

Eastwood Community Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	119473
Inspection date	20 June 2007
Inspector	Jenny Howell
Setting Address	Eastwood Community Centre, Western Approaches, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS2 6XY
Telephone number	01702 522865 or 07986 982697
E-mail	
Registered person	Eastwood Community Playgroup Association
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?

Eastwood Community Pre-School opened in 1980. It operates from the large hall and lounge within the Eastwood Community Centre, located in a residential area of Southend-on-Sea, within walking distance of local schools and shops. The pre-school serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 60 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 22 funded three-year-olds and 10 funded four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties or disabilities and small number of children who speak English as a second language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45, with afternoon sessions on Wednesday and Friday from 12:30 until 15:00.

Fifteen members of staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and is a member of the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children effectively learn about simple health and hygiene routines as they wash their hands before snack and after going to the toilet, painting or using glue. Staff act as good role models and ensure that they follow the procedures in place for changing nappies and preparing food hygienically. Children are well cared for if they have an accident or become ill. A first aid box is close to hand at all times and several members of staff have up to date training in first aid. Parents provide permission for staff to seek medical advice or treatment, ensuring children can be cared for quickly and appropriately in the event of an accident. Children are well protected from the Sun when they play outside as they are reminded to wear hats.

Children learn about healthy living as they enjoy the varied and nutritious snacks which are provided. These include cheese and crackers and a range of fruits and vegetables. Children are able to exercise indoors and outdoors on a daily basis with free access to equipment such as a large climbing frame, bats and balls, bicycles, balancing planks and a parachute. Children are able to rest and relax according to their own needs in a quiet and comfortable book area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very safe and secure environment. Arrival and departure times are well organised to ensure that children can be accounted for at all times and are only released into the care of their parents or approved adults. Daily risk assessments of all areas used by children ensure that they play in safety and that all hazards are minimised. Fire precautions such as smoke detectors, fire blankets and extinguishers are well placed around the pre-school. Children and staff regularly practise evacuation procedures, paying close attention to the safety and welfare of all children. Children are kept safe on outings as staff follow appropriate procedures and parents are invited to ensure that a high number of adults are present to care for children.

Children play in an environment where the organisation of toys, furniture and equipment is carefully planned to minimise hazards. Children play with toys and equipment which are clean and in good condition. These are thoroughly checked by staff on a daily basis. Staff have a very good understanding of their responsibility to protect the safety and welfare of all children in their care. They are regularly updated about child protection issues and all staff have guidance and advice to hand should they need it.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children quickly settle as they are warmly welcomed by staff into an environment which is thoughtfully planned to meet their needs. They develop confidence and self-esteem as they are able to choose freely from the toys, equipment and activities which are on offer. Children successfully become involved and engaged in a broad range of activities which help them to enjoy and learn. Staff interact effectively with children, asking them questions encouraging them to talk about what they are doing. As a result of this opportunities for children to learn and develop are effectively enhanced and supported. Children are able to move freely between a wide variety of activities including construction, art and craft, physical play, educational

computer games, puzzles, role-play and reading. Children under the age of three are very well cared for. They have their needs identified on all planning and staff are able to adapt games and activities so that they effectively meet the needs of younger children. Staff make good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to ensure that children under three enjoy playing and learning according to their interests and abilities.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff effectively use their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to develop planning which is clear and easy to follow. It thoroughly covers all areas of learning and effectively guides staff in helping children to make progress towards the early learning goals. Staff use a variety of teaching methods to help children to learn, providing them with opportunities to learn alone, with an adult and in small and large groups. They help older children to prepare for school by providing 'let's get ready' sessions where children can learn how to get themselves changed for exercise, to develop early writing skills and take part in more formal activities. Staff keep detailed records of what children can do and the progress they are making. They include photographs, written observations and examples of children's pictures and work. These combine to make detailed and meaningful development records which staff can use to inform their future planning and to share with parents in order to keep them informed about what their children are learning.

Children develop social skills as they talk in front of a group about special events in their lives or items they have brought in from home. They develop independence as they find their own name card to register and select their own activities. Children develop good communication skills as they talk about letters and the sounds they make, write for a purpose during role-play for example, writing shopping lists. They are learning to write their own names and recognise that print carries meaning through sharing stories with staff and other children. Children learn about numbers and counting as they sing number rhymes, see and talk about the numbers on display around the pre-school and take part in games to find and order numbers. They learn about shapes and colours through games, posters and educational computer programs.

Children learn about the world around them as they explore the local area and play outside as frequently as the weather allows. However, some opportunities to learn about diversity in the world around them are limited. They develop a good understanding of technology as they use toy telephones and cameras to assist their imaginative play, as well as using the computer to develop skills in all areas of learning. They explore different textures as they build with sand and play with dinosaurs in soil. Children develop physical skills and confidence as they have daily access to large play equipment which they use to climb, slide, balance, ride, crawl, throw and catch. They learn to use and control tools as they cut and stick and roll and mould play-dough. Children freely explore their creativity as they paint and draw at any time, act out real and imaginary life as they dress up and play in the role-play area sing and dance to action rhymes and children's songs.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have equal access to a wide range of toys and resources which effectively meet their differing needs and interests. Staff know individual children very well. They are aware of their needs and provide additional support where needed. Children are able to learn about difference as they find out about world religions and life in different countries. However, opportunities for children to learn about some aspects of diversity, particularly disability, are limited. Children

with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well cared for. Staff work closely with parents to identify individual needs and ensure that toys and activities meet these needs. Staff work together well with outside agencies to gather as much advice and support possible to ensure that all children are able to make good progress. Children behave very well. They play co-operatively and are learning to share and take turns. Staff effectively support positive behaviour through their interaction with children and their frequent use of praise and encouragement. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive good quality information about the Foundation Stage and how they can help their children to learn at home. Children's progress records are shared with parents formally each term and informally at anytime parents wish. As a result of this parents are well informed about the progress their children are making towards the early learning goals for Nursery Education. Progress records are detailed and meaningful, including photographs and children's pictures which successfully illustrate what they have been learning.

Parents provide detailed information as well as written consents to ensure that staff care for children in line with their parents' wishes. Parents are kept up to date with all relevant information regarding their child, including accident and medication logs where appropriate.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Time, space and resources are well organised to provide children with a variety of play and learning opportunities. The effective use of two rooms ensures that children have space to play, exercise and eat according to their individual needs and interests. The good management of the outdoor area ensures that all children have the opportunity to play outside if the weather permits. Staff are well deployed to ensure that children receive a high level of care at all times. Staff recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that children are cared for by adults who have relevant training and experience and have undergone checks with the Criminal Records Bureau. Staff are well deployed to ensure that children are well cared for and receive individual attention as appropriate. Well-organised documents complement the care children receive, ensuring that staff are aware of the procedures to follow, for example, should a child become lost or unwell or when a student is placed with the pre-school.

The quality of leadership and management is good. Staff have a clear focus on delivering high quality nursery education and strive to develop and improve the education they provide to all children. The managers of the pre-school ensure that plans are in place to improve and develop the education they provide. They motivate staff well ensuring that they are able to contribute ideas and suggestions towards potential improvements. Managers ensure that staff are well trained, frequently attending courses in early education and related topics. Most members of staff have completed recognised training in childcare and as a result of this their skills have been refreshed and improved, allowing them to provide children with high-quality care and education. Regular management, staff and committee meetings ensure that the pre-school is regularly reviewed and evaluated as well as allowing staff to keep up to date with recent developments and share ideas from the courses they have attended. A system of staff appraisals has been introduced. This helps managers and staff to identify areas in which they would like to improve as well as recognising the areas in which they are strong.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection documentation has been improved. All written policies and procedures have been updated to ensure that they are in line with the revised National Standards. They now effectively support the care of all children.

Nursery Education.

Since the last inspection planning and assessment records and the use of resources have been improved and a staff appraisal system has been introduced. Resources are used well to ensure that children have access to an appropriate range of core activities, enhancing their opportunities to learn through play. Progress and assessment records clearly identify what children can do and are used to plan their next steps for learning. A staff appraisal system has been introduced. This effectively motivates and monitors staff as well as helping them to identify training and development opportunities. As a result of this staff are able to evaluate and improve the care and education they offer to children.

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.

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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):

- make improvements as indicated in the nursery education section below.

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 activities and resources which help children to develop an understanding of difference and diversity, including disability.

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