

# Rainow Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 305262

**Inspection date** 26 September 2007

**Inspector** Zoe Smith

**Setting Address** Rainow Institute, Stocks Lane, Rainow, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 5XR

**Telephone number**

**E-mail**

**Registered person** The Committee of Rainow Pre-School

**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](http://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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Rainow Pre-School Playgroup has been registered since 1971. It is based at Rainow Institute in the village of Rainow which is in the Macclesfield district of Cheshire. The group is open from 09.30 to 12.00 on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday during school term times. They have sole use of the premises during hours of operation.

The group is registered to provide sessional day care for a maximum of 24 children aged between two and five years. Nursery education is provided for three and four year olds. There are currently 29 children on roll of whom 22 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. They are able to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The group is committee run. An appropriately qualified person is employed to manage the group on a day to day basis. The manager is assisted by a team of five staff, of whom, two hold recognised childcare qualifications and one is working towards attaining one.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have daily opportunities to participate in enjoyable and fun activities that help them develop good control and coordination over their bodies. They use scissors and tools, play skittles, balance on the brightly coloured stepping blocks and eagerly join in ball games, music, movement and action sessions. Children are taken on walks and trips round the neighbourhood to enable them to participate in outdoor activities. These activities are providing children with fresh air and exercise, and helping them find out exercise is good for their bodies.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment. Mostly effective hygiene practices and routines are implemented to help keep children healthy. Children know to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. However, several children share the same water when washing their hands after painting and on occasions before eating snack. Two members of staff have current training in administering first aid. All the necessary permissions and records are in place and appropriately maintained regarding medication administration and accidents to children.

Children enjoy a healthy snack of apples and toast. They sit around the table happily chatting to each other whilst enjoying their food. Children can ask for a drink if they are thirsty, however, fresh drinking water is not readily available for them to help themselves to. Children participate in lots of activities that reinforce the benefits of healthy eating. They enjoy learning about the food chain and where their food comes from, they bake bread, make butter and fruit smoothies. The dental nurse visits regularly to show children how to clean their teeth properly using a horse puppet, a large set of dentures and a toothbrush.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure, safe and appropriately maintained environment. Photographs, educational posters and examples of their artwork and creativity are displayed on the walls. This helps to make the premises welcoming and child-friendly. A risk assessment of the premises has been conducted and effective safety and fire precautions put in place to minimise identified risks. The premises are kept secure, fire fighting equipment, plug socket covers and safety gates are provided. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe through activities about road safety and topics on 'people who help us'. They look forward to talks and visits from the community police officers and fire service and thoroughly enjoy helping the fire fighters hold the hoses and spray water.

Keeping children safe and protected is given utmost importance by the group. Children are constantly and directly supervised at all times by the diligent staff team. High staffing ratios ensure children are well supervised and kept safe on outings. Children choose what to play with from a wide range of safe resources, which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Parents regularly take part in fund raising activities to raise money to purchase new resources. This has enabled them to purchase a new book case, storage cupboard and bicycles. Children are safeguarded because the manager is trained in, and staff have a sound understanding of, their responsibilities in respect of safeguarding children procedures.

## **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children have access to a wide variety of age appropriate activities, toys and equipment, which are interesting, enjoyable and stimulating. The daily routine is planned so children have opportunities for free play, group and adult-led activities. Younger children are making good progress in their development because staff use their knowledge of early years guidance to plan suitable activities and play opportunities. Children are developing good imaginations through make believe and role play. They become engrossed in their play with the train sets and vehicles, happily taking the trains on journeys round the tracks, up hills and over bridges. Children enjoy making pictures using felt shapes, designing and building with construction toys and completing large floor jigsaws.

Sensory, messy and creative play is well provided for and very popular with the children. They thoroughly enjoy activities involving sand, water, dough, cutting, sticking and painting and they explore treasure baskets which contain a variety of materials and natural resources. They enthusiastically roll, rake and dig the sand and use nets to catch frogs, fish, crabs and shells from the water. Children use lots of paint as they happily paint pictures at the easel. Positive adult and child interactions are supportive of early communication skills. Children snuggle up next to staff to look at books and listen to stories and they eagerly join in with action rhymes and singing sessions. This is helping them to listen, respond to language and learn new words.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff use guidance on the early learning goals and stepping stones to plan a varied programme of activities across the six areas of learning. Children are kept busy, interested and enjoy their play. However, activities are not consistently extended for older and more able children and therefore, they are not always sufficiently challenged. Development records are in place to monitor children's learning and progress through the stepping stones. However, they are not regularly maintained, which results in insufficient emphasis being placed on planning for their next steps. Good links with the school most children will attend helps children to confidently make the transition to school.

Children have positive relationships with their peers and staff. They take turns, negotiate and cooperate with each other whilst playing. Children discuss and agree they will make a roadway for the cars and not a garage as they initially planned. They develop self-help skills and independence when they attend to their own personal care, put on their coats, distribute plates and cups and help themselves to food at snack time.

Children's spoken language is developing well and they are becoming confident speakers. They initiate conversations, join in singing sessions and contribute to discussions. Children recall their holidays at the seaside and the different animals and creatures they saw on the beach. They have an understanding that print carries meaning. They find their name label and post it in the letterbox in the morning and at the snack time they know to sit where their name label is placed.

Children show an awareness of, and take an interest in, numbers. They match, compare and sort the brightly coloured bears into groups and play number dominoes. They use a range of resources, such as peg boards and threading beads to sequence and follow patterns. Children have opportunities to use and recognise numerals in everyday situations. They count how many

children are sitting at the table for snack and how many cups and plates are needed. Plastic and foam numerals are provided in the writing area for children to use and handle.

Children have daily access to information and communication technology equipment, such as computers and electronic toys. They look forward to their turn on the computer, skilfully manoeuvring the mouse as they play educational games. Children use chalk to design a track and roadway for the trains and vehicles so they can extend their play across the room. Children are showing an increasing awareness of change. They find out about different breeds of sheep and learn about the process of how to make felt from wool and then they enjoy making felt bricks.

Children play imaginatively in the role play corner and express themselves using a variety of media, such as construction toys, shapes, creative materials and musical instruments. They use sticky tape, scissors, glue, crayons and feathers to make Indian headdresses and tepees. However, there is a tendency for some creative activities to be adult-led. This limits opportunities for children to freely explore some creative materials. Children have lots of fun and eagerly talk about the changes, textures and feel of the properties of the mixture as they explore what happens when food colouring, water and cornflour is mixed.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They have access to a range of resources that provide positive images of diversity, such as books, posters, jigsaws and imaginative play equipment. Children regularly participate in activities that help them learn about wider society and to value difference. Children found out about Chinese New Year from a visitor who came to talk to them about the celebration dressed in a traditional Chinese outfit. The setting is proactive in taking the necessary steps to ensure they can welcome children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

Children enjoy outings round the local neighbourhood, learning about and joining in activities that help them feel a part of their community. They made and displayed pirate scarecrows for Rainow's annual scarecrow festival, and were really pleased that they were highly commended by the judges. Staff skilfully support and encourage children to play fairly, share and take turns. Children respond to the meaningful praise they receive, they eagerly help staff to tidy up at the end of a session and behave well. Children are learning to care for others less fortunate than themselves; they regularly join in fundraising activities and events to raise money for national charities.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are made to feel welcome and they regularly work at the group, support and join in activities. They are spoken to in a friendly and professional manner by staff. Parents speak highly about the care, staff and how happy their children are at the group. Daily discussions, end of term reports and development files keep parents up to date about their child's day, progress and any issues. Annual parents evenings and newsletters provide parents with up to date information about the group and the nursery education curriculum.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the friendly and organised environment. The key worker system is being developed to ensure staff plan effectively for children's individual needs. Children are settled and secure with their carers, and confidently explore the play and learning activities. They receive lots of support, encouragement and attention from the well deployed staff team. Sensible policies and procedures are used to underpin staff practice and the care provided. Effective recruitment and selection procedures are in place to ensure the suitability of existing and new staff.

The leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a commitment to develop practice through self-evaluation and regular communication between the committee, manager, deputy and staff. Daily discussions and team meetings inform the planning of play and the nursery curriculum. Support is accessed from an early years development worker to help the group continually develop and improve the service provided. All required records and documentation are in place, appropriately maintained and retained for inspection.

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 five recommendations were made to improve the quality of care. Policies have been devised and implemented regarding the administration of medication and the exclusion of children who are ill. There is now a named staff member responsible for behaviour management issues and procedures have been formalised to manage incidences of bullying. A trained member of staff is now responsible for safeguarding children and the telephone numbers for the local social services department and police are recorded in the safeguarding policy. Accurate arrival and departure times are now recorded in attendance registers and the uncollected child procedure has been updated. The address and telephone number of Ofsted has been added to the complaints policy.

At the last nursery education inspection two key issues for improvement were identified. The group now provide more opportunities for children to develop their existing skills of personal independence and parents now receive regular verbal and written information on their children's progress.

## **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 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):

- improve arrangements for hand washing and make sure fresh drinking water is readily available

#### **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):

- increase opportunities for children to freely use and explore media and creative materials
- further develop assessment, planning and teaching to ensure activities build on what children already know, challenge children and facilitate the next steps in their learning, and keep up to date records of the progress children are making.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)