

PANDORA COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	135330
Inspection date	12 September 2007
Inspector	Philippa Clare Williams
Setting Address	Maldon Road, London, N9 9QP
Telephone number	020 8803 1868
E-mail	
Registered person	GLORIA WRIGHT
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?

Pandora Pre-School opened in 1996. It operates from a large community hall. Children also use a small outdoor play area. The pre-school is situated on a housing estate in Edmonton in the London borough of Enfield. There are currently 23 children from two to five years on roll, this includes 16 funded children. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week term time only. Sessions are from 09:00 - 15:00, 09.00 -12:00, or from 12.30 - 15.00 each day. There are four full time staff working with the children. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at Level 2 and the manager has a Level 3 qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to understand simple good health and hygiene practices, such as washing their hands before snack, and after using the toilet. Satisfactory levels of hygiene and cleanliness are maintained in areas used by children. Children are assured of receiving appropriate care and treatment if they have an accident, as all staff are qualified in first aid and there is a fully stocked first box. All relevant documentation with regard to health, including information about any health needs, allergies and the required consent forms are in place and up to date. These positively safeguard children's well-being.

Children are beginning to learn the importance of eating healthily. Staff reinforce this by providing a balanced range of nutritional food for snack time, such as fresh fruit and bread sticks. Children who stay for lunch bring their own packed lunches. Parents are provided with a booklet on suggested healthy foods for their lunch boxes, this ensures children eat healthily. Children drink either diluted juice or water. Staff ensure safe storage and food preparation procedures are satisfactory. Staff ensure that individual dietary needs are met and any food allergies are well recorded and accessible to all staff. The beginning of the lunch time is generally disorganised and children wander from the table and are not initially well supported, as staff were busy completing other tasks. As a result children's individual needs are not fully met at this time.

The children are provided with a range of equipment which enables them to practise moving their bodies and developing their large muscles, including a climbing frame, slide and wheeled toys. They also benefit from regular music and movement sessions with a dance and drama teacher to further develop skills as they confidently participate in action songs and moving rhythmically around the hall. Children's small muscles are developing well as they use a wide range of equipment such as play dough tools, paint brushes, glue spatulas and scissors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and welcoming environment where staff are aware of risks and take appropriate steps to minimise them. For example, close observation of children ensures that they remain safe when using the climbing frame, and staff do a visual check of the premises prior to the children's arrival each morning.

Children learn to keep themselves safe as staff encourage them to climb safely on the climbing frame, not to run and to ride their bikes in one area. There are satisfactory security systems in place, for example, doors are kept locked, there is a bell on the main door, and staff greet visitors in a lobby area. However the visitor's book is not consistently maintained to monitor those who attend the setting, as a result children's security is not fully protected.

Children independently select toys and activities from a wide range of good quality and developmentally appropriate resources, which are well laid out in defined areas. Staff regularly check these to ensure that they are clean and safe. Children are safeguarded because staff have a satisfactory awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse and procedures to follow if they are concerned.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The welcoming environment of the pre-school and the attentive staff ensure that all children are supported to settle and feel secure. Children who are new to the setting are sensitively supported by the staff when they are upset, promoting their emotional well-being and easing their transition from home to the setting. For example, staff use a group game at circle time to settle new children help them to get to know each other. Children benefit from their warm interaction with the staff. They have formed good relationships with them, which helps to develop their confidence and self-esteem. The children enjoy taking part in a full range of activities within the setting. For example they use their imagination well as they dress up and pretend to drill, hammer and screw on the work bench fixing items. Staff do make observations of younger children's progress, however, they currently do not use these consistently inform the plans and to identify the next steps. The organisation of the planned group activities does not always meet the needs of all children. For example, during the mid morning circle time some young children become restless and often disrupt the other children's concentration levels.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Staff have an adequate knowledge of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn. This means that children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals. Although written plans are in place which cover all the areas of learning, there is no clear indication how activities will be adapted or extended to meet individual learning needs of children in the group. Staff complete written observations of children, although systems used do not effectively link to the stepping stones to identify children's next steps in learning. Consequently, the planning is general and does not cater for children's individual needs.

Children are able to be independent. They visit the toilet and see to their personal needs as required. They enjoy helping to tidy and most are able to put their rubbish in the bin after lunch. They confidently request support from staff if required. Children's behaviour is generally good and they are developing negotiating skills as they learn to share and take turns with staff support.

Books are easily accessible throughout the session and some children take quiet time out during free play time to sit and read, they show good awareness of how to handle the books. Children enjoy the storytelling times. Some staff are good at using stories to develop discussions through effective questioning. For example, whilst reading a story about 'babies', staff ask children about their families and help them to recall past events. Children have opportunities to develop early reading skills as they beginning to recognise their names as they self register and see labels and print around the hall.

Staff make good use of questioning to encourage children to become interested in numbers through everyday activities. For example, they count the number of children at their table and number the cups required at snack time. Children enjoy singing number rhymes like 'Once I Caught a Fish Alive,' which helps their understanding of early counting. Children are offered suitable opportunities to help them to understand size and shape. For example, they find the biggest and smallest objects in a book and name some shapes when playing with the play dough. However, less opportunities are provided to extend activities for more able children to develop early problem solving and calculation skills.

Children are developing their knowledge and understanding of the world through planned activities. They observe the changes of tadpoles over a period of time, make visits to a farm, 'sea world' and the local park to observe the animals and fish. They talk about their families and news and discuss the weather every day at circle time. They particularly enjoy singing 'Happy Birthday' to one child in the group. Children develop their manipulative skills as they play with play dough and use a range of tools, such as cutters and rollers competently. Although a children's computer toy is available during the session, children do not use it, as staff do not support or encourage children's interest in programmable toys. Children have few opportunities to explore objects and to show interest in why things happen, how things work.

Children particularly like the creative and imaginative play. Opportunities to freely express their creativity and develop their skills during art and craft activities are well supported. For example, staff encourage children to make their own choice from a wide range of materials from the art trolley for sticking, they choose lentils, pasta, glitter, material, card and paper to create their own collage pictures. Children enthusiastically participate in the weekly drama and dance session.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the pre-school. They develop suitable confidence and self-esteem as staff respect their individual needs, for example, settling less confident children into the setting. Children are treated with equal concern. They are becoming aware of the wider world because staff provide children with positive images of diversity and disability and plan activities which encompass a variety of celebrations, such as Ramadan, Diwali and Christmas. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported within the setting. There are appropriate systems in place to provide for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children are generally well behaved. Staff effectively manage their behaviour, using strategies that are consistent and appropriate to children's age and stage of development. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are provided with booklets detailing information about the pre school and their procedures. However, there is insufficient detail available to parents regarding the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning. Staff gather useful information at the time of admission about children's progress, which are linked to the early learning goals, and use this as a starting points for their assessments. Both written and verbal information is exchanged to keep parents informed about their children's progress. However, parents do not contribute to their child's assessment record. This means that children do not fully benefit from the sharing of information that would enhance their learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff know their roles and responsibilities and work well as a team. Children enjoy a range of play opportunities through the organisation of space, time and resources. However, there are times when the organisation of some group activities and lunch time does not meet the needs of all children.

All of the legally required records are in place, confidential and well organised. This ensures the safe and effective management of the setting in order to promote children's welfare. There are satisfactory recruitment procedures in place, which ensures that adults are suitable to work with children.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager and team work closely together, they benefit from regular team meetings to discuss issues, plan sessions and identify training needs. The staff are committed to attending regular training to aid personal development and benefit the care and education of the children. For example, staff have attended short courses in 'Makaton' signing, maths, planning activities and managing behaviour. There are no rigorous systems in place to evaluate the quality of teaching. This means that there are some areas for improvement, such as linking assessments to the planning.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting were asked to, ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff are suitably qualified and/or experienced to work with children, that records of this are kept on file and that staff inductions are effective; to improve hygiene and cleanliness of the kitchen; provide parents with information about how to complain including Ofsted contact details and the settling in procedure to ensure that children are settled in gradually and to record the hours that children and staff are on the premises. The setting has made sound progress in addressing these issues. There are satisfactory recruitment procedures in place which ensures staff are suitably qualified to work with children, records of these are now in place and all staff complete an effective induction. The hygiene and cleanliness of the kitchen is satisfactory. Parents now have access to a complaint procedure and the settling in process ensures children are gradually settled into the setting. Daily registers are now completed and clearly record children and staff hours. This ensures the health, safety and welfare of the children is protected.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting were asked to: develop the planning and assessment systems to ensure all aspects of each area of learning are covered, the next steps for children are identified and this is incorporated into the activity plans; create more opportunities for children to design and make things from a range of materials using their own ideas and creativity and provide more opportunities for children's speaking and listening skills to develop and for their interest and enjoyment of stories to be encouraged. The setting has made some progress in addressing these issues. Planning now covering all six areas, although next steps are not clearly identified and incorporated into the activity plans and therefore have been highlighted for further improvements. Children now have plenty of opportunities to design and make things from a range of materials using their own ideas as they have free access to wide range of craft materials. Children speaking and listening skills are encouraged through discussions at circle times. Their interest and enjoyment of stories is encouraged through staff comments and questioning whilst reading, and through using props to engage their interest. As a result children show interest in books and are learning to predict story lines.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 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):

- review the organisation of lunch time and planned group activities in order to meet the needs of all children
- improve security of the setting by ensuring the visitor book is used appropriately

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 the use of observations to ensure next steps are clearly identified and used to inform the planning (also applies to care)
- provide opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's assessments and improve the written information for parents about the foundation stage curriculum
- improve the opportunities to explore why things happen, how things work and to use information technology regularly to support their learning
- provide activities and every day experiences for children to problem solve and to write for different purposes in their self chosen play

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