

# Ring O' Roses Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119513
<b>Inspection date</b>	07 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Anne Daly
<b>Setting Address</b>	RNA Club, 73-79 East Street, Prittlewell, Southend on Sea, Essex, SS2 6LQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01702 617 106
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees Of Ring O' Roses Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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 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?

Ring O' Roses Pre-school is managed by a voluntary management committee of the parents of children attending the pre-school. It opened in 1995 and operates from one room within the Royal Naval Association premises in the Prittlewell area of Southend-on-Sea. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday, term time only. Session times are Mondays to Fridays from 09:15 until 12:00. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 30 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for nursery education. Children from the local community and surrounding areas attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who have English as a second language.

The pre-school employs five staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is working towards an early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority and from the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA).

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing a good awareness of the importance of their personal hygiene through the encouragement of staff. They are being encouraged by staff to wash their hands after using the toilet or before eating food. Some children understand why poor hygiene may affect their health, such as by knowing that their hands may carry germs and may give them a tummy ache. Children are being protected because some of the staff members who hold first aid qualifications are always available to effectively handle their minor injuries. However, children's best interests are not being fully met as staff have not sought prior written parental permission to enable them to seek emergency medical advice and to provide appropriate care for children. Children are being protected from the spread of infection by the setting's sickness policy being made freely available to their parents or carers to ensure that they know when to keep their unwell children at home.

Children are able to explore their personal likes and dislikes, such as being able to taste different foods from the available healthy snack options. They are able to make the most of their snack table by freely accessing the snacks, meeting their personal needs and preferences. Their individual dietary needs are being met through staff working with parents and carers, following requesting information from them about their children's dietary requirements and allergies. Children are being protected by satisfactory daily procedures highlighting which children have any special requirements to minimise any possible allergic reactions. In addition, some staff are specifically trained in dealing with severe allergies. All children are able to rest or to be active according to their individual needs.

Children are being offered a range of both indoor or outdoor play to encourage their physical development. They are developing their fine and gross motor skills when using single-handed tools and equipment or larger apparatus with increasing control and coordination. They have a varied range of activities and opportunities to practise manipulative skills, for example when playing musical instruments while marching around to music. They are able to negotiate appropriate pathways when riding their wheeled toys. Staff have introduced the 'Birth to matters' framework to help them to successfully support children aged under three years.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are warmly greeted by members of staff as they arrive each day into a hall organised to promote their free-flow play. Children are developing a sense of achievement through seeing some of their creations being displayed on the walls. They are able to freely select from a varied range of activities promoting their learning in all areas, although some activities have restricted choice to allow them to develop their play through their own ideas.

Written risk assessments and procedures for the premises help staff to safeguard children from some potential hazards. Children's safety is paramount as no child is allowed to go to the upstairs toilets without a staff member. Staff ensure that the high chain is always on the exit door leading to the toilet area to prevent a child wandering off unnoticed. However, children's well-being and safety may be potentially being compromised as they can freely access tall ashtrays containing cigarette ends in the outside play area.

Clear child collection procedures are in place and children are only permitted to leave the pre-school with adults identified and agreed with parents. Staff are developing children's awareness of safety by organising and practising fire evacuation procedures to enable them to know what to do in an emergency. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe when using scissors by learning how to pass them safely between each other.

Children are being safeguarded by staff aware of their child protection responsibilities, having a sound knowledge of safeguarding issues and able to implement policies and procedures.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a busy time playing happily together at the pre-school, where daily routines promote their confidence and self-esteem. They are being encouraged by staff to try new things through supporting investigative opportunities by providing suitable activities, such as painting over waxed drawings. The majority of children are purposefully engaged throughout sessions, working and playing enthusiastically, either alone or with others. They show interest in what they are doing, with many of them being able to build and construct using different types of resources.

Children receive appropriate praise and encouragement from staff to help to promote positive attitudes to future learning. They demonstrate their natural curiosity as learners through sharing their ideas during discussions at circle and snack times by asking questions such as 'why, when, how and where'. They are building on their natural curiosity through playing and discovering new ideas and experiences when undertaking both planned and spontaneous activities, such as filling the bucket of a small ride-on toy with sand. Children negotiate taking turns, and sharing resources, and show consideration for others, such as making room for others to join in with their play activities.

Staff have sound systems to ensure that children under three years are being appropriately supported at all times, including adapting activities to meet the needs of all children.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have some understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and of how young children learn through play. Key workers support children's progress towards the early learning goals, monitoring their progress by using the stepping stones assessment records. Planning is in place to ensure that the learning intentions are identified in all six areas of learning. The staff team is beginning to develop activity plans clearly linked to the stepping stones and detailing the learning intentions. However, short term planning is not based on observations to ensure activities are linked to what children know and can do. Some staff make observations and assess significant achievements, although this information is not yet linked to planning. Staff work together as a team and discuss what children can do, but the adaptations of planned learning objectives are not yet effectively implemented. Potentially, children are not effectively challenged when their differing levels of attainment are not considered, for example, by pre-planning key questions at different levels or following through and extending a child's ideas.

Children have access to a varied range of chosen resources to support their learning and play. Some staff ask open-ended questions to encourage children's language development. Children are able to consolidate their learning through daily core activities, such as sand and water play.

A varied and suitable range of teaching methods are used, including encouragement and child-led activities, while some staff interact with children to extend their play and learning. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals.

Children feel safe and secure as they feel able to trust the staff who are working to care for them. The majority of children are able to separate from their main carer with confidence when entering the pre-school. They are learning skills and attitudes during imaginary role play situations, although some of the planned experiences do not fully allow children to build on what they already know and can do, such as buying stamps. Children are able to concentrate on tasks such as completing puzzles or making construction models. They are developing skills for their own care when putting on dressing-up clothes.

Children are learning the importance of listening by some eagerly taking part in 'show and tell'. Individuals or small groups of children enjoy listening to stories and learning about rhyming words when finishing off rhyming strings. Some of the more able children are able to recognise some letters and to say their initial sounds. They are beginning to understand that the written word has meaning when sharing books with staff and when seeing some written words within the environment. They have many opportunities to develop their emerging writing skills through the provision of small outside blackboards and chalks. Pencils and paper are freely available inside for writing letters and lists in the 'pretend post office'.

Children are developing a satisfactory understanding of mathematical ideas and concepts, with more able children being able to count 10 and beyond. Children enjoy singing number rhymes and are showing interest in numerical problems, for example, how many will there be in the pool if one more frog jumps in. They are beginning to observe shapes, some of which they know to be round or circle shapes 'like wheels'. Children are beginning to instruct a programmed toy to go backwards or forwards. Their early geometry skills are being developed through building three-dimensional shapes and making sand castles.

Children have varied opportunities to learn about technology through independently using the computer to confidently demonstrate their skills in following simple educational programmes. They are able to click on different icons to cause different things to happen on the painting programme. They are learning on the computer about saving the environment by confidently sorting and moving a variety of items into the correct recycling bins. They particularly like the 'metal crusher' and 'worms' taking fruit and vegetables into the 'compost bin'.

Children are developing new skills through having many opportunities to persevere in repeating some actions, such as climbing the slide steps. They are being allowed plenty of time to explore malleable materials and to experiment using their senses. They can use large and small arm movements, with left to right and top to bottom movements, for example, when 'painting' the fences with water.

Children are able to be creative by expressing their ideas and thoughts through art, music and both role and imaginative playing. They are beginning to explore colour through themed topics, such as playing with red play dough and exploring the red water. However, staff are missing some everyday opportunities to talk about the colour red, such as when they have the colour red in their clothing. Children have varied role play experiences to develop their imagination, such as digging in the compost and planting artificial flowers. They thoroughly enjoy joining in with their favourite songs and exploring musical instruments, especially 'things' that can be shaken or struck.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter the setting with confidence and feeling a sense of belonging. They understand the routines by collecting their name to hang on a peg with their personal possessions. They play and learn in an environment where staff promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all. They are beginning to develop an understanding of people's similarities and differences through seeing positive images and by playing with toys and resources reflecting diversity. They have regular access to puzzles, books, dolls and play figures reflecting diversity. Staff find out about children's family's cultural backgrounds to ensure that familiar experiences, interests and needs are being utilised in their care and learning. Staff use pictorial cards with children who have English as an additional language.

All children and their families, including those with learning difficulties and disabilities, receive support from staff and from the Area Senco Advisor. This support ensures that appropriate action is taken to promote the welfare and development of the children, including working in partnership with their parents and carers to meet individual needs.

Children's behaviour is generally good when playing happily together. They are beginning to regulate their behaviour and are learning about the boundaries and expectations. They know that when sand passes through the timer they have to allow their friends a turn on the computer. Children are being given some praise and encouragement by staff to raise their self-esteem and to develop a sound sense of right and wrong. However, children are not currently being supported by a designated staff member to ensure that all staff know the setting's strategies for dealing with behaviour management.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are able to have tranquil moments when quietly looking at books with staff. They can confidently speak and relate to staff, visitors and other children. Staff encourage children's simple manners, such as saying 'please' and 'thank you'. Children have sufficient opportunities to learn about the wider society through staff ensuring that festivals and celebrations are covered within planning, including designing 'rangoli' patterns during Diwali. Children have some first hand experiences to learn about their environment, for example, when walking through the leaves in the local park.

Children's well-being is promoted by staff working closely with parents and carers to ensure that they meet individual children's needs. Parents and carers receive clear information about their children's care and education through a prospectus, newsletters and notice boards. Children are benefiting from a trusting and supportive partnership between staff, parents and carers to meet their individual needs, especially during flexible settling-in periods.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early years education is satisfactory. Parents and carers receive information regarding forthcoming topics through the weekly planning being displayed on the notice board and in newsletters. A key worker system provides a consistent point of contact for parents and carers to share any observations about their children. However, staff do not record on individual children's files and do not fully use this information in their planning for the children's next steps of learning. Parents and carers are unable to fully support their children's learning at home as systems currently do not inform them of their children's next steps in learning and how they can continue play and learning activities at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are being cared for by staff who have been through the vetting checks. However, children's safety is potentially being compromised by the lack of robust procedures to ensure that any new staff are suitable to care for them. Children are supported by sufficient staff working directly with them through the committee employing additional staff to escort children to the toilet and to complete administrative tasks. Therefore, the minimum required adult-to-child ratios are being met at all times. The staff team are developing an understanding of how the acting manager works to ensure that they know what is expected of them. An action plan is in place to ensure that staff's professional development is achieved within the team to maintain an appropriate skill base for children's care and education. However, some of the different roles and responsibilities are still to be delegated to fully promote the welfare of all children.

The majority of the required documentation is in place for the safe day-to-day management and to promote children's welfare and safety. The operational plan is being developed, although there are some missing elements to ensure that new staff and committee members fully understand how the pre-school runs and how resources are to be used to meet the needs of all children.

Leadership and management of the funded nursery education is satisfactory. The committee members are committed to the improvement of the care and education for all children and are receiving support from the pre-school learning alliance and from the local authority. The acting manager reviews the working practices of the staff and evaluates their impact on the children to help her staff team to identify areas for improvement. Staff have taken steps to address some weaknesses in the planning and assessment of activities.

Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection, the registered provider was asked to ensure that good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing. Children now wash their hands after creative activities and before snack time at a small sink with running water, liquid soap and paper towels to prevent cross-infection.

There were no significant weaknesses to report at the last nursery education inspection, although the registered provider was asked to consider children's understanding of the use of upper and lower case letters, particularly in name writing. The children now see their names written correctly at snack time or when finding their names before hanging their possessions on pegs.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection, Ofsted has received concerns relating to supporting children with specific dietary requirements. These concerns related to National Standard 8: Food and drink and to National Standard 12: Partnership with parents and carers. An Ofsted inspector conducted an unannounced visit to the premises and found that not all staff were aware of all children's dietary requirements. The provider was therefore given one action under National Standard 8 to ensure that all staff are made aware of all children's dietary requirements and preferences, with positive steps being taken to ensure that such knowledge is maintained. A further action was set under National Standard 12 to update the complaints procedure to ensure that it was

in line with the National Standards and to ensure that a complaints log was made available for parents. A satisfactory response has been received to the actions set. The provider remains qualified for registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by the 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 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):

- request written permission from all parents or carers for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment
- ensure that children have sufficient choice of equipment to allow them to develop their own ideas
- ensure that hazards to children on the premises are minimised with reference to ashtrays containing cigarette ends
- appoint a named staff member who will be responsible for behaviour management issues
- develop rigorous vetting and recruitment procedures for new staff members.

#### **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 and implement adaptation in planning to ensure that all children are challenged effectively
- ensure short term planning is based on observations of what children know and can do
- develop opportunities for parents and carers to participate in their children's records of assessment by making comments and sharing observations of their children's achievements at home.

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)