



## Little Rascals (Ilford) Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY337383
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Fiona Sapler
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<b>Registered person</b>	Little Rascals (Ilford) Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Little Rascals pre-school was registered in 2006. It operates from St Margaret's church hall in Ilford in the London borough of Redbridge. The group uses two large halls and the outside play area and opens every morning, term time only from 9:30 to 12:30.

A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 53 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for early education. The preschool supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language.

Seven members of staff work directly with the children, all of these hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Pre-school learning alliance and are working towards the Quilt quality assurance scheme.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment where the daily routine provides opportunities for children to follow good hygiene practices, such as washing their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet. However, the organisation of the setting makes it difficult for staff to monitor successfully which children have washed their hands before snack time.

Children are protected in case of an injury as accidents are recorded appropriately, parents provide written consent for emergency treatment and all staff have previously undergone first aid training. Staff whose certificates are now out of date are booked on courses to update their training in this area.

Children who are infectious do not attend and efficient methods are used to ensure parents are fully informed of any contagious illnesses that are present in the preschool. For example, notices were displayed when a child was suffering from a serious tummy bug. This helps to prevent the spread of infection.

Children are provided with daily opportunities to participate in physical exercise, indoors and outdoors. The garden is available for outside play every day. The children confidently manoeuvre cars and bikes and carefully negotiate balancing beams and stepping stones, developing their physical skills and helping them understand the different ways their bodies can work.

Children receive a range of healthy snacks including bread and fruit encouraging them to develop healthy eating practices. However, snack times do not provide opportunities for children to develop their self help skills effectively. They are not supported, or encouraged, to pour their own drinks, select their own plates or help clear the table. Water is available for the children to request throughout the session, this helps them identify their own needs to keep their bodies healthy.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play and move around safely in a spacious environment. The ongoing safety of the setting is monitored termly through comprehensive risk assessments that are well documented and ensure safety issues are addressed. In addition, the manager carries out visual daily risk assessments to assure the environment remains safe for the children. There are clear procedures in place to follow in case of a fire in the setting; however these have not been practised since the provision was registered. This means that children are at risk as not all staff and children are familiar with the evacuation procedures to follow in case of an emergency.

Children use a wide range of toys and resources appropriate to their ages and stage of development. Staff provide reminders and explanations to the children to help them learn about keeping themselves safe as they play. Staff are deployed around the setting to provide a good

level of supervision. The security arrangements in place are very good, ensuring children are unable to leave the premises without a suitable adult.

The children's welfare is safeguarded as staff are aware of signs of possible abuse and follow clear procedures if they are concerned about a child in their care.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed warmly by the staff who greet them by name and encourage them to share their news on their arrival. Younger children, who are still settling into the preschool, are building a healthy dependence on their key workers, this provides them with security and reassurance. All children confidently approach staff for support, indicating good trusting relationships.

Children have access to a wide range of books and enjoy listening to familiar stories accompanied by props from story sacks. This helps them develop an early interest in stories and promotes their developing language.

Children under three are currently observed and their progress evaluated within the Foundation Stage framework. This means their specific developmental needs are not addressed appropriately. The manager has recently attended a Birth to Three matters course and has started to implement this framework within the setting to address this.

Throughout the setting a wide range of activities are planned to meet all areas of development. However, staff generally over-direct these activities and there is an overuse of worksheets. This limits opportunities for children to be creative and to use their imaginations.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff maintain good records of observations which allow them to identify individual children's stages of learning. Key workers contribute to planning meetings where they ensure activities are offered to help each child in their key group develop along the stepping stones. However, staff facilitating the activities are not always clear of the purpose of the activity being offered. This means that children do not consistently benefit from the learning opportunities that are planned.

Children are developing strong relationships with their special friends and often move around the nursery in small groups choosing from the range of activities offered. They are learning to co-operate and work well together.

Children speak very confidently to peers and adults. They use good vocabulary when talking to each other and the adults in the setting, although there are few opportunities for the children to share their experiences with each other. For example, in a small group at circle or news time. Children enthusiastically join in when they listen to familiar stories and enjoy predicting what happens next. There are few opportunities for children to write with a purpose or to write their own names on their work. Children are not routinely introduced to the sounds that letters make.

Children select maths activities as part of their free play. Staff introduce mathematical language as the children try to balance the weighing scales and count the number of peg men that fit into the small boats.

Children enjoy painting and sticking activities and thoroughly enjoy experimenting with musical instruments and listening to the different sounds they make. However, there are limited opportunities for the children to engage in role play and to use their imaginations. The reliance on worksheets and the emphasis on the appearance of the finished product limits their creativity and opportunities for them to experiment.

Children learn about the world around them when introduced to theme work such as 'Homes and Houses'. This covered their own homes as well as habitats of different animals. Visits by the dentist, community farm and a discussion about borrowing resources from the toy library help develop the children's knowledge of the wider community. Children have a clear sense of time when they talk about tidy up time and make sure all the staff and children are aware of the routine. They excitedly talk about the snow that fell that morning as they are fascinated by the wonders of nature. Children do not have access to equipment to help their understanding of information technology.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are treated with respect, and staff use praise and encouragement to promote the children's self-esteem. The children learn to accept differences through a range of resources that reflect diversity, particularly many books and puzzles that represent different cultures and people with disabilities. The manager makes good use of local lending facilities to expand the resources available for the children that promote positive images of the wider world. The preschool celebrates festivals throughout the year and asks parents to participate by bringing in items from home that are important to their culture or religion. This helps the children value their own and others' cultures. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered

There are appropriate systems in place to support children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Close liaison with parents and outside agencies ensures all children's needs are well planned for and met.

Children are encouraged to be kind to each other and to think about others' feelings. However, although they understand the rules of the preschool, the organisation of the setting and the routine do not fully engage them. This means that there are times when they move around aimlessly and lack purpose.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents receive copies of the curriculum plans each week and termly reports. They have access to the children's files and are able to share the observations and checklists that record the children's progress along the stepping stones. However, they do not receive sufficient information to enable them to have a complete understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Parents happily enter the preschool and chat to the staff about their children. They feel welcome and involved and feel able to approach staff with any concerns. This promotes continuity between the home and the preschool.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The preschool ran for many years under a different registration and is now operating with a new registered person and manager. The new management team are committed to improving the service provided and are working closely with the Early Years pedagogy service to update their practices. They have clearly identified weaknesses in the provision and are addressing these through guidance and training. Leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory.

The organisation of the setting has a particular impact on the children's behaviour as there are times when staff are involved in routine duties rather than engaging the children. The large hall encourages children to wander without a specific purpose. Staff are all undertaking behaviour management training where these issues have been highlighted. The preschool is currently working towards a Quilt module specifically addressing improving the environment and how the children move around the setting.

The manager supports staff in their work through regular team meetings and informal discussions. All staff have appropriate checks to make sure they are suitable to work with children and the manager and proprietor regularly monitor staff practices through observation and by providing positive role models. The staff team are encouraged to participate in training courses to ensure the shared knowledge in the setting meets the children's needs and promote good working practices.

The policies and procedures are mostly appropriate but generally relate to the previous setting and some lack detail, this means that they do not fully inform the organisation of the setting. The children's welfare is protected as all required records are in place and maintained effectively.

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

### **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

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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 fire evacuation procedure is practised regularly
- plan and provide challenging and stimulating activities that promote children's creativity and develop their imaginations (also applies to nursery education)
- review the policies and procedures to make them more relevant to the setting
- ensure the daily routines and organisation of the setting engage children purposefully throughout the session and promote their independence.

#### 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):

- ensure activities provided cover the breadth of the Foundation Stage curriculum specifically those relating to Information Technology, communication, language and literacy and creative development
- ensure staff are fully aware of the relevance and purpose of each planned activity and how it can be used to promote children's progress along the stepping stones
- provide parents with relevant information about the Foundation Stage curriculum, the Early Learning Goals and the Stepping Stones to ensure they can be fully involved in their 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)