

Downshall Pre-school Playgroup.

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	128463
Inspection date	12 September 2007
Inspector	Rufia Uddin
Setting Address	St John's Church Centre, St John's Road, Newbury Park, Ilford, Essex, IG2 7BB
Telephone number	020 8598 1536
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Registered person	The Committee of Downshall Pre-School Playgroup
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?

Downshall Pre-school Playgroup originally opened in 1976 and it is situated in a residential area in Newbury Park, in the London borough of Redbridge. It uses a large church hall for its premises, with adjoining facilities. There is a safe outside play area. The pre-school is open daily during school term times, offering morning sessions between 09:30 and 12:00. There are currently 27 children aged from three to under five years on roll. All children currently attending receive funding for nursery education. There are 27 children who have English as an additional language. The pre-school welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. A maximum of 35 children may attend the playgroup at any one time.

The pre-school employs nine members of staff. All of the staff, including the managers, have appropriate child care qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Pedagogy Advisory Team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a good understanding of how to take care of their own personal hygiene, and are well protected from infection by staff maintaining consistently applied and appropriate procedures. Children are safely escorted by practitioners to suitable toilets, which are checked for cleanliness prior to each session. Children know to wash their hands after using the toilet, and before eating their snack. Children's good health is promoted by the provision following appropriate sickness policies and procedures, which are effectively shared with parents and minimise the risk of cross infection. For example, health issues are fully discussed with parents, who have given consent to staff seeking emergency medical treatment or advice. Children's first aid requirements are well met because all staff hold relevant first aid certificates and there are good procedures in place to ensure that accidents are fully recorded and parents are kept notified of accidents.

Children are learning about healthy eating through informal snack-time discussion. Staff demonstrate a good awareness of food hygiene practices. For example, they all wash their hands before snack-time. Children's individual dietary needs are thoroughly discussed with parents. All children enjoy a flexible, informal snack-time, when they can freely choose from a good range of healthy food, such as a variety of fruits and milk, fruit-juice or water. Children sit together and chat happily when eating, which promotes their social and emotional development. Jugs of drinks are available at all times, to which children help themselves, which encourages their independence.

Children engage in a good range of physical activities, which effectively promote their physical development. Children have good daily opportunities to access fresh air and their physical skills are supported through playing outdoors. They enjoy playing on bikes as well as using the outdoor play area for a learning environment. Additionally, children enthusiastically participate in a planned session which takes place in the large hall on a daily basis. Here they play a range of group games, which involve a lot of running and excitement. Opportunities for children to be active, learn to control their bodies and develop their physical skills both indoors and outdoors are good. Children competently use a wide range of small tools and equipment with increasing control including, scissors, dough cutters and glue pens. They take part in vigorous exercise on a daily basis as they access the outdoor play area to run, pedal and play ball games.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is assured because practitioners are vigilant and ensure risks and hazards are minimised within the nursery. Formal risk assessments, and informal daily checks on all areas, help ensure the environment is safe. Consequently, children confidently move freely and safely around all areas of the nursery, including the outside learning environment. Children use the spacious main hall for their play and learning activities. This is effectively divided into different play areas. Children move around safely and can negotiate the different play areas well. They show good levels of independence as they self select a good range of resources and play provision suitable for their ages. Checks on all furniture, equipment and play resources are included as part of the daily risk assessments, which helps to ensure they are clean and well-maintained. Risks and hazards are minimised, for example children do not have access to

the kitchen area. Fire alarms are tested weekly and the fire drill is clearly displayed throughout the premises. However, the fire drill log shows that not all the drills are recorded.

Children are appropriately safeguarded as a result of practitioners having a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities with regard to child protection, and their ability to implement relevant procedures. All practitioners are vetted and children are never left unsupervised with anyone who has not been vetted, such as students and visitors. Good visibility and effective security systems ensure the access of visitors is suitably controlled.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the setting. They arrive happy and confident and quickly settle, making their own choices about their play. Staff have a good understanding of the Birth to three matters framework to support their planning for children under three. The daily routine throughout the nursery includes time for free play and some focussed, adult-led activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are well qualified and experienced. They have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. This enables them to plan a wide range of indoor and outdoor activities that reflect all aspects of children's learning. Children are supported effectively and allowed to learn at their own pace and enjoy interesting topics and themes that link curriculum planning to all six areas of learning. However, records do not show how the next steps in children's learning have been planned. The welcoming environment gives children a strong sense of security and belonging in the group. There are high expectations for children's behaviour. They form positive relationships and share space together very well.

All children are interested, excited and motivated to learn. They enjoy exploring the wide range of interesting learning opportunities available to them, such as painting, water play, music, role-play and creative opportunities. They are developing confidence, independence and pride in their achievements. They are kind and helpful towards each other and behave very well. They relate well to staff, adults and peers and talk freely about their home .

Children are developing appropriate skills in counting and they are able to write and count up to five. Children count confidently and recognise numerals in their play. They count and compare the number, size and shapes of models they make from dough, using language, such as bigger and smaller. Mathematical concepts are further developed through planned activities, such as sand and water play which introduce concepts, such as empty and full and floating and sinking.

Children are developing good language and communication skills. They can recognise their names and confidently use their name cards to self-register as they arrive. Children enjoy looking at books and are engaged during story time. Children enjoy mark marking with a range of media. However, further learning opportunities are missed, for encouraging children to write for a variety of purposes, for example they might make shopping lists during a role play.

Children have good opportunities to use all their senses to learn about living things, objects and events. For example, they talk about planting seeds and watching their sunflowers grow. Children's learning is further enhanced by regular visitors who talk about their work and help children to keep themselves safe, such as the dentist.

Children have daily access to construction toys and different tools. They have opportunities to create their own designs and access the computer confidently. Children speak naturally about past and present events in their own lives and have daily access to a wide range of resources to support their learning about different cultures and beliefs.

Children show awareness of personal needs and most competently carry out a range of healthy practices, such as hand-washing and personal hygiene. All children are developing good hand-eye coordination through using one-handed tools and equipment with increasing control. Children enjoy a broad range of creative materials that promote colour, texture and sensory awareness. They show an interest in what they see, hear, smell, taste and touch. For example, they make patterns and shapes with dough; they enjoy water play, role play, craft activities and exploring textured and natural materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit because staff have a secure knowledge of their individual family and home circumstances. They gain an awareness of themselves and an understanding of the wider world through activities linked to various topics. Regular activities linked to celebrations and festivals, such as Eid, Diwali, Chinese New Year and Christmas, and the use of everyday play resources which reflect a diverse society help children gain an awareness of their community. Girls and boys mix and play together very well. Children from various ethnic backgrounds are welcomed in the group. Communication with parents and children speaking English as an additional language is helped by the staff who understand a range of community languages.

There are no children attending with learning difficulties or disabilities. The playgroup promotes an inclusive environment where all children are provided with the support, encouragement and challenges to achieve their individual potential. Effective systems are in place to ensure that those children with English as an additional language receive a good level of support. Staff work very closely with parents and other agencies to ensure children's individual needs are fully met .

Children behave well as staff are positive role models. They learn to negotiate, take turns and share play materials. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children benefit because secure links are established between home and the group. Parents are invited to an open day before children start at the group and meet the staff team and familiarise themselves and children with premises. Induction and registration procedures are flexible to suit the individual needs of children and their parents. Good systems are in place for settling new children, with parents staying for extended periods and comprehensive dialogues regarding children's needs taking place. The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents are warmly greeted by practitioners when they come to the playgroup. Information is shared in a relaxed and friendly manner, and formal contracts and agreements are used. Comprehensive policy statements are in place. Children's learning and day to day progress is shared with parents or carers through, newsletters, a prospectus, notice-boards, posters, progress files and end of term reports.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment. They have a good time at the group because all staff have a good understanding of how children learn and how important play is

in their development. Staff are deployed effectively so that the staff ratio is maintained and children receive appropriate adult attention which helps children feel secure. Staff work well as a team. Good record keeping takes place which is easily retrievable, with a good range of written policies and procedures in place, which all parents and staff are aware of. All relevant information is recorded in children's record forms, which are suitably stored in a confidential manner.

The quality of leadership and management is good. Staff are supported and comprehensive policies and procedures effectively underpin the work of the playgroup. Systems are in place to monitor the curriculum. Staff receive regular one to one supervision, annual appraisals and attend staff meetings. Staff liaise with other professionals, attend meetings and further training courses and work together to continue to develop their provision. Management understands the need to continually develop the provision and the skills of staff. Children benefit because all staff are valued by management, therefore, are enthusiastic about their roles within the group. This helps to ensure they all contribute fully to the group and promotes positive outcomes for all children attending.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the playgroup was asked to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Some members of staff have attended safeguarding training to improve their knowledge and understanding of the child protection procedures which helps to protect children.

At the last nursery education inspection the nursery was asked to give children access to programmable toys and information technology. The playgroup now provides opportunities for children to learn about information technology by using things like programmable toys, computers, tape recorders, and CD players.

The nursery was also asked to identify how activities could be developed to meet the needs of more able and quieter children, and to use the assessment of individual's progress to inform future planning. Staff keep assessment records of what each child knows and can do and these show that children make good progress in their learning. Activity plans have been developed and key workers are used to consider the needs of individual children. This all helps children's learning.

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):

- ensure that all the fire drills are recorded

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):

- develop systems of observations and assessments so that they are effectively used to plan for the next steps in children's learning
- develop opportunities for children to write in a variety of situations, for example by writing during role play activities.

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