

# Lincoln Hall Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119584
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Liz Corr
<b>Setting Address</b>	70 Fern Street, London, E3 3PR
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Committee of Lincoln Hall Playgroup
<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 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?

Lincoln Hall Playgroup opened in 1982. It is situated in the Linc Centre in Bow, in the London borough of Tower Hamlets. The playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee. Children access a group room, side room, and toilets. There is also access to a fully enclosed garden. The playgroup serves the local community and provides two sessions each weekday from 09:30 to 12:00 and 12:45 to 03:15, 41 weeks of the year.

There are currently 40 children aged from three to five years on roll. All children receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs four full time and one part time member of staff. All full time staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher from the Early Years Service.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the positive measures in place to ensure their physical, nutritional and health needs are promoted. They are learning the importance of hand washing before eating and after messy activities. Effective routines are in place so children are well supervised when using the bathroom; soap and paper towels are in good supply. Staff are good role models as they remind children why it is important to keep their hands clean before eating and explain to children about germs.

Children benefit from a clear sickness procedure which is shared both verbally and in writing with parents. Clear details are recorded of any medical conditions and permissions have been given in case a child needs emergency medical treatment or advice. Appropriate ratios of staff hold first aid qualifications. Therefore, children are well cared for if they become unwell.

Children enjoy healthy snacks at each session. Care is taken to ensure each child's individual dietary needs are known and met. Snack time is a well organised social occasion where children chat to staff and each other.

Children enjoy regular opportunities for energetic play, fresh air and exercise. The outdoor area is well organised and children are keen to engage in the activities available. They are developing physical skills and learning to control their bodies as they run, climb, slide and balance. This contributes to a healthy lifestyle.

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

The provision is good.

Children play happily in a well organised environment. Children's artwork and photos are displayed throughout the setting which makes the environment a welcoming place for children and their parents. Different sections of the setting have been created for quiet activities, for instance, looking at books, accessing the computer and a sensory area. Children are able to move around easily and self select from a wide range of interesting activities and equipment. The security of the premises is good and regular risk assessments take place to identify any potential hazards.

Children are well supervised both indoors and out. They are encouraged to think about how to play safely, for instance, when they play with wooden bricks staff make suggestions about how to safely change their models into a car. They are learning to take responsibility for their safety as they are encouraged to wear sun hats outdoors. Good organisation ensures that children are safely collected from the setting by appropriate adults. Although a clear emergency evacuation procedure is in place, children are not regularly practising this and learning how to keep themselves safe in an emergency.

Staff have a clear understanding of their role in safeguarding children. A clear child protection procedure is in place. Therefore children's well-being is protected.

## Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a varied and broad range of activities and experiences that are planned in advance. The environment is well organised to make the most of the available space, including the garden which is laid out with interesting activities and physical play equipment, such as the fixed climbing frame. On arrival they are eager to see what is on offer outside and quickly settle into their chosen activities and become immersed in their play.

A large sand pit is available in the garden, children enjoy taking their shoes and socks off and sitting inside it. Staff make this more interesting as they add water to the fine sand. Children enjoy feeling the change of texture and making sand castles together. They are delighted as the adult says they are making magic; they all shout together 'Abracadabra' while she gently removes the sand bucket to reveal the well formed sand castle.

Children are developing independence skills as they learn to wash their hands using the easy to reach soap dispenser and hand towels. They enjoy being helpful and taking responsibility, one child is keen for the sand pit to be opened. When he approaches the member of staff she explains that he will need to go inside and ask one of the adults for the key. He happily carries out the task and returns to the garden with the key to unlock the sand pit.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Most staff have attended training for the Foundation Stage and plans are in place for the whole staff team to receive training in this area. Staff work well as a team; they are motivated and organised. The outdoor area is included in the planning to cover the six areas of learning.

Children are making good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. As they arrive at the setting they are excited; they quickly become involved and are motivated to learn as they persist at chosen activities. For example, children rush outside to play with the large wooden bricks, they interact with each other as one child wants to make this a Bob the Builder game. The same group of children continue to play in this area and later in the morning they have developed their game into a rocket going to the moon. They are able to sit and concentrate at circle time and are familiar with the 'What's in the Bag?' game. They wait until they are chosen to pick a prop from the bag and know that each prop will give them a clue to the songs they will sing together.

Children are developing their communication, language and literacy skills as they are able to recognise their names and the names of the other children at the setting. At snack time staff hold up a card with their names on, children know it is their turn to wash their hands when their name is picked. Other children call out the names of their friends they recognise. They respond to familiar songs with enthusiasm during circle time which is well organised and interactive.

Children are confidently exploring numbers during everyday activities. While involved in the imaginary rocket game, they enjoy counting backwards from 10 to zero and excitedly shout "blast off". One child sits quietly counting the numbers displayed in the outdoor area, when she gets to 10 she realises something is wrong, the one is missing, she says "Oh there's just zero".

Children are exploring and investigating their environment and are developing a good understanding of the world they live in. Staff encourage their interest in nature as one child brings over a ladybird they have found. Staff help the children to count its spots and talk about other insects they have found outside.

Children are independently using a range of equipment confidently; one child concentrates on a program at the computer. She carefully uses the mouse and is able to select different pairs of shoes for the characters in the program.

Children are making good progress in their creative development and enjoy initiating role play ideas. In the wooden brick area a small group of children pretend to go to sleep; they carefully assemble bricks to be their beds and lay down. Suddenly they decide it's morning and now they want to make a car. A member of staff assists the children as they carry tyres from another area of the garden to use as their wheels. They have fun as they sing a range of songs from memory during circle time. They remember that each prop in the special bag is linked to a song and they sing with enthusiasm.

Children have many opportunities to develop their fine motor skills as they cut around cards during sticking activities and sort small objects into type whilst playing with small world toys.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled within the setting as staff are aware of their individual needs and backgrounds. Medical and dietary needs are well recorded and adhered to. Children are developing a positive self image and learning about the beliefs of other people. They are involved in celebrating cultural festivals and are able to access a good range of play equipment that promotes positive images of diversity. Children easily access multi-cultural books and dressing-up outfits. Staff have lists of key words for community languages spoken by some of the children and there are several signs around the setting written in English and community languages.

There are good systems in place to identify and support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff are strongly committed to inclusion and work in partnership with parents to help support children's needs.

Staff use effective techniques to promote positive behaviour; children are praised throughout the session. They know how to sit well at circle time and story time because they are given good examples to follow. For instance, children are told good sitting means sitting still and crossing their legs. They are encouraged to resolve conflicts with each other, consequently, they will tell other children what it is they don't like about their behaviour, if they are upsetting them. This positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Children benefit from the good partnership between staff and parents. Staff work closely with parents to ensure that each child is settled into the setting. Discussions take place with parents to resolve any difficulties, in some cases a home visit is made by a member of staff. This has had a positive impact for some children and has helped them feel more secure and settled. A notice board is available to inform parents of new themes or changes. A clear complaints procedure is displayed including details of the regulator. Children make a memory book during their time at the setting which contains photographs and examples of their work and activities they enjoyed. This is given to the children when they leave and shared with parents.

The partnership with parents and carers is good for older children too. Staff record clear information about what each child can do at the start of the Foundation Stage. This helps to ensure staff provide activities and experiences that are suitable to their stage of development. Progress reports are available for each child with a summary of the next steps to extend their learning. However, this is quite general and does not give specific examples of the types of activities that will be planned. Parents are invited to discuss their child's records of achievement with their Key Worker. However, there are no formal systems in place for staff to share ideas and resources so parents can extend their child's learning at home. Children benefit from the well organised systems in place to help make a smooth transition from playgroup to school. Staff explain which children will be going to the same school, during snack time. Some children visit their new schools with staff. Books are made with photographs of the visits, therefore, children feel more positive and settled about the change.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The children benefit from being cared for in a well organised environment where they are fully involved in a wide range of stimulating activities. Effective recruitment procedures are in place which means that suitable, qualified and experienced staff care for the children. Staff are well supported and are able to access further training to enhance their skills and knowledge.

There are good systems in place to identify children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff follow correct procedures to involve parents and ensure relevant professionals are notified of their concerns. However, sometimes full support is only available when children begin school. As a result staff are not always fully supported to meet children's needs at the setting.

The setting is organised to maximise play opportunities for children. Staff are well deployed to ensure children receive appropriate support and attention. There is a balance of small group work and large group activities. Children are familiar with the routine and happily make choices from the interesting activities. They enjoy playing with their friends in groups or making choices independently as they quietly look at books or play with the computer.

The staff provide a safe environment and encourage children to think about keeping themselves safe. However, they have not been involved in regular emergency evacuation procedures to help them develop awareness of keeping safe in an emergency situation.

The leadership and management is good. The manager has a clear knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and provides appropriate support and training opportunities for staff to enhance their knowledge in this area. Good organisation ensures that staff observe children's progress and have time to plan and assess their learning. However, the plans for the next steps for children's learning are not specific and do not clearly identify the types of activities that will help children make progress. Although staff offer some ideas to parents for continuing children's development at home, this has not been sufficiently formalised. Therefore, children's learning is not fully extended through partnership with parents.

Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and all required documentation is in place and well maintained. The setting is meeting the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

Since the last inspection some progress has been made to improve systems for identifying the next steps for children's learning and how to adapt activities for more able children. However, plans are not always specific enough with examples of the types of activities to further children's learning in the identified areas.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection 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):

- improve systems for staff support for working with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities

#### **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 systems for information sharing to encourage parents to extend their children's learning at home and ensure that planning systems contain specific details of the steps staff will take to develop children's learning

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