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Rainbow Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	155323
Inspection date	13 March 2007
Inspector	Anne Legge
Setting Address	School Lane, Newton Poppleford, Sidmouth, Devon, EX10 0EL
Telephone number	01395 567762
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Registered person	Rainbow Pre-school
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

This inspection was carried out under the provisions of Part XA of the Children Act 1989, as inserted by the Care Standards Act 2000

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?

Rainbow Pre-school has been registered since 2001. It is located on a site adjacent to the primary school in the village of Newton Poppleford in East Devon and is run by a voluntary committee. The premises comprise a mobile classroom with two teaching rooms, toilets and kitchen. There is also an enclosed outside play area. The group is registered to care for up to 26 children, aged from three to five years. There are currently 23 children on roll, including 21 funded three and four-year-olds. A team of five staff work with the children, two of whom have appropriate child care qualifications. Sessions are from 09:00 to 12:00 on weekdays in term-time. Older children can also attend afternoon sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 12:00 to 15:00. A toddler group operates on Fridays, from 13:30 to 15:00. The pre-school receives support from the Pre-school Learning Alliance and the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from eating very healthy snacks and meals. They choose from a very good range of fresh and dried fruits and breadsticks for their snack. Packed lunches are well-balanced, as staff work closely with parents, discouraging the provision of foods which are high in sugar or fat. Children talk about healthy eating and know which food items are good for their bodies. They have plenty of fluids, as fresh drinking water is always available and they drink milk or water at snack-times. Children's special dietary needs are recorded and carefully met. Children have daily opportunities to be physically active. They have almost constant access to physical play indoors, as they crawl through a play tent, use a slide or enjoy sharing a rocking toy. Outdoors, they use a range of wheeled toys, play with bats and balls, or dig in the earth. In summer, they use the school field, to run freely or play parachute games.

Children receive good care when they are unwell or injured. Staff are very caring when children have minor accidents and provide good support and first aid. Almost all staff have current first aid qualifications, and accident and medication records are comprehensive. Children are very well protected from infection. The premises are spotlessly clean and staff ensure that floors and toilets are maintained in a hygienic state. Tables are carefully cleaned before food is served, and snack preparation arrangements are very hygienic. Three staff have food hygiene certificates. Children learn good routines, as staff constantly remind them to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. They use liquid soap and paper towels, to help prevent the spread of infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a very safe and secure environment. Their security is assured, as the door is locked during sessions and the outside gate has a secure bolt, which is out of children's reach. Arrangements for collecting children are very secure, as parents wait outside until staff accompany them into one room, while children are cared for by staff in the other room. Staff have a very good understanding of all safety issues and they regularly risk assess the premises and activities. All risk assessments are carefully documented and the procedures are meticulously followed. A daily checklist is used to ensure that floors, doors and equipment are safe for children's use. All hazards are addressed. For example, covers protect children from unused electric sockets and fire guards prevent them being burned by heaters. Children do not enter the kitchen unless accompanied by adults.

Children are safe in emergencies, as evacuation procedures are practised five times each term, on different days of the week, so that all children know the routines. All fire safety equipment is tested regularly. Children play safely outdoors, as clear procedures are followed, including checking gates and equipment. An area is coned off, to protect children who are not using wheeled toys. Children are very well protected from abuse or neglect, as staff have a thorough knowledge of all safeguarding issues and procedures. They have undertaken relevant training and established effective systems to protect children, although the child protection policy lacks some details.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy an excellent variety of activities. At every session they have opportunities to choose freely from an array of interesting resources and tasks, which effectively promote their development. Sessions are very well organised, to provide a balance of free play and structured activities, in small or large groups. Two sessions each week are reserved for older children, when they engage in more challenging activities. Younger children enjoy plenty of sensory play experiences, such as exploring sand, water, dough and trays of earth or seeds. They have constant access to imaginative role play, physical play and large-scale construction activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff plan interesting topics for each half-term, ensuring that the curriculum is covered over time. They observe children's achievements and record their progress towards the early learning goals, using this information successfully, to plan for the next steps in children's development. Key workers have a very good knowledge of the needs of individual children, and they ensure that each child is appropriately challenged or supported. All staff make skilful use of questions and discussion, to extend children's understanding and encourage their development. The learning intentions of daily activities are clearly displayed, so that all adults are able to engage in children's learning and support their progress.

Children talk confidently and are eager to show items from home and talk about them, as staff challenge and support them with effective questioning. They make very good progress in their understanding of letter sounds, as they regularly discuss initial sounds, in a wide range of practical contexts. They experience different forms of writing, such as when making lists during role play, and they learn to form letters correctly, by writing them in sand. They recognise and write their names and enjoy sharing stories. Children count in an extensive variety of practical tasks and routines. For example, they count children present, petals on a daffodil, toy bears or their fingers. They match numerals to sets of objects, such as name cards on the fruit board. Able children are consistently challenged to explore number patterns, as when they count pairs of cards or share grapes at snack. They use positional language in movement games and investigate shapes when making collages or discussing the shape they make when sitting in a group.

Children learn about the natural world, as they explore things that grow, and plant seeds or watch tadpoles develop. They extend their understanding of technology, as they play computer games or use tills and telephones in role play. They develop a very good sense of time and place, discussing the things they bring from home, and recalling events and places they have visited. Children create freely, using paint, dough, drawing and craft materials. They make very good progress with their observational drawing, as staff help them to look closely at petals and consider the number, colour and shape, before they begin. Children enjoy singing familiar songs and moving imaginatively to music, as they use scarves and pretend to be caterpillars and butterflies. They engage in imaginative role play, pretending to be police officers and paramedics, as staff effectively challenge them to respond to an imaginary car crash. Children develop good control in their use of small equipment, such as brushes, spoons and pencils, and with large equipment, including tricycles and scooters.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from consistent care, due to the pre-school's good systems for communicating with their parents. Carers receive clear information when their child first attends, including all policies and procedures and details of all aspects of their children's care. All records are shared appropriately. Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum in the curriculum policy, and termly newsletters provide information about current topics. Notices and displays remind parents about weekly themes. Activity suggestions are included in newsletters, which enable parents to effectively support their child's learning at home. Regular parents' evenings and discussions with key workers provide carers with good information about how their child is making progress towards the early learning goals. Records show children's achievements and include examples of their work, but they do not provide clear information about each child's progress through the stepping stones, and targets for future learning are not always shared formally.

Children behave very well, as they respond to the staff's positive approach to managing behaviour. They enjoy copious praise, as staff celebrate all successes and constantly praise and clap children for their good behaviour, including good sitting, listening or sharing. Children know the pre-school's clear daily routines. They wait patiently and politely before they begin eating or see their name card, signalling that they may leave the seating area. They become very independent as they help with daily jobs, such as preparing snack or tidying up. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They learn to be aware of the needs of others, as staff explain, for example, why they need to be careful with wheeled toys in the restricted outdoor area. They sometimes learn about different cultures, as they use resources, such as multi-cultural dressing-up clothes, books or dolls, but they have limited opportunities to explore different faiths or festivals. The pre-school has very close links with the adjacent school and is very effective in managing smooth children's transitions. The local environment is used well, as children go for regular walks to nearby woodland, to investigate seasonal changes. All children and families are welcomed and included. There are no children on roll with learning difficulties or disabilities, but staff have relevant training and experience, and good systems are in place to support any child with additional needs.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the pre-school's strong leadership and the commitment of all staff to providing high standards of care and nursery education. Leadership and management are good. The play leader and her team constantly review the quality of the nursery education and they have made very good progress since the last inspection. They have successfully re-organised sessions, so that group sizes are appropriate and all children make good progress, throughout sessions. The play leader has accurately identified areas which still need to be developed and she has taken steps to address these issues. Staff work closely with the neighbouring school, to ensure that teaching is consistent and that children move easily to the next stage in their education. The school's Headteacher appraises the play leader and oversees the work of the pre-school.

Children enjoy plenty of individual attention, as adult ratios are very good and staff are well-deployed to support or extend learning. Parent helpers have clearly defined roles and are also able to work effectively with children, as learning intentions of activities are always available to them. Children enjoy the facilities of clean, safe and secure premises, where the space is

used very imaginatively to provide an excellent variety of activities. Their care is supported by all the required documentation, although the child protection policy and complaints procedures lack current details. The pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the pre-school was asked to improve children's safety by carrying out regular fire drills, and to manage group sizes, to help children behave well. They also agreed to develop assessment systems, so that activities are planned and managed well, to challenge all children, especially the most able. The pre-school was asked to develop systems for keeping parents well-informed about their child's progress towards the early learning goals.

The pre-school has made very good progress. Provision for children's safety in emergencies is now good. They practise evacuation procedures regularly, on different days of the week, to include all children. Sessions are very well organised, allowing children to learn in large and small groups, and to be challenged effectively in all sessions. Behaviour is very good, throughout sessions. Assessment systems have been developed and staff are now able to track children's progress, and plan for the next steps in their learning. Able children are very effectively challenged. Help has been sought from the Local Authority to further develop systems, so that parents can see more clearly how their child is progressing through the stepping stones, and targets for future development can be shared. Regular parents' evenings are held, to allow parents to discuss their child's progress with key workers.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 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.

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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):

- provide a good range of activities and resources which help children to develop their understanding of different cultures and beliefs
- make sure that children's care is always underpinned by current and comprehensive documentation, including up-to-date complaints procedures and child protection policy.

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):

- continue to develop children's assessment records, and use them to keep parents well-informed about their child's progress towards the early learning goals and the next steps in their development, so that they can fully support 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*