

Dinosaurs Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	140414
Inspection date	18 September 2007
Inspector	Anahita Aderianwalla
Setting Address	Campsbourne Play Centre, Newland Road, Hornsey, N8 7SL
Telephone number	020 8341 9008
E-mail	
Registered person	The Management Committee
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?

Dinosaurs playgroup has been registered since 1999. It operates within the Campsbourne Playcentre, situated on the Newland Estate and near Campsbourne primary school. It is a voluntary organisation and run by a management committee. The group serves the children of the local community.

The group has access to a kitchen, play hall, children toilets area, staff toilet area and all children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 16 children may attend the group at any one time. The setting is open from 09.15 until 12.45. Although at present the group close at 12.00 on Friday. The group operate during term time only.

There are currently 16 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 1 child receives funding for early education. Most children attending come from the surrounding area.

There are four staff working with the children. All staff have relevant childcare qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy as they are looked after in a welcoming, airy and bright environment. Children learn about personal hygiene through regular routines such as washing their hands before eating and after going to the toilet. Older and more able children understand why they need to wash their hands and know that washing your hands 'stops bad germs'. Staff act as good role models, wiping down surfaces before serving snack and after children have eaten to help children to stay healthy. Good hygiene routines are undertaken by staff to minimise the risk of cross-infection, for example, appropriate nappy changing procedures are in place, and staff wash their hands after playing outdoors with the children. There are clear procedures in place in the event of a child being unwell and as a result appropriate action is taken in the event of sickness or accident.

Children are encouraged to learn about a healthy diet through topic work, a daily snack of fresh fruit and vegetables and a healthy lunch. Older children are introduced to cutting their fruit and serving their own snack, at the snack bar with a member of staff on hand to lend support. For example, until children are confident about pouring their drink from a jug. Children are also often encouraged to help make their own sandwiches for lunch. There is a choice of healthy drinks to ensure that children are well hydrated and water is also available throughout the session. During the enrolment process detailed information is obtained from parents about children's dietary and medical needs to ensure that these are met.

A good range of resources enables children to develop new physical skills according to their stage of development. They handle small pieces of construction toys competently and expertly use scissors, glue sticks and other tools, developing co-ordination and manipulative dexterity.

Children have increased opportunities to access fresh air in the large outdoor area. Children learn about leading a healthy lifestyle through everyday, practical experiences. They develop new physical skills such as running, climbing, and swinging when they practise using large equipment outdoors. They are aware of changes that occur in their bodies due to physical exertion and comment 'I'm sweating and tired' when they have been running around outside. They use the lavatory independently and show a good understanding of how their bodies work.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in a safe and secure environment. Space is effectively organised to ensure that there are clear designated areas of play in which children can move around safely. Resources and play equipment are of a good standard, and are stored in low level storage units which enable children to access them safely.

Risks to children are minimised as staff have a good understanding of how to reduce any potential hazards as daily risk assessments are undertaken. For example, the main entrance is secure, and the outside garden is secured, with latches and bolts that are not accessible to children. Children and staff practise regular fire drills, ensuring everyone in the premises can evacuate the building safely and quickly in the event of an emergency. Children learn about keeping themselves safe as staff provide them with consistent and gentle reminders such as placing chairs under the table, and walking around play areas safely. Children only need to

leave the main room to go into the outside area or to use the toilets and are always supervised at these times. They do not often go on outings, but when they do suitable routines, levels of supervision and discussions about crossing the roads ensure their safety. On most trips they are accompanied by their parents.

Children are effectively safeguarded because staff are aware of their child protection responsibilities. This ensures that they act in the best interests of children, for example, all existing injuries are recorded and parents signatures are obtained. There is a clearly written child protection policy and staff have access to the new guidelines from the Local Children Safeguarding Board. Parents are informed of the nursery's responsibilities, reassuring them of their child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and enjoy their time at the setting. The staff's organisation of time and variety of resources used is very good. Staff ensure that the room is set up ready before children arrive, with all the resources they think will be needed to hand, but they are also prepared to get additional things out to follow children's interests. All children engage eagerly in the range of interesting activities that are provided. For example, they play with play dough to learn about texture as they use an assortment of cutters to chop, slice, and cut. Children use a variety of craft materials such as; milk tops, different sized wooden sticks and potpourri, to explore their senses. Children's experiences are enhanced by the skilful interaction of the members of staff who use their knowledge and understanding of how children learn to plan activities that meet children's overall developmental needs. They expertly encourage young children to make choices in their learning when they help with them at the sticking and gluing area. They extend children's language skills sensitively, refining their attempts at new words and listening with interest so that young children become confident communicators. The setting is just beginning to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework effectively to plan activities that are appropriate to young children's stage of development and to help them to learn. Key workers make daily observations of children to monitor their progress and use these to inform development records. Children in the setting have access to a large outdoor area. However it is only used at a specific time in the session. The settings routine limits the children's choice to explore and investigate both indoor and outdoor play when they would like. Planning needs to incorporate outdoor activities, giving children opportunities for exploration and to learn new skills during outside play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All the staff have experience of working in the Foundation Stage and have attended various courses. All are confident about what they are doing with the children, and why, as they are involved from the planning stage. A weekly meeting allows them all to have input into planning and the choice of activities offered. A new format of observation and assessment includes, all of the required six areas of learning, and more specific learning intentions for each child. Staff are able to provide challenges for children in areas which observations identify the next steps. They plan an interesting range of activities over time so that children access a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities. Key workers monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals and use the stepping stones to track development.

Children show a sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. Older children show care and concern for younger children and are very considerate of their needs. For example, two children help pass the craft box to younger children who cannot reach them on the table. They are well engaged in their play as they select and carry out activities. They assume responsibility for their personal care. Children speak confidently, they eagerly initiate conversations with each other and practitioners. They enjoy listening to stories individually and in the large group. Practitioners encourage children to explore their own imaginations. For example, they discuss at story time, about experiences of going to the "deep and dark woods", as they read the story of "Going on a bear hunt". They use the book corner well and are learning how books work. Children are very happy to sing familiar nursery rhymes and there is soothing music playing in the background throughout the setting. However, the setting does not encourage children to use musical instruments to extend their musical experiences. Children are keen and motivated to learn. An effective key worker system, ensures staff have good relationships with children. Children talk confidently, sharing their experiences and ideas. Children use a wide range of vocabulary to express their ideas and talk about what they know. They use language effectively to respond to their sensory experiences, telling adults that the glue feels, 'sticky'. Some children are beginning to write and to link sounds with letters, as they write their names on their own pieces of work.

Children show a good understanding of numbers and some can sequence and name numbers from 1 to 20. Children confidently use mathematical language; they talk about big and small, talk about and name shapes and use directional language 'That one goes under there, next to that one'. They count correctly to ten and show a clear awareness of numbers larger than ten when counting the children at lunch time. Children also use simple calculation in every day situations, with staff asking questions such as 'are there more red blocks or yellow blocks?'

Children have many opportunities to make marks and practice emergent writing, with free drawing. Children have free access to paint and a range of craft resources and enjoying expressing their ideas and creating their own designs. Children use their imaginations well, creating their own scenarios in the role play area. Children are developing good hand-eye coordination, when using scissors and pencils. Practitioners give attention to adapting activities to ensure that all children have access to the full range of activities.

Children develop an interest in the world about them. Children understand about seasonal changes, for example, discussing photos taken in the summer when they planted herbs and flowers, and how brown the leaves have become. Children learn to explore technology through the use of programmable toys. There are good examples of children's work displayed where they join and build together with natural materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's behaviour is good and they respond well to positive praise and encouragement, sharing and taking turns. For example older children help younger children at the gluing table. Staff encourage good behaviour, through good role modelling and speaking politely, respectfully and using positive language. For example, "Please can you hand out the plates".

Children are confident and their self-esteem is built up by sensitive practitioners. Children's work is well displayed. All children are treated like individuals and valued. They are learning to accept people of diverse cultures through well planned topics. For example, 'Ourselves in the community' helps teach children about different cultures and festivals. This helps children

develop a positive approach towards diversity. Children have access to a varied range of resources such as books and puzzles and role play clothes, and cooking activities like making "Samosas" and "tasting Indian sweetmeats" for Divali; help them increase their awareness of diversity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

There are good systems in place to support children who have special needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Staff manage children's behaviour well and good explanation ensures children learn right from wrong. Children are learning to be polite and helpful and are encouraged to take responsibility for tidying away the toys used.

All parents are made aware of how to access the groups policies and procedures, as well as receiving the prospectus and being asked to fill in detailed information about their child before they attend. They are also offered the opportunity of attending as many times before the child begins. During these visits staff ensure they talk to the parents to get as much information as they can about the child to help them settle. They are made aware that the group have an open door policy and are encouraged to spend as much time as they like at the setting. Some parents take the opportunity of talking to staff about their child's achievements and progress daily on arrival or collection, while others wait for more formal opportunities, such as, the open sessions.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. They receive written information about the group, its procedures and detailed practical information. The new prospectus informs parents about the curriculum the children follow. Parents of children who have recently left are particularly appreciative of the record of their child's time at the group that their "Work books" provide and also of the information shared with the new school about their levels of achievement. Parents are given opportunities to be involved in their child's learning, for example, to accompany them on outings, to come in and talk to the children about their experiences or jobs, and through practical examples given by staff to support activities on their individual learning plans.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Good organisation in all areas of the provision helps provide children with a secure and positive environment. Systems are in place to ensure that all the staff are suitable to work with children. Ratios are always maintained above that required, which enables staff to provide a greater variety of activities for the children as well as look after their individual care needs. All of the staff are very experienced, which reflects in the quality of their interaction with the children. They ensure that the premises and resources are well used to provide an interesting, child-centred environment where children enjoy learning. All necessary documentation is available in the setting and policies and procedures are regularly updated.

The leadership and management are good. The manager monitors the delivery of the Foundation Stage through regular reviewing of the records maintained by the staff. Staff are encouraged to attend training to deal with identified weaknesses in their knowledge or practise, or to follow their interests. The provider uses weekly meetings, either as a group or individually, to identify strengths and weaknesses, but does not always record these discussions. The Manager works closely with the advisory teacher to monitor the curriculum and the impact on the children's individual progress.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to review the operational practise of snack time to meet the children's differing needs. She has reviewed the organisation of the sessions to provide a good balance of more physical play, and free play, where children, are not made to sit for long periods of time, and where all younger and older children's needs are being met. The setting were required to keep documentation on the premises at all times. Since the last inspection, the setting, have all the required documents on the premises, so that they are easily available, especially in an emergency.

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.

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 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 planning to incorporate the operational practise of outdoor play to meet the children's different needs (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):

- ensure that investigative tools are provided to extend children's learning in outdoor play
- promote the use of musical instruments to extend children's musical experiences.

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