

Richmonds Childrens Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY339761
Inspection date	30 April 2007
Inspector	Susan Elaine Heap
Setting Address	Richmond Primary School, Winterbottom Street, OLDHAM, OL9 6HY
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Registered person	Oldham Metropolitan Borough Council
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Crèche

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?

Richmond Children's Centre operates from Richmond primary school. It opened in 2006 and operates from four play rooms in a purpose built building. It is situated in the Westwood and Coldhurst ward of Oldham, close to the town centre. A maximum of 96 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. The opening hours of the crèche vary depending on the needs of the service to support parents accessing training. All children have access to enclosed play areas.

There are currently 23 children aged from two to under four years on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for early education. The majority of children attending speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a good understanding of personal hygiene. They are beginning to confidently manage their toileting needs and wash their hands unaided before snacks or before taking part in a bread tasting activity. Children's good health is enhanced through a variety of precautionary measures being in place to prevent the spread of infection, such as the maintenance of a clean and hygienic environment and detailed policies and procedures being in place which are clearly understood and implemented by all staff. Children stay healthy because detailed records of individual health and dietary needs are kept which are regularly reviewed with parents. Children benefit from links with other activities provided by Sure Start; the setting has recently achieved the Breast Feeding Awareness Award.

Children are nourished through the provision of a varied and well balanced diet. They are developing a positive attitude to healthy eating through planned activities and enjoy food through socialising at mealtimes with their friends or helping to prepare their own snacks. They are developing independence skills and know when they need refreshment as they help themselves to fresh fruit, milk or water during the course of the session. As a result, they are learning to keep their bodies hydrated and healthy. Children are actively involved in a good range of activities which develop their knowledge and understanding of healthy lifestyles, for example, creative activities, attractive wall displays and books in the snack area, and through their discussions with staff at snack and meal times.

Children enjoy fresh air and exercise everyday through the provision of an excellent range of well planned activities to promote their physical health and well-being, such as parachute play, pedalling and running outside. The centre offers continuous indoor and outdoor provision and children free flow between the activities following their own interests. Many children actively seek to play outdoors in the rich and vibrant environment, experimenting with water, using watering cans, hoses and drain pipes or digging in the large outdoor sandpit. Children's good health is promoted by staff who encourage them to experience different types of weather through the provision of appropriate waterproof clothing. Equally a good range of indoor activities, such as dance, music and movement or twirling ribbons, actively contribute to keeping children healthy and fit. These encourage the development of their gross motor skills, as they reach high and low, move the ribbons around in circles or move them along the floor like a snake.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a rich learning environment where they are able to move around safely and confidently. The play areas are bright, welcoming and extremely child-centred with attractive displays of children's art work, such as Humpty Dumpty and their free paintings. Children use an excellent range of good quality toys and equipment which are maintained to a high standard of hygiene and safety, and stored at low level in labelled boxes, enabling children to access them freely.

Children's safety and security is given high priority by risk assessments being in place which minimise hazards both inside and out. Precautionary measures are in place to maintain children's safety at all times, for example, coded door locks, a video entry system, and the effective

deployment of staff ensures that all children are always well supervised. Clear and comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and contribute effectively to the safety and well-being of children. Staff place importance on teaching children how to keep themselves safe by providing games and activities, such as the 'Stop, Go' game and keeping safe during play. Children demonstrate a clear understanding of this as they respond positively to adult instructions regarding boundaries and ground rules.

Children's safety is further enhanced due to staff having a good awareness of fire prevention and a commitment to keeping children safe whilst on the premises; equipment, such as an evacuation cot, is in place to aid the quick and safe evacuation of non mobile babies. Children are developing a good understanding of fire precautions through being made aware of and the regular practice of the emergency evacuation plan.

Children are well protected because staff and managers are clear and confident about their roles and responsibilities in a child protection situation and the appropriate procedures to follow. All the staff have attended child protection training as part of their induction procedures. All the required documentation and contact numbers regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures are in place and available to parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the setting and most separate from their carers with confidence. Less confident children are well supported by the caring and friendly staff and are soon involved in their play. Children of all ages benefit from an excellent range of indoor and outdoor play experiences to foster their all-round development. Play activities are provided by staff with imagination and creativity to make them interesting, stimulating and challenging for children. For example, children pretend to be builders as they use large scale diggers in the soil outside or develop their sensory experiences through tasting different breads at snack time. Children are motivated and interested as they engage in their self chosen activities, using initiative and imagination frequently to extend and control their own play. For example, a group of three-year-olds play imaginatively by going shopping and counting out how much money they will need.

Although there are no children aged under two years currently on roll, the staff have created a welcoming and safe environment for them to explore both their surroundings and a range of natural materials. They are able to develop their senses through exploring different treasure baskets and listening to a variety of sounds and music. Children acquire new knowledge and skills because staff support their play, intervene appropriately and allow them space and time to practise skills, such as moving the wheelbarrow on the wheeled truck outside. Children develop confidence and self-esteem well through being given age appropriate tasks to do and being rewarded with praise for effort and achievement as they self register and hang their coats up on arrival.

Staff place great emphasis on children's emotional well-being and developing their language and communication skills as the majority of children have English as an additional language. For many children, attendance at the setting is their first play experience. Planning of activities is in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this acts as a secure link and firm foundation for the stepping stones within the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff plan and build on children's interests. For example, some children show interest in playing in water and

this is extended to include the use of straws and washing up liquid. However, planning for children's next steps is not fully developed for children aged under three.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Planning systems are in the early stage of development as the setting has only been operating for four months and the childcare staff team are all new in post. However, these are detailed and show that the planning, observation and assessment systems are used by staff to plan the next steps for children's learning by setting targets for individual children. Formal evaluation of these systems by teaching staff within school ensures children's successful progress and learning, as individual learning plans are clearly linked to the stepping stones and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Childcare staff are making strong links with the early years department through weekly planning meetings and children spending time in the nursery with their key workers. This helps to build children's confidence prior to transition.

Children are becoming confident learners, making choices and decisions about which activity they wish to participate in. For example, a three-year-old says 'I want to play in the water'. Staff skilfully question children to make them think and extend their knowledge and language. Children benefit from the good relationships they are developing with adults and peers and initiate interactions with other people with confidence, such as by asking an adult to come shopping with them.

Children confidently use signs and gestures during songs and stories to communicate as they show the correct number with their fingers as they count during the rhyme '10 little monkeys jumping on the bed'. They have many practical experiences of using mathematics in everyday situations; during a play dough activity they count the number of buns they have made or measure the height of the play house outside. They recognise when they have the same number 'that's my number' as they point to the number '3' which is the same age of the child.

They are learning about technology and how things work as they play with remote controls cars and make them go forwards or backwards. They use their imaginations well to design and build as they make 3-dimensional models without adult intervention while playing with the large wooden bricks. They learn about the wider community through planned activities which reflect different cultures, however, they have little opportunities to show an interest in the world in which they live by enjoying outings to local parks and shops. Children are free to explore a range of media such as paint, play dough, chalk, felt tip pens and are able to name and recognise colours with ease. They beam with delight at the patterns they have made when they paint with cars or when they successfully copy the letters of their name on paper.

During physical outdoor play, children confidently join in parachute play or rides bikes successfully negotiating obstacles and other children. They frequently choose to play outdoors and freely move in a range of ways with pleasure and confidence. Children show great skill in judging body space by sitting carefully on the mat at story time so as not to squash anyone.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have a strong sense of belonging within the setting as they are encouraged to make their own choices and decisions about how they spend their time. They enjoy friendships and develop good awareness of their own needs and the needs of others through learning to share

and take turns. They are busy, contented and cooperate well together, often initiating their own activities. Children become aware of the wider world through an excellent range of good quality resources which reflect positive images of colour, culture and disability. The recognition and celebration of festivals from around the world helps children to develop positive attitudes to others and to value diversity, such as making Dragon masks for Chinese New Year. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Staff are committed to the inclusion of all children within the setting through ensuring the physical environment is accessible and adaptable, and working closely with parents and other professionals. Staff are appropriately trained and the Special Educational Needs Coordinator is confident in seeking further advice or assistance from other professionals within the local authority or within school, which enables all children to participate fully in the life of the setting.

Children behave well. They learn right from wrong through clear boundaries and through staff being positive role models and giving clear direction. Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and put strong emphasis on rewarding positive behaviour. They consistently give children lots of verbal praise for effort and achievement.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are greeted warmly into the setting by staff who work very closely with parents in an open and honest way. Home visits with a bilingual member of staff and the effective settling in procedures ensure staff build good relationships and trust with parents and ensure that children feel secure and settled. Systems of formally sharing information with parents about their child's development and involving them in their child's learning and nursery education are not fully developed. However, they do share information verbally on a daily basis and children's files, which recognise children's achievements, are easily accessible for them to view.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children are well protected through robust recruitment and vetting procedures. Staff are qualified and experienced and display an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development. Effective deployment of staff contributes greatly to children's enjoyment and achievement. Effective organisation of play areas and resources allow children to be independent and confident learners. Staff have a clear understanding of the importance of a key worker system resulting in babies and young children enjoying positive interactions throughout the day with consistent adults. Children benefit greatly from staff's commitment to broadening their knowledge and skills in childcare practices through further training. The combination of external and internal support networks, such as the strong links with the early years department within school further enhances the high quality of care and education. Documentation and children's records are kept and maintained to a high standard contributing to the safe and efficient management of the setting.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. Staff work effectively as a team due to strong leadership which values and respects their skills. Staff share a clear vision to consistently deliver high standards of care and education for all children through their knowledge and implementation of sound policies and procedures. Clear dialogue and direction from managers to identify strengths and weaknesses in the care and nursery education lead to continual improvement. Staff are well supported by management to promote their professional development through regular appraisals and attending further training. Managers value their staff and provide a clear sense of purpose and direction resulting in a motivated staff team.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- develop opportunities for children to show an interest in the world in which they live by enjoying outings to local parks and shops (also applies to nursery education)
- develop observation and recording systems to plan the next steps for children's play, learning and development.

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):

- improve partnership with parents by developing systems of involving parents in children's learning and by sharing children's assessment records on a regular basis.

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