of sensory play that encourages them to explore and experiment freely. They self-select resources, decide what they want to do and so are confident in initiating their own learning and play ideas.

Children make good progress in all areas of learning because of staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. The effectiveness of the curriculum planning is suitable. However, it does not include methods of identifying how different learning experiences can be adapted to meet the varying ages and ability of the children within the pre-school room, and older children's learning is not always fully extended. Staff value children's independent learning and organise the day to make the most of children's concentration and stamina. They are attentive and responsive, give clear explanations and offer questions that make children think. As a result children are interested, fully involved and learning.

Some aspects of children's development in the area of communication language and literacy are strong. Children are confident speakers who talk freely and expressively at circle times and during activities. They respond enthusiastically, often showing awe and wonder during story times and enjoy a variety of good quality story and reference books. They have lots of opportunities to recognise their own names and enjoy using a colourful self-registration board each morning. They make marks freely using pens, crayons, dough and paint and some older four year-olds can form some recognisable letters and write their own names. However, writing for a purpose is less well supported with infrequent opportunities provided for children to make marks, for example, during their imaginary play. A simple phonic system is used to help children to link sounds to letters, with staff helping children to recognise the letter sounds in their

names and link these to the alphabet. However this has not been fully developed, and is not offered frequently enough to ensure children make full progress in this area.

Children show positive attitudes to numbers, with counting and number recognition threaded throughout most activities. Number lines displayed as rockets are used effectively, and children often count as they play. They measure and use mathematical language spontaneously, with three year-olds showing a good understanding of size and four year-olds able to describe the shape of bricks, using such words as triangle and circle. Older children are also beginning to develop an understanding of how to solve simple number problems. For example they were able to work out how many spoons were left if two were taken away.

Knowledge and understanding of the world is a particular strength, with children having wide opportunities to learn about nature and to explore freely using all of their senses. A wide range of sensory and unusual materials are provided to encourage children to observe, question and experiment. For example, children showed real delight and fascination as they mixed salt, sand and flour with water, then pretended to make a cake of fir cones, polished eggs and stones. They learn about the natural environment as they look at and record seasonal changes on a weather board, feed the birds and grow seeds and plant flowers in the outdoor classroom area. Children have frequent opportunities to design and make things with a variety of different resources and they freely access a computer each day. All children show skill in using a computer mouse and four year-olds are able to play simple computer games unaided.

Children's creativity is valued and they are encouraged to be creative throughout most activities. Children's art work is widely displayed around the room to show it is valued and they express themselves freely through paint, drawing, music and movement. They make up their own games and stories during small world play and act out familiar roles in the home corner. Regular music sessions allow them to experiment with sounds and rhythms and they join in enthusiastically with actions songs and nursery rhymes and often dance freely to taped music.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children show a strong sense of belonging and enjoy an atmosphere where their individuality is valued and staff help them to feel good about themselves. Positive support, praise and encouragement are used effectively to help build children's self-esteem and they are warmly welcomed into the nursery. There are plenty of opportunities for very young children to be held, cuddled and comforted and they are valued as individuals and so settle quickly and feel safe and secure.

Three and four year-olds are confident, self-assured and often show excitement and pleasure as they play and learn. Personal, social and emotional development underpins the rest of the children's learning and this ensures they are willing and eager to try new things. They develop sensitively towards others through use of careful explanation and posters and this is fully supported by staff who set good role models and are quick to intervene in sharing issues. Children's self-care and independence is supported extremely well, with children encouraged to put on their own coats and craft aprons, use toilets and hand washing facilities independently and able to self-select their playthings and activities. Children behave very well, responding

positively to the clear guidelines and expectations set by staff and learning to share and work together harmoniously. They develop a good understanding of the wider world as they play with special resources that help them to acknowledge a diverse society. Positive role models are seen as they play with dressing up clothes, small world toys and books. They learn to feel valued as they celebrate their own birthdays and other special days such as Chinese New Year, Diwali and Easter and special topics and themes help them to develop positive attitudes to other people's cultures and beliefs. Staff show a positive and caring attitude that ensures all children are fully included and their individual needs are well met. Some children are able to benefit from one-to-one attention, when necessary, and staff work in close partnership with parents and keep thorough records of each child's individual needs and all aspects of their progress. As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. A strong relationship is formed and this contributes to children's well-being. Valuable information about how the setting operates is provided to new parents on joining the setting and they are encouraged to talk freely to staff and key workers on a daily basis. Notice boards and displays are used effectively to keep parents informed and there are regular newsletters sent out each term regarding such things as information on healthy lunch boxes and the topics being used to promote learning. Parents know that they can ask to see the observations and assessments made of their children's learning, and young children's developmental milestones and achievements are shared through key workers and daily care sheets. Parents of three and four year-olds are invited to attend a parent's meeting each term to talk about their child's progress and can also see their child's individual learning folder at any time. Parents are widely encouraged to share what they know about their children using the daily routine sheets and child profile forms. These help staff to understand what stage each child is at and to gain early information about the child's likes and dislikes so that they can plan ahead to meet them.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is supported by enthusiastic staff and strong management. There are high staffing levels within the nursery and staff work well as a team and have a shared commitment to providing good quality care. Time and space are used effectively and a keyworker system helps staff to get to know the children in their care well. There are robust recruitment and induction procedures to ensure that children are well protected and an on-going commitment to training and staff development.

Leadership and management of 'funded children' is good. The nursery is run by a well qualified and experienced manager who fully involves her staff in the decision making and planning processes. Monthly staff meetings and room meetings are held to enable staff to reflect and assess the level of care and education offered to children and yearly plans are being developed, based on this and feedback from parents. Training plans, yearly appraisals and comprehensive induction procedures reflect the enthusiasm and commitment shown by all staff and the manager observes staff and works closely beside them to evaluate practice and the effectiveness of the nursery education. Staff work closely together and effectively as a team. The nursery is expected to form part of a dedicated children's centre later this year, when both children and their parents

will be able to access a range of integrated services including a parent and toddler group, holiday play scheme, out of school club and health support services such as speech therapists, midwives and health visitors.

Good documentation, policies and records ensure children's health, safety and well-being are always carefully considered. The operational plan contains all policies and is always available to parents. All documentation and records are well organised and stored securely. Overall the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 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):

- develop methods of clearly identifying how learning experiences and activities can be adapted to meet the needs of children of different ages and ability (also applies to Nursery Education)

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):

- further improve opportunities for children to link sounds to letters and to make marks for their own 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