

# Newstead Road Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	129103
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 April 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jeannette Waring
<b>Setting Address</b>	Compton House, Birch Grove, Lee, London, SE12 0SU
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<b>Registered person</b>	Newstead Road Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care, Out of School 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?

Newstead Road Pre-School has been registered since 1995 and has been on the present site since 2000. It operates from a purpose built unit located in the base of a block of flats on a housing estate. The unit comprises two large play rooms, an office, kitchen, toilet facilities and a secure outside play area, part of which has been laid with a safety surface. The pre-school is managed by a parent committee and serves children from the local community.

The pre-school, which is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children aged from two to under five years, is open Monday to Friday from 09:30 until 13:00 during term time. A holiday playscheme for children aged three to under eight years operates for the same hours during some school holidays.

A total of 26 children are on roll, 15 of whom receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. A small number of children who speak English as an additional language currently attend, as do a small number of children who have disabilities or learning difficulties.

A total of three full-time staff work directly with the children, all of whom hold a recognised childcare qualification. In addition one relief staff member covers for staff absences. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA) and receives support from the local branch and from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) early years advisory teacher.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where they have opportunities to play together in the bright playrooms and in the pre-school garden. Staff ensure that rooms are kept clean and make sure that surfaces used for food preparation or for snack time are routinely cleaned with an anti-bacterial cleaner before use. General storage in the kitchen is somewhat haphazard and some surfaces are cluttered with non-food related items making thorough cleaning difficult. Clear health and hygiene policies and procedures are in place and these provide staff with guidance and parents with clear information about how children's health is protected. For example, parents are informed about exclusion periods for sick children and are routinely asked to sign any accident records and to provide clear written consent for any medication their children require.

Children learn about personal hygiene as staff remind them to wash their hands after using the toilet, where they use fresh water, liquid soap and paper towels. However, because staff always supervise children using the bathroom children are not encouraged to develop independence. At snack time children know that they must wash their hands before they sit down to eat. However, as a communal bowl is provided for this purpose children's health is not well protected and they are receiving a mixed message about good practice.

Children enjoy almost daily access to outdoor play in the pre-school garden. They have good opportunities for spontaneous vigorous exercise and they enjoy using a range of large apparatus which is set out on the safety play surface. They particularly enjoy using a small bouncy castle and a range of soft play blocks which they arrange imaginatively for themselves as they practise balancing, jumping and climbing skills.

Children benefit from a canteen style snack time. They really enjoy this time as they sit together with friends and a member of staff. They are able to select their snacks from a range of healthy options such as crackers, pitta bread, cheese, cooked meats, salad, fruit and dried fruit. Fresh water is available throughout the session and children routinely help themselves, particularly after a vigorous session in the garden. At snack time children choose either water or fresh milk to drink.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

There are satisfactory arrangements in place to keep children safe. The building and garden are kept secure during the session and staff have put in place good procedures at the start and end of the session to ensure children's safety. There are good arrangements in place for the safe collection of children by persons other than their parents and clear records of children's days and times of attendance. There are clear safety policies and procedures in place which are shared with parents, these include procedures for lost or uncollected children, risk assessments

and daily safety check lists. Staff are generally careful to ensure that children are safe and well cared for. However, children's safety is not fully assured because during the inspection, the door to the kitchen, where cleaning products are stored, remained open and on one day a balance beam was positioned in front of a fire exit. In addition staff do not always fully assess hazards when positioning large equipment in the garden. For example, the bouncy castle was positioned close to the edge of the safety surface rather than centrally.

Children enjoy playing with a range of good quality toys and equipment all of which are maintained in a clean and safe condition. Children are able to select from a range of activities which staff set up each day and they are able to access some resources, which are stored in low level storage units, safely for themselves. Although the arrangement of many of these resources is not well organised and so does not encourage children to make their own selections.

Children are protected from harm or neglect because the pre-school has in place a clear policy and procedure for safeguarding children. The policy is shared with parents and staff are fully aware of their responsibility for protecting children and know how to make a referral should they have to.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children in the pre-school are relaxed and happy. Most separate readily from their parents or carers and staff are skilled at supporting less confident children so that they settle happily into the pre-school day. All staff are warm, kind and caring towards the children and children relate well to them.

The relaxed and informal pre-school routine helps children to feel settled and secure and ensures a minimum of disruption to their play. A whole group story time brings children together at the end of the session, however, this is not effective for all children as younger children find it difficult to focus and become restless.

The organisation and layout of equipment in the main playroom is generally good and encourages children to play purposefully with the activities provided. The general arrangement of activities and resources in the second room is less well planned and consequently children sometimes lose focus. Children are able to move between activities making independent choices for most of the session and they play happily together enjoying support from staff at some focused activities. A range of activities which support children's development are provided, however, many activities lack challenge particularly for the older or more able children. Children enjoy the daily opportunities to play in the pre-school garden where staff ensure that they have access to physical play activities and a range of other pre-school play. On the day of inspection children particularly enjoyed chalking on the walls and then 'painting' the walls with soapy water to remove the marks.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are confident and staff foster their self-esteem by praising their achievements. Children choose activities for themselves throughout the session, however, staff do not provide focused support at the full range of activities so children sometimes lose interest and move on quickly.

Activities are planned with some reference to the Foundation Stage, but staff's knowledge of how to plan effectively for children's learning is not secure enough to ensure that all children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff carefully note children's achievements and use this information to compile a report on progress for parents, but it is not used to plan for children's next steps. As a result activities do not always build on what children already know and can do.

Children are generally well behaved, they are learning to share and to take turns and to play together at activities, for example, when using the computer. Although some children confidently organise their own play they do not have sufficient opportunities to develop independence in self-care skills. For example they do not help to prepare the mid morning snack or have access to the bathrooms unaccompanied.

Children's communication skills are well supported, they enjoy talking to staff who listen carefully to them and they talk happily together in small groups, for example, at snack time. Children have opportunities to make marks in a variety of ways, such as with paint, chalks and water and in organised activities such as printing or in the graphics area. However, staff do not effectively support children's attempts to write for a purpose or encourage older children to experiment with writing. The book areas are not well organised and are not used well. Children are introduced to some basic mathematical ideas such as shapes and patterns through topic work and staff introduce some basic counting into play. There are insufficient opportunities for children to learn about mathematical concepts and problem solving through practical activities and daily routines.

Children learn about everyday technology as they use the pre-school computer. They learn about elements of the natural world as they play in the garden and take part in a bug hunt. Visitors to the group and outings in the local area enhance children's knowledge of the local community and they learn about elements of their own and each other's culture as they celebrate a range of community festivals. Children enjoy good opportunities for vigorous physical exercise in the pre-school garden, however, planning is not sufficiently well focused to ensure that all children have appropriate opportunities to develop their all round physical abilities. Children enjoy a range of imaginative play in the role play area and with a selection of small world play. They are able to experiment with art and craft materials in a range of planned activities but do not have good opportunities to explore a range of media and materials in their own freely chosen work. During the inspection children enjoyed playing imaginatively with a selection of large cardboard boxes which became a house, a hiding place, a bus, a train and a car.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning to value and respect each other at pre-school from a staff team who welcome all families into the group and who demonstrate an interest in each child. Children have access to a range of play provision which reflects the wider community and they learn about aspects of each other's culture as they celebrate a range of community festivals. Children with disabilities and learning difficulties are welcome in the pre-school and staff work together with parents and with the area special educational needs co-ordinator to provide each child with appropriate support. Parents of children with additional needs told the inspector that their children are well supported by the staff team.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Behaviour is generally good and children are beginning to learn right from wrong. Staff encourage children to think

about the impact their actions have on others and to consider what they can do to put things right if they have upset another child. They are learning to be polite to each other and well mannered, for example, as they sit together at snack time they remember to say please and thank-you.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. This pre-school is managed by a parent committee and parents are encouraged to spend time in the group with their children. Parents told the inspector that the pre-school has helped their children's development. They are given an information pack when children join the group which includes some information about the areas of learning but does not specifically refer to the Foundation Stage. Information on key workers, planning and on the groups policies and procedures is available to parents in a parents information area in the lobby. Termly newsletters ensure parents are up to date with any changes at pre-school and are informed about the terms themes. However, parents have insufficient information on how to extend children's learning at home and there is no system in place to ensure that all parents are provided with regular updates on their children's progress and development.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. All staff hold a recognised childcare qualification and have been suitably vetted. There are good arrangements in place to ensure that children are protected from un-vetted people for example new staff and parent helpers always work with a vetted staff member. Good deployment of staff ensures that children are safe and well supervised at all times. The relaxed and informal structure of the day ensures that children are able to play without interruption and they benefit from being able to select activities for themselves. However, the organisation of resources in some areas does not ensure that all play is purposeful or focused.

A comprehensive set of policies and procedures underpins the work of the pre-school staff and provides good information to parents. All documentation sampled during the inspection was appropriately completed, up to date and where appropriate, stored to ensure confidentiality. Staff are aware of the requirements of the National Standards and associated regulations and are aware of the need to inform Ofsted of significant events or changes. However, a change of committee has not been formally notified to Ofsted.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The playleader and staff team demonstrate a commitment to providing a good service and are keen to attend training. They meet together to plan ahead and work hard to create a welcoming environment for children and their families. There is no effective system in place to monitor practice or to evaluate the overall effectiveness of the nursery education programme. For example, although staff observe and record individual children's achievements they do not currently review activities or planning in order to check how they are helping children to make progress.

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

Since the last inspection children's safety and well being has been improved because both the playleader and her deputy now hold a recognised first aid qualification and parents are asked to provide written consent for staff to seek emergency medical treatment for children if required.

Improvements have been made to the system for informing parents about children's progress and staff now keep records of all children's achievements which parents can see at any time.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints 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 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 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 children's pre-snack hand-washing routine to ensure that children are learning good hygiene practices, for example, by ensuring that communal bowls are not used and make sure that work surfaces in the kitchen are free from clutter so that they can be kept in a clean and hygienic condition
- improve safety by ensuring that children do not have access to hazardous substances in the kitchen, make sure that all fire exits are kept clear of hazards and carefully consider where large equipment is placed so that children can use it in safety, for example, ensure that the bouncy castle is placed centrally on the outdoor safety surface
- review the organisation of activities and resources so that that children are able to access a range of resources freely and safely for themselves ensure that the layout of all areas promotes purposeful play and make sure that large groups activities, such as story time, are effective for all children (also applies to nursery education)
- make sure that Ofsted is notified in writing of any significant changes in this case a change of management committee members

#### **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):

- make sure that planning for children's learning is based on a sound knowledge of what children already know and can do so that activities provide all children with sufficient interest and challenge and make sure that staff bring a clear focus to activities when supporting children's play
- put in place a system to review practice and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the nursery education programme ensuring that the system is rigorous enough to identify and address any areas of weakness

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)