

Rooftops Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	100608
Inspection date	31 October 2007
Inspector	Catherine Greene

Setting Address	Priestly House, Athlone Steet, Kentish Town, London, NW5 4LN
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Telephone number	020 7267 7949
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E-mail

Registered person	Elaine Walton
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care
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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?

Rooftops Nursery operates from a purpose built nursery on the fourth floor. They are situated in Kentish Town. The nursery has three group rooms which lead out into two separate rooftop play areas. The nursery opens daily for 51 weeks of the year between 8.00 and 18.00.

There are currently 46 children on roll aged between two and five years. Of these 18 children receiving funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and children who speak English as an additional language.

Each member of staff has, or is working towards, a range of early years qualifications. The owner and manager receive good support and advice from advisory staff attached to the local education authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well through very good opportunities for physical exercise and activity in the outside play area. Children enjoy physical play on a daily basis, they are using their bodies to explore space, weight and strength. They develop large physical skills as they run, jump and climb on and off the frame. They enjoy transporting each other around and chasing each other during a ring game and as they roll, throw and catch balls. They enjoy playing with water and sand and have opportunities to climb, move under, over and through equipment. The outdoor curriculum is constantly being reviewed to ensure activities meet all areas of learning consistently throughout the year.

Children have many good opportunities to develop fine motor skills as they use equipment such as rolling pins, cutters and scissors for cutting, making shapes and sticking. They use pencils and scissors confidently and paint with various tools and brushes of different widths and sizes. They learn to dress independently, when, for example, putting on and taking off their cardigans and coats.

Considering children's overall well being and health is high on the agenda. The nursery has a healthy eating policy and an extensive understanding of the benefits of providing children with nutritious food. Lunches are prepared by an experienced cook who works closely with staff and parents to monitor the menu and ensure that the meals provided are seasonal and very nutritious. Children can help themselves to drinking water throughout the session, they enjoy platters of fresh and dried fruit. Staff liaise well with parents, ensuring that any children's special dietary requirements are appropriately met. They look forward to the recipe book being produced for Christmas. This will include children's 'favourites' such as the delicious homemade meat balls.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the warm and welcoming way in which the staff greet them as they arrive. Children's art work and photographs are used to make the environment interesting and welcoming. This contributes to the children's sense of self worth and a feeling of being valued.

Children's awareness of their own safety is encouraged very well. Their understanding is reinforced by frequent discussions about safety, reminders to be careful in their play and discussions about the consequences of actions, such as, running and climbing on furniture. They learn to carry equipment carefully at snack time and follow instructions very well. Children are learning to take responsibility for their own safety by helping to clear away equipment at tidy up time and discussions about how they should respond when someone falls over. Children are able to access the resources for themselves as they are displayed on low level storage shelves. Resources are grouped into learning areas and the comfortable book corners provide children with opportunities to use books independently and in comfort.

Visitors are monitored on and off of the premises through the intercom system, they are also required to sign the visitors record book. Children are safeguarded through a variety of practical measures. These include maintaining risk assessment records and safety appliances that are regularly checked. These measures help to monitor the risk of any potential hazards. Information relating to accidents is recorded appropriately and shared with parents. Four members of staff

have current first aid certificates. Information is displayed giving clear instructions on the evacuation of the premises in an emergency and a record of frequent fire drills is maintained.

Children are further protected as staff have a good understanding of child protection issues, this includes local arrangements for the reporting of concerns. The policy clearly states staff's responsibility to protect children. Recruitment processes seek to employ only those adults who have been fully vetted and are deemed suitable to work with young children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, secure and interested in their play and learning at the nursery. They arrive happy and are pleased to see staff and each other. Children separate well from their parents and carers and any children new to the setting, who may be feeling unsure, are reassured by staff and quickly become interested in the activities that are set out. If their distress continues they are reassured with discussion about their parents and by sitting with a member of staff. They enjoy a good range of well planned, interesting experiences and activities, such as cooking, singing and creative play sessions. Children have access to a stimulating, well organised and child centred environment, where they can access play materials independently.

Children who are new to the setting are settling in very well with close staff interaction that is warm and comforting. Children are stimulated and soon become involved in activities such as play dough, shape sorting and painting. They respond very well to the close contact and delight when a staff member sits on the carpet and reads them a story. Staff use questions well to encourage children's language and involve children by asking them to turn the pages. Children have great fun in the home area, they use their imagination cooking, dressing up and caring for their dolls. Older children show the younger children how to take care of and put their drawings in their named trays. Staff interact well with the children, giving explanations, asking questions and giving lots of physical affection and reassurance, particularly, to younger children who are new to the nursery, supporting them in their play.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff work very well as a team sharing ideas and inspiration when planning the Foundation Stage. This is demonstrated by their organisation and presentation of activities, experiences and play materials to the children. Staff plan and provide a welcoming and interesting environment for the children where their independence is encouraged well. Language, questioning and praise are used to encourage children's learning, development is clearly recorded and used to identify when children need support. Observations and discussions with children are used to establish which stage children are at in their development and influence what activities will be provided to move them on to the next stage.

Children socialise and work well together during activities, such as building with large blocks and making various creations for Halloween. Children help each other with tasks, for example, one child carefully showing another how to glue the feathers to the hat she was making. They are learning to express their feelings through discussion outdoors about why someone might not be kind and saying what they do and don't like to each other.

Children have good opportunities to recognise letters and their names through displays, books and their name labels on pegs. They talk about the letters in their names. Writing materials are easily accessible and well used by children who help themselves to pencils and paper and draw

recognisable pictures. New words are introduced in familiar contexts, such as children learning about Autumn and bears in hibernation. Books are easily accessible to children and they look at them independently. Children are learning about the format of books during discussion with staff who use every opportunity to encourage their enjoyment. They interact very well with each other and talk as they play. Children are gaining confidence in speaking in large and small groups and choosing their friends to come and dance with them, during circle and story time.

Children use numbers confidently in their play, they count out loud the numbers of legs on inky wincy spider on their collaborative display. They count backwards, confidently, from 10 to one during a countdown in a song. They have lots of opportunities to recognise numbers from displays, books, when matching figures to the corresponding number of cubes and discussion about less and more. Children learn simple mathematical concepts when singing number rhymes. They measure and pour through a variety of funnels in the imaginatively presented water tray.

Children have good opportunities to explore creative materials through painting, play dough and collage activities. They are able to construct with a range of equipment including a replica tool bench with real tools. They enjoy designing their own displays using re-cycled materials with glued objects to paint and decorate. They use their imagination when building with duplo/stickle bricks and talk about 'flying' and 'crashing'. Children have opportunities to enjoy music and singing daily. They sing as they march in time, using pretend drums to beat the rhythm. Children learn about colour and texture when making collage, painting and drawing around shapes.

Children are learning about the world they live in, they have access to resources that reflect diversity, such as, books and play figures. They learn words of greeting in different languages during circle time, and have opportunities to take part and learn about different celebrations, such as, Diwali and Christmas. Staff talk about recent topics that children thoroughly enjoyed, they act out shops in imaginary play and learn how to hold conversations on the phone and calculate using the till. Children have good opportunities to share their own lives through the children's profile books that include photographs and experiences from children's families and home life and contributions from parents. There are some opportunities for children to learn about everyday technology. However there are fewer chances for them to explore information, communication and technology as resources, such as programmable toys are limited.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing lots of confidence and self-esteem. They are very happy because the staff know them extremely well and as a result they are able to meet their individual needs effectively. Staff have respect for children and as a result they respond to children's requests and give them good explanations to their questions.

Children have opportunities to find out about their own culture and the beliefs of other people as they learn about different festivals, and during story times. They have access to a very good range of toys and resources which promote equal opportunities, such as small world play equipment and books which promote disability positively. Children enjoy quiet and relaxing times as they listen to stories and they have very good opportunities to explore using their senses, for example smelling, feeling and listening. Children behave well, they respond to clear explanations from staff, who are calm and consistent. They are learning to manage their own

behaviour as staff provide consistent boundaries and they are very kind and considerate towards each other.

Systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A number of children currently attend the nursery who have English as an additional language, they are supported by use of simple signing, repetition of words and through demonstration. Staff are able to identify concerns relating to children's development and they know the correct procedures to follow. Children benefit from the staff's enthusiasm to develop their skills through training and quality assurance schemes.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the good relationships between staff and parents. Parents have the opportunity to meet with staff to discuss their children's progress and they are given written information about the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Parents are welcomed into the group at any time and they play an active role, for example when celebrating festivals.

This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a staff team who have a secure knowledge and understanding of children's developmental needs. The nursery has an established and well-organised staff team who receive ongoing training and support. Very good deployment of staff and organisation ensures that high staff ratios are maintained.

Written documentation, such as, policies and procedures are in place. Records and information relating to children's health and safety, such as, accidents and medication records are in place and maintained. Children's attendance and times of arrival and departure are recorded and there is a record of fire drills. An appropriate procedure is in place to process staff suitability checks following new guidance.

Leadership and management is good. The setting is well organised and great care is taken to create a child centred environment. The manager makes it a priority that the staff team are fully supported to meet all children's potential learning needs. Indoor and outdoor space is set out to enable maximum play opportunities for children. Staff are committed to providing a welcoming atmosphere where children and their families are well supported. The nursery is well resourced with a good selection of equipment and play materials and the environment is planned and equipment set out, relating to the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff are well deployed to meet children's needs and support them in their play and learning. They work very well together and children benefit greatly from staff commitment to improve practice through ongoing self-evaluation. The manager and provider are committed to ensuring that staff receive on-going training to increase and update their childcare knowledge. The nursery receives good support via the local authority and regular staff meetings and staff appraisals are held.

Written documentation is well organised, and used to ensure children's wellbeing. There are plans in place to review existing policies and procedures in line with new initiatives and to reflect changes in line with new legislation and guidance. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection a recommendation was raised to ensure that staff are given the opportunity to access training to increase their understanding of record keeping in order to plan the next steps for children's play, learning and development. All staff now benefit from attending on-going training provided by the Local Authority and they look forward to the benefits of being part on a quality assurance scheme 'Celebrating Quality'.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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 that policies, procedures and operational plans reflect current practice and any changes to requirements or legislation

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 children's chances to learn about everyday information, communication technology.

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