



Rainbow Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127485
Inspection date	14 June 2005
Inspector	Stephanie Graves
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Registered person	Rainbow Day Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 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?

Rainbow Day Nursery Early Years Centre Ltd, opened in 1985. It operates from eight school classrooms on a school site with sole use of the premises, in Dartford, Kent. A maximum of 168 children, may attend the setting at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 06:45 to 18:00 all year round. All children share access to secure, enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 131 children from 3 months to 8 years on roll. Of these 60

children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a local catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs, and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 29 staff. The majority of staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The remaining staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing an awareness of good personal hygiene through planned activities and the daily routine. For example, they know when and why to wash their hands and wipe noses, because staff explain the importance of doing so. Staff wear disposable gloves and aprons during nappy changes, which helps to protect very young children and babies from cross infection. Toys and equipment are cleaned regularly. Children understand the importance of self care routines, for example, they know that cleaning their teeth makes them 'clean and shiny.' However, the storage of items, such as tooth brushes and flannels, does not promote positive steps to reduce the spread of infection. Towels are not always available for children's individual use. This is because the setting has not yet fully addressed previous issues regarding bathroom hygiene practices.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. Drinking water is readily available to older children, while younger children and babies are offered regular drinks. They learn about healthy eating through discussions and planned activities, such as cooking. Even very young children are beginning to learn about healthy eating as they sit together and receive support from staff who encourage them as they eat. Menus are provided for parents and children can choose from a range of well prepared meals and snacks. Food complies with individual dietary requirements, to promote good health and to ensure that the dietary needs of all children are met.

Children learn the importance of physical activity through the nursery education curriculum. They have regular opportunities to experience fine manipulative skills as well as vigorous outdoor play. They know that physical exercise helps to make them 'strong' and they know when they need to rest.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy the freedom to move around and play within safe boundaries. This is because staffing ratios ensure good levels of supervision and physical boundaries have been designed to ensure the safety of children of all ages and stages of development. A maintenance person is on site to address any safety issues efficiently and toys and resources are checked regularly. Good safety and security

procedures are in place. For example, an intercom system is installed, visitors are challenged and their details recorded. Children's safety is promoted on outings through ongoing risk assessments and activities, which promote their understanding of how to keep safe.

Children benefit from a range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate equipment and resources. Child height furniture encourages independence and staff ensure even very young children begin to understand how to keep safe when accessing resources. Sleeping babies are monitored effectively through the use of timers. Older children have safety in mind and can recall incidents, such as knocking into others when running, to help them avoid accidents in the future. Children extend this awareness through role play opportunities where they use language such as 'put your crash helmet on otherwise you will hurt yourself'. Staff encourage children's understanding of safe practices, for example, by reminding children not to run inside. Children learn about taking responsibility for their own safety because staff plan appropriate activities. Visits by professionals, such as police officers, help to teach the children strategies to keep themselves safe.

Children's welfare is supported through developing child protection policies, based on the Area Child Protection Committee procedure. Child protection training has been attended by some staff. Outings are planned and risks assessed. Long term child absences are followed up. Parents feel their children are safe and well cared for.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children of all ages and stages of development enjoy a range of stimulating activities, resources and experiences within a caring environment.

Babies enjoy the benefits of lots cuddles and close contact with staff and have secure relationships with their key workers. Even babies new to the nursery are settled and content, because staff spend much of their time playing and talking with them. The setting has not yet implemented the Birth to three matters framework, although training is currently taking place. Babies enjoy the colours, sounds and feel of interactive toys, which they explore with interest and concentration. They develop early communication skills, because staff use routines, including nappy changes and meal times, to engage in warm verbal contact with them.

Children between the ages of one and three years have sound relationships with practitioners and are not afraid to ask for support or a cuddle. They are beginning to show interest and involvement in a range of accessible activities. Children's starting points in their learning and their achievements are charted in well presented personal files which often span from just three months in age to three or four years. Staff have a sound understanding of the range of experiences required to enable babies and children to make progress using their senses and creative abilities. These include musical activities, which promote opportunities for children to explore rhythm and sing action songs such as the 'Hokey Cokey'. Easily accessible books and puppets help to develop children's imaginations and communication skills. Investigation through resources including paint, water and sand, helps younger children to

represent their experiences and ideas, and make connections as they play. Staff sometimes miss opportunities to answer their questions or encourage children on a one to one basis. Pre-school children take part in visits to places of local interest, for example, to the library. Children up to eight years of age, being cared for in the after school club enjoy the benefits of outings to venues such as the cinema and bowling.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the stepping stones and early learning goals. This is because the majority of staff working with them have a satisfactory knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Although most staff contribute to planning and assessment, there are some inconsistencies. For example, differentiation within the planning is understood by room leaders but not recorded, and although the stepping stones are used to chart children's progress, they are not always recorded clearly. Children are provided with activities which build on what they already know and can do. Regular evaluations help practitioners to focus on the success of activities, although there is little evidence of how the setting monitors the overall strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum.

Children show a sense of belonging as they learn and play together. Most respond well to challenges and are generally engaged in meaningful activities. Children are friendly and their confidence is growing as they share their ideas and experiences. However, they have limited opportunities to problem solve, negotiate together and take responsibility for decisions. For example, when too many children play in an area where only three are permitted, staff do not always encourage them to find solutions together. Children use a variety of resources to make marks and some are able to write their names using correctly formed letters. They are developing a sense of time and begin to differentiate between past and present experiences. For example they talk about weddings and parties they have been to. They enjoy musical instruments and engage in action songs and circle games. They have access to range of books but some story times are spoiled by distractions, including the door buzzer at home time and raised noise levels. Children are gaining confidence with numbers and counting. However, staff miss opportunities to engage the children in simple addition and subtraction concepts, for instance, when setting out chairs or cups at snack time.

Children learn about the similarities and differences between themselves and enjoy activities including creating portraits of themselves and one another. They show an awareness of change, for example, the changes that occur between cooked and uncooked rice. They use language such as 'bigger' to describe what they see and use their imagination as they act out scenarios through well resourced role play opportunities. Children are developing hand eye co-ordination. Some are very competent with using scissors to make creations including Father's Day cards. Other children are able to click and drag the mouse as they follow simple instructions on the computer. Use of the outdoor areas ensures children's developing physical skills are regularly promoted. Overall the provision plans and provides activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into the setting from a variety of ethnic backgrounds. They are beginning to develop a positive attitude to others because practitioners ensure resources and activities promote positive images of equality and diversity. Children are generally sociable and although staff include all children in all experiences, they miss opportunities to engage other children's help in supporting those who are less confident socially. Children with special educational needs are included in all experiences. Their needs are addressed in partnership with parents and outside agencies, such as speech and language therapists.

Babies and young children show a sense of belonging because they are regularly acknowledged and affirmed by staff. They develop self assurance and confidence when making choices and seeking comfort or help. They already show care and concern for others, for example, by approaching the door to the babies sleep room when a very young baby starts to cry. Young children attempt to feed themselves and freely communicate the word 'ta' to staff as they eagerly await their meal at the table. Older children are generally well behaved, although at times high levels of noise are not always managed effectively by staff. This means some children are unable to concentrate and complete tasks. Older children who attend the after school club know and understand expected behaviour boundaries, because they help to devise ground rules. They show care for those in the wider community by fund raising for good causes such as Leukaemia Research and Comic Relief.

The partnership with parents is good. Children benefit greatly from the good relationship forged between the setting and parents. Information is shared and parents feel their children are included. Even new parents to the setting feel that staff are already getting to know their children's characters well. Parents of children receiving funding for nursery education feel they receive good quality information, for example through consultations and children's individual progress files, which they often take home and contribute to. Curriculum plans are displayed with clear aims relating to the early learning goals. Children enjoy the benefits of their parents visiting the setting, because it means they share this part of their life and parents share their special knowledge and skills with the children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most staff, including the managers, are appropriately qualified and vetted, and children are never left alone with unvetted persons. Records identify future planned training events. Staff are inducted and their professional development is addressed during regular appraisals. This means children's care and learning, safety and well being are promoted. Staffing ratios meet with requirements and children have plenty of space to move around and make choices as their play. Toys and resources are generally well organised to encourage safe, easy access for all children. Policies and procedures contribute to the efficient and safe management of the provision and help

to promote children's welfare, care and learning. Records about individual children are shared with their parents. Records of attendance do not currently show clear arrival and departure times for children.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage is adequate and leaders have clear aims for the personal development and achievements of all children. However, there are some inconsistencies with recording children's next steps and differentiation within the planning. Staff are committed and the integration of care and nursery education enhances children's learning. However, a lack of effective communication and systematic monitoring of teaching and learning means the overall effectiveness of the curriculum has not been evaluated consistently. To address this, leaders have sought the recent support of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and staff understanding has been promoted. Leaders are committed towards the continuing improvement of the provision. For instance, the group have recently embarked upon the 'Kent Quality Kitemark' Endorsed Quality Assurance Scheme. Most recommendations from previous inspections have either been met or are continuing to be addressed. Overall the setting provides a professional service. As a result, the needs of all the children being cared for are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to plan and use daily routines and activities to help extend children's play opportunities, language, communication and mathematics. The provider was also asked to use information and assessments to plan what children need to do next and develop staff knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals.

Children are now provided with a good range of activities, toys and resources to meet their individual needs. Staff training has helped to improve knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. Assessments and evaluations help to inform future planning although children's records containing the next steps for children still show some inconsistencies. This is being addressed with the help of the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received two complaints about this provider. Both complaints relate to Standard 1: Suitable person.

Ofsted investigated the two complaints by carrying out an unannounced visit on 01/03/2005 during which the following points were addressed: Hygiene, toilet routines, cleaning and general management; health and safety; security of premises, accident and incident records, staff deployment and meeting children's individual needs; including encouraging independence. Also covered was the partnership with parents, child protection procedures and practises and behaviour management policies. As a result of the visit, the following recommendations were set:

Standard 6: Ensure that the premises are secure and staff are aware of procedures to follow when unknown adults enter the building.

Standard 7: Review the hygiene routines in the bathroom and give children the opportunity to independently provide self care.

Standard 13: Review the nursery's practices regarding child protection procedures.

Standard 14: Ensure that records of accidents and incidents are effectively kept and more accessible.

Most recommendations have been addressed well, although there are still some minor concerns regarding hygiene routines in the bathrooms, which were addressed by inspectors during an integrated inspection on the 14/06/2005. A further recommendation was set. Both complaints were fully investigated and the provider continues to meet the National Standards.

The provider remains qualified for registration.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- continue to promote children's health and independence by implementing good hygiene practices and by providing individual towels for children
- continue to provide training opportunities for staff, to include child protection
- promote social opportunities between all children and opportunities for them to problem solve, take responsibility and make decisions, with effective adult support (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- provide children with opportunities to enjoy activities, such as story time, away from distractions, and to explore simple addition and subtraction concepts during routine activities
- continue to ensure staff receive support and training to improve the planning and assessment records, and to ensure the overall effectiveness of teaching and learning is evaluated.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk