

Rainbow Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133689
Inspection date	02 May 2007
Inspector	Sheena Bankier

Setting Address	High Street, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 0BX
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Telephone number	01491 826209
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Registered person	Rainbow Pre-School
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care, Out of School care
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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 opened in the 1970's and is run by a committee made up of parents. It operates from three rooms in a war-time, pre-fabricated, single storey building within the town park of Wallingford. A maximum of 45 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. Children may attend between the ages of two years and five years. A summer playscheme is also offered for 40 children from the age of three to nine years. This runs during selected school holidays from 09.00 to 15.00.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. An early-bird session is offered between 08.45 and 09.00. Nursery education sessions are held between 09:00 and 11:45. Wrap around care is offered from 12:45 to 15:00. A lunch club is held in between the sessions, providing the opportunity for the children to stay all day. Funded nursery education is available to children the term after their third birthday. The setting is able to support children with special needs and children who speak English as a second language. The pre-school serves the local area and children attend for a variety of sessions.

Seven members of staff work with the children, of whom six hold suitable childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about a healthy lifestyle as they take part in activities to support their understanding, such as sun safety and healthy eating. They benefit from regular fresh air and during parts of the day they can independently choose to play outside which is encouraged by staff. The well-equipped garden offers challenge and interest to children through the variety of equipment on offer, for example, fixed play equipment to balance on, toys to pedal and push and large tyres to climb on. This promotes children's good health.

Children are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment. Cleaning procedures are clear and on display for staff to refer to. Staff have a good understanding of how to maintain good health and hygiene standards, for example, the fridge/freezer temperature is checked twice a day and disposable gloves are worn when dealing with bodily fluids. Four of the staff hold food hygiene certificates. There are clear procedures in place to ensure food is stored and prepared in accordance with food hygiene guidelines. Children learn about good hygiene through routines, such as hand washing before eating and after the toilet. Pictures and captions are displayed at the hand washing area to remind children to wash their hands and staff discuss the importance of good hygiene with them. Therefore, children's good health is protected well.

Children enjoy healthy snacks provided by the pre-school, for example, wholemeal toast, fruit and crackers. They have a café style snack time which enables them to choose when to eat. Children eat in small groups at snack time lead by a member of staff. This develops and encourages children's social skills as they sit and talk together. Children are involved in the snack preparation, such as spreading the toast or cutting up fruit. This develops their awareness of food, small physical skills and independence. Parents provide a packed lunch for children which is stored appropriately in a fridge. A healthy eating policy is in place which parents are made aware of. This promotes a healthy lifestyle for children. Healthy drink choices are offered at snack time of either water, diluted fruit juice or milk. Children have access to water at all times, including a tray outside for children to pour themselves a drink as needed. This ensures children drink sufficient quantities to meet their own requirements. Staff encourage children's awareness of the importance of drinking enough during the warm weather by discussing this with them.

Children's individual needs, such as toilet training and rest are well considered. The pre-school requests information regarding children's toilet training needs and works with parents to meet these. Children who stay all day are able to rest or sleep after lunch as they lay on bean bags and watch children's television quietly. This ensures children are able to restore their energy for the afternoon. Paperwork is in place to meet children's individual health needs, such as records of allergies and dietary needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Good procedures are in place to ensure the safety of children. Clear risk assessments are in place and evacuation procedures are displayed in all rooms. This ensures staff, parents and visitors understand the potential risks and how to manage them. Daily checks are carried out and recorded with any action required and when and how it has been rectified. This means any identified issues are addressed. Staff are vigilant in maintaining secure premises and ensure

the door is locked and an accurate record is kept of visitors to the premises. Children gain awareness of how to keep themselves safe through discussions with staff, for example, about being careful with the knife at snack time and through role play about road safety whilst playing outside.

The pre-school is warm and welcoming with posters, art work and photos of the children displayed. There are designated areas for different play and activities over the three rooms used. Space is utilised well which benefits the children. Children move freely and safely between the two adjoining rooms and the outdoor area, providing them with choices and independence. The children have use of a wide range of toys and equipment which meet their needs. These are well-maintained through regular checks and cleaning.

All staff hold current first aid certificates which ensures children's minor accidents and injuries are quickly attended to. This protects children's well-being and good health. Staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities to protect children in their care from harm. They have a good knowledge of the procedures to follow in the event of concerns and staff have undertaken training. Therefore, children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the activities on offer and are mostly well occupied. They choose from a good range of activities, play opportunities and resources both in and out of doors. Children settle quickly and are confident at the pre-school. They feel at ease in the environment and approach adults, engaging them in conversation, such as their home lives and likes and dislikes. Children enjoy playing together in small groups at their chosen activity and children have good relationships with each other overall. The playscheme offers a range of activities during school holidays, such as art and craft based activities suitable for the age-range of children who attend.

The 'Birth to three guidance' is used effectively with the younger children. The younger children's needs are understood very well. They are sensitively integrated into the pre-school with small separate sessions where they develop their social skills and confidence. Staff support the younger children at these sessions extremely well. Staff encourage learning through play with gentle discussions which raises the children's awareness of different concepts, such as numbers and colours. At the end of each session the pre-school children benefit from time to interact with each other. These sessions enable children to settle successfully into pre-school.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff undertake regular training and most have a good knowledge and understanding of how they support children's progress. There is a good range of well-planned experiences for children. All staff are involved in planning the curriculum. They use their knowledge of the individual children to offer suitable activities and experiences to enhance and extend the children's development. Individual play plans are in place for all children which ensures the next steps in their learning are clearly understood. Staff use parent information which relates to the Foundation Stage to establish where children's starting points are. This helps provide staff with a good understanding of children's stage of development on entry. Children's progress is regularly recorded and observed by staff. This is recorded in an individual achievement file against the stepping stones with good sources of evidence, such as photos, written observations and discussions and children's own work. However, the evidence

is not clearly linked to the stepping stones and as a result a full picture of how children learn and progress is not in place. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Most staff are able to effectively extend and support children's development well through their discussions, questions and interaction. The aims and objectives of activities are listed on activity plans which provide a guide for adult-led activities. However, when some staff take over an activity the aim and purpose is not always communicated to them. This means the children's knowledge and understanding is sometimes not fully extended. Small and large group activities are not always effective for children's learning. During large group activities, children at times become disruptive. The staff deployment means that the behaviour is not always managed successfully. At times, less experienced staff are not supported and guided sufficiently to promote positive learning outcomes for children.

Children benefit from being independent as they visit the toilets by themselves, make their own decisions and pour themselves drinks, such as at snack time. Children have a good understanding of the pre-school routine and are quick to notice changes and to question why. Staff support children's play and learning choices, following their interests and encouraging their participation. The more experienced staff use the children's choices well to extend their knowledge and understanding, for example, when children build a tower with large construction bricks the staff develop the use of mathematical language and counting. They measure how tall children are against the tower by counting the bricks and look at the similarities and differences between the children's height. Children develop counting skills as they sing number songs. Staff and children hold up the corresponding number of fingers to aid the children's understanding. Staff extend children's mathematical understanding through the activities, such as shape names and by introducing positional language.

Outdoor play effectively used to underpin children's development in the six areas of learning of the Foundation Stage. Children's physical development is well supported with the wide range of equipment. Some more able and older children confidently ride two wheeled bikes independently. This means that children have sufficient challenge and time to practise their skills. The shaded area provides a quiet area where children can sit and look at books or use it for role-play. Children use their imaginations well, for example, a small group of children make a bridge and doors into the shaded area and recreate their recent experiences of acting out the 'Three Billy Goats Gruff', using their memories of the story and their experiences to act it out again. Children develop good small physical skills and use tools successfully, for example, they roll, mould and cut out the play-dough and use a knife for spreading and cutting at snack time.

Children enjoy exploring and investigating as they play with dinosaurs in the sand and different resources in the water tray. These encourage children's thinking skills and imagination as they find out what sinks or floats in the water tray or use their creativity playing with the dinosaurs. Spaghetti painting develop children's senses, such as sight, smell and touch, for example, lemon flavouring is added and some children pick up the spaghetti with their hands and they observe the pictures they have created. Children learn about their local community, such as during local outings into the park and visits to a nearby building site. Visitors to the pre-school include a nurse and a person with a variety of insects and small creatures. This encourages the children's understanding of the world we live in. The pre-school have built a wormery and planted seeds which supports children's understanding of living things and how to care for them. Children learn about information, communication and technology equipment as they have use of computers. These also promote the children's understanding of colours, numbers and letters in a fun format as well as teaching them computer skills.

A mark making table is available to children to practise their emergent writing both informally and with staff support. Children have access to plain paper, printed pictures and letters, stencils and formal worksheets, providing suitable activities for the different abilities and interests of the children. Children are encouraged to write their names on their art work and to match their initial letter sounds with words, including their names. They match their names during the self-registration and find their names for snack times which develops their recognition skills. Print is used well in the environment with statements, children's name labels and sentences displayed. This encourages the children's understanding that print carries meaning. A good range of fiction and non-fiction books are available to children both in and out of doors which develops children's understanding that books have different purposes. Children listen and concentrate well when they are with staff in a very small group. However, they do not always listen or concentrate well during smaller group story times and are sometimes disruptive during the larger group singing time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about other's through their natural play with resources which reflect positive images of society, such as dolls, dressing up clothes and books. The pre-school celebrates festival and religious dates, for example, Easter, Chinese New Year and St David's Day. The pre-school welcomes families to share and celebrate their religion and culture with them. This values the children and families of the pre-school. Children's understanding and acceptance of other people different to themselves is promoted. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's individual needs are understood as information is gathered about their needs, such as on the registration and ability form which parents complete. Staff are also available at every session to exchange information with. This means that staff understand the children's individual needs well. The pre-school is able to support children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties through working with other parties and the use of individual play plans.

Children's self-esteem and confidence is developed through praise and encouragement from staff. Staff provide good role models to the children as they are calm and treat others with respect. Children's behaviour is generally good overall. However, at times children behave unacceptably, for example, they hurt each other and throw sand at others. Staff do not always promote clear boundaries and expectations. At times there are insufficient staff deployed to ensure incidents are managed effectively.

The partnerships with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents receive excellent information about the pre-school. An informative booklet about the pre-school aims, objectives, routines, policies and curriculum is provided to parents. Information is actively sought from parents about their children's needs which builds very good relationships between staff and parents. Parents are provided with their child's achievement record every six weeks. This ensures they are fully informed about their child's progress and understand their next steps in learning. This helps parents to support their children's development at home. Parents are encouraged to be involved with the pre-school from providing materials to joining the committee. Parents are welcome to act as parent helpers at sessions and are invited to share their skills, enabling them to participate in the pre-school.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leaderships and management is good. The committee and staff work in good partnership with each other and understand their roles and responsibilities well. Good communication is in place as regular meetings are held. Staff and the committee work together for the development of the pre-school and have clear aims and objectives.

Staff undertake regular training which enables the pre-school to reflect and extend its practice. Staff are mostly well qualified. The staff benefit from good team work overall and mostly have good communication. Some less experienced staff at times, lack necessary communication and support from other staff to ensure they understand the aims and objectives of activities. This means that outcomes for children are not always effective. Staff do not always provide children with clear boundaries and expectations of behaviour. Sometimes due to insufficient staff deployment children's unacceptable behaviour is not fully addressed.

All regulatory paperwork is in place. Documentation is effective, for example, thorough risk assessments and safety procedures and the children's individual needs are well accommodated. Space is used well to the benefit of the children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last day care inspection the pre-school was set one recommendation to ensure evidence of suitable checks are in place. This has been addressed by the pre-school having clear procedures to obtain checks and records are kept of these for each person. This ensures children have contact with suitable adults.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was requested to give consideration to increasing more opportunities to develop linking sounds with letters. The pre-school has addressed this by having individual play plans to plan for children's next steps in learning. Staff promote children's understanding through using name cards and encouraging children to link their initial letter sound with their name. Staff discuss at small and large activities letters and sounds, encouraging the children's understanding through mainly play-based activities. This supports children's understanding and learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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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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):

- provide support and guidance as appropriate to staff to improve outcomes for children
- ensure staff are effectively deployed to meet the needs of the children

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):

- develop staff management of children's unacceptable behaviour.
- extend as appropriate, staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage.

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