

Earl Rise Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	401757
Inspection date	12 March 2008
Inspector	Sandra Daniels

Setting Address	St John's Church Hall, Earl Rise, London, SE18 7NF
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Telephone number	0208 317 2568
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E-mail

Registered person	Earl Rise Playgroup
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Sessional care
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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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Earl Rise pre-School operates from a church hall in Plumstead and has use of a large play room, a smaller room, a kitchen and toilets. The pre-school is managed by a paren' committee and two play leaders. Children from families in the local areas attend the pre-school. The setting is registered to care for no more than 24 children from three years to five years at any one time. There are currently 19 children on roll, of whom 11 are in receipt of funded nursery education.

The pre-school provides sessions from 09.00 to 12.00 daily during school term times. There are three permanent members of staff and volunteers, all staff have childcare qualifications. The pre-school is supported by an advisory teacher from Greenwich Early Years partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay very healthy because practitioners follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, for which policies and procedures are in place. For example, staff wear protective clothing when serving snacks and tables are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray before and after each snack session. Staff encourage parents to leave a spare set of their child's own clothes so they can be comfortable should they need to be changed. Practitioners talk to children about appropriate clothing for varying weather conditions so that children know it is important to keep warm in the winter. Most of the staff team are qualified to administer first aid and all are confident in their ability to respond well to minor accidents. Detailed information is recorded about children's medical needs and dietary requirements to ensure that staff are equipped and able to meet children's individual needs. A sick child policy and clear accident procedures means that they can act in the best interests of children in the event of a medical emergency or an accident.

Children are cared for in an environment that is clean and bright. They begin to learn the importance of good hygiene through the daily routine and they learn about the importance of minimising the spread of germs through regular hand washing. Children know why and when they should wash their hands, for example, children say they need to 'get rid of germs' as they wash their hands after using the toilet. In addition, the use of liquid soap and paper towels contributes to minimising the risk of cross-infection. Children develop independence as they confidently take themselves to the toilet to attend to their personal needs. Thematic planning encourages children to learn further about healthy lifestyles as they look at different fruits and vegetables, investigating both known and new ones. Children make posters of fruits and vegetables and discuss their favourites. They go on visits to local shops including the greengrocer, where they choose and buy fruit for their snacks. During a project on healthy foods, children investigated lentils before and after they were cooked. They made a fresh vegetable soup and fruit 'smoothies'. Children also tasted plantain and couscous and made their own pizzas.

Children learn about healthy eating because snack time is well organised and affords children good opportunities to enjoy a variety of healthy snacks and fruit that is good for them. In addition, children are able to enjoy fresh milk or water with their snack, contributing to their good health. Staff ensure that snack foods cover the main food groups and are varied and interesting for children. Staff create a calm and relaxing atmosphere for children at snack times. They dim the lights, play relaxing music and place imitation candles on the tables. Children respond to this by sitting nicely and enjoying their snack with the staff. Information relating to children's dietary requirements, preferences and allergies is collated. As a result, children's good health is safeguarded. Drinking water is available throughout the session. Each child has their own water bottle with their name on.

Children receive very good opportunities to participate in activities to promote their large muscle movements both inside and outdoors; this includes riding bikes, ball games, running freely, climbing apparatus and music and movement. As a result, children develop a healthy attitude to exercise and they are beginning to learn about changes that occur in their bodies as they embark on vigorous physical play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The pre-school provides a welcoming environment for children, parents and visitors. Clear information is placed on notice boards and children's creations are displayed on the walls helping to give them a sense of belonging and achievement. Children and parents are greeted warmly by staff. Children freely access the wide range of attractive, well-maintained play equipment and resources. A range of child-height furniture enables children to extend their play and learning in safety and comfort. The very good organisation of the play space along with thorough daily checks of all child-accessible areas ensures the environment remains safe for children. Toys and resources are regularly checked and cleaned so they remain in good condition for the children to use. The provision of child-accessible storage encourages children to extend their own play and learning. Staff support children very well, encouraging them to tidy away when they have finished playing, thereby keeping the play space free from tripping hazards and helping children to learn about the importance of doing things for themselves.

There are very good systems in place for ensuring that children are safe on the premises, for example, a secure entry system, a visitor record and very good supervision of children at all times. Thorough risk assessments are in place and daily safety checks are carried out by competent staff. No safety issues were highlighted at the time of the inspection. All external entrances are kept locked, ensuring no unauthorised persons can gain access and pose a risk to children. There are highly effective procedures in place for the safe arrival and collection of children. Parents and carers bring children right into the building and only persons authorised to do so may collect children from the pre-school. Children have very good opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe. They participate in games and discussions about how to cross roads safely and practise this when they go out for walks. Children practise regular emergency evacuation procedures with staff so that they know what to do in the event of a fire.

Children are extremely well protected as staff have a very good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Appropriate support documents are in place to ensure that practitioners follow correct procedures in the event of any concerns. All staff have attended child protection training, procedures are up to date and information on this subject is actively made available to parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children relish every minute they spend in the nursery. They are extremely happy, amazingly confident and delightfully enthusiastic about every new experience. They arrive happily ready for the challenges of the day. Staff greet the children and immediately focus on playing, talking and listening to them. As a result, children are very keen to share their experiences with staff who clearly value conversation. Warm relationships are evident as children excitedly approach the staff who automatically greet children with a smile or a hug. Staff are calm, warm and consistent. They demonstrate great pleasure in their work and focus on each child as a unique and worthy individual. Staff effectively integrate all ages to actively support younger children as they progress towards the Foundation Stage of learning. Early experiences of high quality ensure children develop the skills for future success.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Staff create a highly stimulating and welcoming environment for children. They have a first rate understanding of the Foundation Stage, are very confident in their delivery of the curriculum and knowledgeable about the aims and learning objectives. The planning tool is exceptional in detailing the intended learning objectives linked to all six areas of learning and includes the role of the adult, evaluation of the activities and differentiation for more and less able children. All aspects of children's learning are planned for and planning is largely guided by children's personal interests and favourite things.

Staff rigorously monitor children's achievements during their time at the setting. They constantly make a variety of meaningful observations, gain parents' views about what their child can do and use photographs to complete the child's progress record. Staff use this information skilfully to inform and plan the next stages in children's learning. Children benefit from staff's involvement and interest in their play; they ask open-ended questions and extend their imaginary play by suggesting they construct a 'den' as they play with large blocks. Staff speak respectfully to children on their level; they genuinely listen and are interested in what children have to say. Children's behaviour is managed consistently by staff using suitable strategies. Children listen attentively at small and large group times and actively respond to staff instructions, for example, to tidy away the toys.

Children are highly motivated, extremely keen to learn and eager to participate in the wide ranging activities on offer. They show high levels of independence during the daily routine, for example, they pour their own drink at snack times and dress and undress for outside play and outings with little or no adult support. The print rich environment ensures children understand that writing carries meaning. Items around the setting are clearly labelled. Some children read and write their names and learn the sounds of letters. Their early writing skills are enhanced due to the numerous opportunities for mark-making in everyday activities, such as making shopping lists or taking telephone messages during imaginary play. These experiences are extended and brought to life as children take real money to buy things at the shops.

Children learn to count competently and recognise numbers that represent their age. Children spend time sorting and matching items by colour, shape or size. Children use mathematical language naturally in their play. For example, during a weighing activity, children discuss which is heavier and which is lighter. Staff support early calculation skills by asking 'how many more?' or 'do we have enough?' Children recognise many shapes as they play, for example, with jigsaw puzzles. They begin to make sense of the world as they investigate live caterpillars as they turn into cocoons. They make a papier-mâché caterpillar to extend this activity. Children sieved earth to look for ants and made an indoor 'ant world' by adding some special mixture to the earth. Children discovered that putting jam onto sticks attracted the ants.

Children enjoy many opportunities for construction and designing things. They can select their own resources for making models, build road and train tracks and are developing independent navigation skills on the computer. Children love music and respond with great enthusiasm as they join in with songs and action rhymes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are able to join in and make a positive contribution in this setting because staff are committed to getting to know them as individuals through their effective key worker system. Staff are knowledgeable about promoting equality of opportunity through daily activities in

the setting. They use resources such as books, posters and small world figures to teach children about diversity and differences. Children are learning to develop a respect for themselves and others because celebrating festivals and finding out about other cultures and beliefs is important to the pre-school. Children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported in the setting. There is a dedicated member of staff who acts as the Special Educational Needs Coordinator for the pre-school and staff are ably supported in managing record keeping, liaising with parents and other professionals, as well as adapting activities so that all children are included in the life of the setting. Staff have created a book of annotated photographs of the local school, as a visual aid, to ease the transition period for children with communication difficulties. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff work extremely hard to develop good relationships with parents. Children receive care which is tailored to their needs because staff gather and keep good, relevant information from parents such as home routines, dietary information and their likes and dislikes. Parents also receive valuable information from staff regarding children's daily care.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding and contributes significantly to children's well-being in the pre-school. Parents' views about their child's needs and interests are actively sought at the beginning of, and throughout their time in the setting. Parents are fully informed about the Foundation Stage and the progress their child is making. There are highly effective two-way channels of communication and a sharing of knowledge and expertise about, for example, cultural festivals. Parents and staff work well together to support children's learning, both in the setting and at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall children's needs are met. Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation of the environment, which enables children to make choices from good quality resources. The managers and staff are highly committed to ensuring that all children receive the best quality care and education. The group actively reviews its own practice through regular meetings, planning evaluations and discussions about children's progress. This ensures that the curriculum and teaching methods take full account of the children's individual needs and the diverse ways in which children learn.

The training programme is carefully planned to meet the individual and collective needs of all staff. For example, practitioners are currently pursuing training on the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). This ensures that all staff are able to deliver a successful early years programme for all children. Positive outcomes for children are assured through the comprehensive range of policies and procedures, which are known to parents and adhered to consistently by staff. All policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they comply with current requirements. Documentation is very well organised, with excellent consideration given to security to ensure confidentiality is maintained. Records are clear, accurately maintained and easily accessible for staff.

A high ratio of staff to children and effective staff deployment, ensures children are always well supervised and supported. The key worker system is very effective and staff get to know the children extremely well. This builds good relationships and helps children feel secure. The setting provides a robust system for the vetting and clearance of all staff. However, there is not currently a structured induction and appraisal system in place.

Leadership and management is outstanding. Staff are led by a highly committed and knowledgeable management team. They work exceptionally well together as a team and support each other in their roles. Practitioners value the different skills that they each have and regularly share information about the children, which helps ensure children's needs are met. The setting promotes the education and outcomes for children exceptionally well, with a team of committed staff who continuously monitor their own performance.

Children play a dynamic part in the nursery. Whenever possible, their thoughts are taken into account when planning activities or making changes within the setting. Staff are always looking at how improvements can be made in the care and learning opportunities they provide for children. Parents are also consulted regularly and their views and ideas implemented wherever possible. Any areas for development are quickly considered, and action taken to improve. This provision clearly demonstrates a truly reflective practice which is conscientiously proactive and responsive.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure that all staff receive training in child protection. Children are very well protected as all staff have attended safeguarding children training and have a clear knowledge and understanding of their roles and responsibilities regarding keeping children safe. Staff know who to report any concerns to and understand the necessity for confidentiality at all times.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

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):

- devise a structured induction and appraisal programme for all staff.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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