

Rainbow Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY273986
Inspection date	28 June 2007
Inspector	Joanne Lindsey Caswell
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Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 is a privately-owned pre-school which opened under new management in 2004. The pre-school operates from the Scout Building in the Meath Green area of Horley, Surrey. Children have access to a large hall with adjoining toilets and hand washing facilities. There is a fully enclosed outside play area. The pre-school serves families from the local community and surrounding villages. The pre-school is open, Monday to Friday, term time only, from 09:30 to 12:15.

There are currently 33 children, aged from two to four years, on roll. This includes 19 children who receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

A team of seven members of staff work with the children. Of these, five staff hold recognised early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The pre-school is clean and maintained to an appropriate standard. Children make very good use of the extensive outside play area, throughout the year. For example, even in cooler weather, children are dressed appropriately in protective and waterproof clothing. This enables children to run around freely and benefit from plenty of fresh air and exercise. There are many resources available which encourage children's physical development. For example, children bounce on the trampoline; they use wheeled toys such as tricycles, cars and scooters and enjoy playing with bats and balls. Children climb on the climbing frame and crawl through tunnels. They run around excitedly chasing bubbles and dig in the garden to plant seeds and grow vegetables. This gives very good provision for children to develop their physical skills and benefit from many different forms of movement and exercise.

Children develop an understanding of personal hygiene routines. Staff explain the importance of hand washing to protect children from germs after toileting. Pictures in the bathroom help to remind children to wash their hands and flush the toilet, encouraging them to develop independence. Paper towels and liquid soap help to protect children against cross-infection. However, not all routines within the pre-school session are as effective. For example, before cookery activities and after creative activities, children wash their hands in a communal bowl of water. This does not sufficiently protect children against water-borne infections.

There are good procedures in place to support children's health and welfare. Staff are very aware of children's individual needs and accurate records are maintained regarding accidents and any administered medication. All staff are trained in first aid and parents' consent is obtained for staff to seek emergency advice or treatment. This ensures that children's health and welfare is appropriately maintained at all times.

Children develop an awareness of how their bodies work. During topic work exploring the letter 'x', children make x-ray pictures and talk about their bones. Children enjoy visits from the ambulance service and a nurse, helping children to develop an awareness of healthy development.

Children clearly understand that they get hot and thirsty during outside play and physical activity. There is good provision for children to help themselves to drinks, ensuring they remain appropriately hydrated. During snack time, children benefit from healthy and nutritious snacks, such as savoury options and fresh fruit. Staff are very aware of children's individual dietary needs and ensure that these are appropriately adhered to at all times. Topic work helps children to learn about the importance of healthy eating. For example, children talk confidently about vegetables they have grown and excitedly take home lettuces and radishes they have grown at pre-school.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises offer a safe and welcoming environment for children. Staff are particularly attentive towards promoting children's safety and security. Daily risk assessments ensure that all areas of the premises are checked thoroughly for any hazards. This ensures that the premises consistently provide a safe environment for children. Access to the premises is closely monitored and good procedures are in place to prevent unauthorised visitors from gaining access. Staff

are very vigilant in this area and have devised written safety procedures to ensure the constant safety and well-being of children.

Children play with a very good selection of high quality toys and play materials. They have good opportunities to choose independently and select their own resources, due to low-level storage areas. This enables all children to access toys easily and safely. For example, the creative trolley offers children a good selection of different types of paper, drawing materials and craft resources. Staff carry out regular checks on all equipment to ensure it consistently remains safe for children's use.

Children develop a very good awareness of safety. They recognise how to play safely and are mindful of the needs of others. For example, children understand one of the pre-school 'rules' is 'walking feet indoors' to prevent accidents and hazards. Topic work and curriculum themes help children to learn how to keep themselves safe. Staff reinforce children's understanding of this well, by inviting visitors, such as the police and fire service, to talk to children about safety.

Children and staff regularly undertake unannounced emergency evacuation drills and children confidently explain the procedures they must follow when staff blow the whistle, indicating an evacuation drill. This reflects that children understand appropriate routines and develop an awareness of safety procedures.

Children's safety and welfare is promoted well as all staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and their responsibilities regarding safeguarding children. Staff undertake appropriate training ensuring their knowledge of local policies and procedures is regularly updated. This enables staff to take appropriate action if they have any concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled and clearly enjoy their time at pre-school. They engage in a wide range of well-planned activities, offering a very good selection of play and learning opportunities. Children develop very close and warm relationships with the staff, helping to provide a very happy and positive atmosphere. Children approach staff confidently for comfort and support and benefit from plenty of individual attention and cuddles. Staff know all the children extremely well and the effective key worker system ensures that all children's developmental progress is closely monitored. Staff make full use of the Birth to three matters framework to monitor the development of the younger children and appropriate observations and assessments are carried out covering all aspects of the framework.

Children enjoy a very happy and sociable morning at pre-school. The routine is busy and stimulating and all children are fully occupied and stimulated. However, this is slightly inhibited during organised group times such as snack time, preventing children from having uninterrupted play.

Children develop very good social skills and learn to play co-operatively. They take turns during their play and share their own ideas. For example, during role play, children devise their own games together.

Children develop very positive attitudes towards learning. They show interest and curiosity for all activities and enjoy an extremely fun, relaxed and happy environment at pre-school.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are skilled early years practitioners with a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children benefit from many practical learning opportunities throughout the daily routine, which effectively extend their learning and enable children to benefit from practical first-hand experiences. For example, children develop a very good understanding of scientific properties as they experiment building slopes for rolling objects down drainpipes. During cookery activities, staff utilise opportunities for children to enjoy practical mathematical activities, as they count out ingredients. Topics are planned effectively to incorporate outings and relevant visitors to the setting. For example, during a topic on People Who Help Us, children enjoy visits from the emergency services and a nurse and undertake an outing to the local fire station. As part of topic work on farm animals, children excitedly recall their recent visit to a farm. This supports children's learning effectively and enables children to benefit from practical learning opportunities.

Children's progress towards the early learning goals is closely monitored. Staff have a detailed system in place for ensuring all observations of children's learning cover all aspects of learning and individual stepping stones. Staff regularly evaluate the weekly activities and continually seek improvements to enhance the provision. However, the current procedures for evaluation do not always sufficiently relate to children's individual learning. Consequently, the current system is not consistently effective in helping to identify all children's further learning needs.

There are good opportunities for children to develop their independence. For example, they self-register on their arrival and confidently find their own name. Children choose their own activities and take care of their personal needs. Children help enthusiastically with tidy up routines and confidently remind each other about helping. During the 'Show and Tell' sessions, children confidently stand up in front of the group to share items they have brought in from home. Children listen to each other and show courtesy and respect for one another.

Children have very good communication skills. They use language effectively to convey their needs and enjoy lengthy conversations and discussions with adults. Children enthusiastically talk about their friends and describe their favourite activities at pre-school. They explain the daily routine and happily share their family news. Staff utilise every opportunity to extend children's language development through effective questioning, encouraging children to think logically and give explanation. For example, during group discussion times, children confidently recall the cookery activity they took part in earlier in the pre-school session and describe the different ingredients. There is good provision for children to develop an understanding of the alphabet as they explore different letters and sounds on a weekly basis.

Children develop a strong awareness for mathematical activities. They count during the daily routine and there are clear examples of numbers displayed for children at low level, helping children develop good number recognition skills. Children count the number of children present and undertake simple calculation as they add numbers together and sing number rhymes. Staff plan practical activities and topics to reinforce children's understanding of shape. For example, children make Shape Mobiles, incorporating circles, triangles, squares and rectangles. Children sort resources into colour and size groups and make sequences and patterns with pegs. During sand and water play, children learn about capacity as they fill buckets and discuss concepts of empty and full.

Children have many opportunities to explore and investigate natural materials and environmental issues. For example, whilst children blow bubbles outside, they confidently explain how the

wind is making all the bubbles blow in the same direction. During a recent topic on Mini Beasts, children learn about different bugs and insects as they hunt for them in compost and in the outside play area. Children study insects with magnifying glasses and support their learning using reference books to extend their knowledge. During topic work on Gardens, children plant seeds and learn how bulbs and vegetables grow. Children develop a keen interest and knowledge of the role of others. They learn about the emergency services as part of topic work and identify different features of the community, such as the post office and vet's surgery. Children have a clear understanding of how things work. During 'Show and Tell', children correctly identify toys and resources which require batteries in order to work. Children use the computer and have access to resources, such as a tape recorder.

Children develop their physical skills and dexterity as they enjoy many activities involving manipulation. For example, children develop mark making skills using writing resources, paints and chalks. They handle cutlery and utensils as part of cookery activities and develop their hand/eye co-ordination as they use scissors and undertake activities such as threading, handling beads and pegs and pouring sand/water.

Children play very imaginatively. There are very good resources for role play, encouraging children to develop their creativity and express their ideas. For example, children pretend to use tools and carry out work on the role play work bench. The role play area is changed to support topic work, enabling children to use their imagination as they play in the 'insect house', garden centre, post office and noodle bar. Children's art work is displayed attractively and clearly reflects their own creativity. Children sing enthusiastically and join in confidently with musical activities. They use their senses to explore a range of textures and materials, such as sand, water, dough, compost, rice, cornflour, cooked spaghetti and shaving foam.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop an excellent sense of belonging within the pre-school. They feel totally valued as individuals as staff treat them extremely fairly and equally. Children proudly see their work on display and talk extremely enthusiastically about their pre-school and favourite activities. Children benefit from exceptionally warm and supportive relationships with staff, helping children to feel comfortable and emotionally secure. For example, when children hurt themselves or need some emotional support, they confidently ask for cuddles knowing that staff will respond positively. This contributes towards children's emotional security and builds their self-esteem.

Children develop an excellent awareness of the wider world. They consistently learn to respect diversity as staff plan a broad range of activities and topics. This helps children to fully understand the cultural needs of others. For example, children recently celebrated the Sikh festival of Baisakhi. Children also celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali, helping them to be increasingly aware of different customs and nationalities. In addition, children take part in sponsored events and help to raise money for different causes, such as Comic Relief and other charity events. This helps children to develop sensitivity towards others and learn to respect equality. As a result, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

There is excellent provision in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The premises are fully accessible and staff have an extremely thorough knowledge of children's personal needs. There is a designated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator

who has a very good understanding of the Code of Practice for special needs. This ensures that children's individual care and learning plans are implemented and regularly reviewed.

Children behave exceptionally well. They clearly understand the pre-school 'rules', such as 'We are kind to our friends' and 'We look after the toys and treat them with respect'. Staff promote an extremely fair and very happy atmosphere and offer children exceptional levels of praise and positive encouragement. Children's achievements are continually celebrated and there is an extremely strong focus on acknowledging positive behaviour and action. Consequently, children consistently behave well and remind one another about acceptable behaviour levels.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Staff utilise every opportunity to involve parents in their children's learning and development. There is an informative notice board which displays a very good range of written information regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum and pre-school activities. Staff consistently help parents to understand the play-based curriculum by organising information meetings, enabling parents to have a clearer understanding of how children learn through well-planned play activities. Parents receive regular newsletters which help them to understand pre-school activities and topics, encouraging parents to take a full and active part in extending children's learning at home. Staff welcome parents' feedback and issue questionnaires for parents to complete and add their own comments about the pre-school provision. This includes comments parents can make about any improvements that can be made to enhance the service. Staff and the provider are extremely proactive in responding to and addressing the points raised and welcome and value parents' comments. Parents share their own skills and contribute towards the parents' rota and share in topic work by visiting the group to talk to the children. This builds excellent partnerships between staff and parents and helps children to see both staff and parents as equal partners in their learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The staff team is strong and well-established. Staff are dedicated, professional and motivated practitioners, who work together extremely well offering high standards of care. Staff are very supportive of one another well and are enthusiastic and committed to providing a high quality service. There are very good procedures in place to cover staff absence, ensuring that the pre-school operates within the conditions of its registration at all times. Effective staff recruitment procedures ensure that all staff are appropriately vetted and cleared to work with children.

The leadership and management are good. The provider is highly committed and ensures that all staff are fully aware of their individual roles and responsibilities. Staff development is a priority and all staff are encouraged informally to undertake further training to keep their knowledge and skills up-to-date. However, there are no formal systems in place as yet, for staff appraisals. This restricts the opportunities for staff to review and evaluate their own practice and celebrate the contribution they make towards the team.

Staff deployment is fully effective at all times to ensure that pre-school activities are well-organised, appropriately resourced and children are closely supervised. The provider takes a full and active part in implementing the Foundation Stage curriculum and ensures that planning records cover all areas of learning.

The daily routine is mainly organised effectively around the needs of the children, although there are some occasions when children's play and learning is disrupted during whole group

sessions. There is very good provision for children to benefit from play and learning opportunities both inside and outside, throughout the pre-school session, offering an extensive range of activities.

All regulatory documentation is maintained and is available. Comprehensive pre-school policies and procedures are available and all staff clearly understand these. This contributes towards the smooth and effective daily organisation of the pre-school. An accurate record of children's attendance is consistently maintained and all necessary parents' consent is obtained. Children's records are stored securely and confidentially.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Ofsted inspection, one recommendation was raised regarding the Care provision. This related to the format for recording children's attendance. Staff have addressed this by reviewing the documentation for the daily register to ensure that times of arrival and departure are recorded. This ensures that documentation contributes towards children's safety and welfare.

This is the first nursery education inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted which 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):

- ensure all hand washing routines sufficiently protect children against cross-infection
- review the organisation of the daily routine to increase the opportunities for children to enjoy extended periods of uninterrupted play

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 the use of formal evaluation of curriculum planning to identify how children's individual learning needs are planned for in daily activities
- develop the use of staff appraisal to review staff practice and identify any further training and development needs

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