

Wonderlands Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Carolyn Mary Hasler

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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 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?

Wonderlands pre-school playgroup is run by a private proprietor. It opened in 2004 and operates from a hall in the Enfield Highway Community Centre. It is situated within close proximity to transport facilities, schools and shops. It offers a pre school resource to the local community within the London Borough of Enfield. A maximum of 40 children may attend at any one time. The playgroup is open each week day from 09:15 to 11:45, 38 weeks of the year.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 38 receive funding for nursery education. A high percentage of children speak English as an additional language, the setting also supports children with special educational needs and disabilities.

The playgroup employs six staff, who work closely with children and support four students. All staff including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning how to live healthy lifestyles, they are building skills in personal hygiene, have opportunities to keep fit through vigorous exercise and are learning about how to eat healthily. Children are accompanied to the toilets but have access to private cubicles and use the toilets and sinks independently. Aids such as nursery steps help them to reach the sinks and the bathroom areas are well stocked with liquid soap and paper towels which the staff encourage them to use. The setting have facilities for younger children and those with specific toileting needs. When becoming involved in messy play they have access to a bowl of water in the play room and paper towels. Staff are aware of cross contamination issues and ensure that areas used for childcare are appropriately maintained.

If children become sick or injured while on the premises, the staff know how to respond appropriately, they have a first aider on the premises and the first aid kit is kept close to play areas. They ensure that children's welfare and comfort is paramount. All the required documentation is in place to help the staff take any necessary action, and staff are familiar with procedures.

Children have access to drinks throughout the session which they can help themselves too. Snacks help children to become familiar with a variety of different fruits and breads offering children healthy choices. Staff explain on some days they are encouraged to make their own snacks although this independent approach is not always used and often they wait for snacks to be placed in front of them. The setting collects information on their dietary needs and displays menus on the parents' notice board keeping parents informed.

Space at the setting is generous and this means that children can move around from one area to another comfortably without bumping into others or crashing into chairs. The setting provides them with a sectioned area where they can enjoy a variety of play resources designed to extend their physical play. They are encouraged to stretch and move large motor muscles when riding trikes, scooters and cars, some of which have peddles which they are using effectively to manoeuvre around the room. While using climbing frames they are building skills in balance and body control, as their skill increases they gain confidence in their abilities. Finger rhymes, songs with actions and musical events help them move their bodies in different ways enjoying dancing and musical movement tapes. They are building fine motor skills as they become familiar with writing tools, painting equipment, scissors, rolling pins and dough cutters.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The play space is situated in a community hall and is a large open space, this helps staff supervise effectively. Children have to leave this secure area to use the toilet facilities and staff are careful to accompany them to ensure their comfort and safety. There is a disabled toilet and changing area close by. The flooring of the hall is wooden, it is kept in good condition, the setting has divided the hall into different areas and provides children with floor mats to ensure that playing at floor level is comfortable. They have access to natural light from windows and doors around the room, the environment has a heating system which can be regulated. Consequently the environment is conducive to playing and learning.

The setting has access to large cupboards for storage of toys and play equipment, each day equipment has to be cleared away. Toys, play resources, nursery equipment and furniture are in good condition and well maintained. They are age appropriate to the children who use this community facility. The staff set out a good variety of interesting and colourful activities for them to become involved with. This helps them feel welcomed and offers them choice in their learning and playing.

Children feel secure in the environment because staff have taken steps to ensure that they cannot leave unnoticed. They are learning to keep themselves safe through posters and timely reminders from staff who remind them not to run in the hall or throw toys and play equipment. The staff ensure areas of high risk are well supervised such as the climbing frame and the physical play area. There is a system in place to record risk assessments each day. However, the risk assessment is inconsistently conducted and records do not always reflect practise. Although children have enjoyed topic weeks such as safety week and have had visitors in from the community such as the fire service and community police officers, most of the current children have not had experience of evacuating the premises. Consequently they are not sufficiently safe guarded.

The staff demonstrate a sound understanding of child protection issues. They are knowledgeable about most of the categories of abuse and their signs and symptoms. Staff are aware of their responsibility to act in the child's best interest and are able to discuss how they would record and report their concerns to the management team. The management team act appropriately to monitor and report their concerns to the appropriate authorities including their regulator Ofsted. They have a comprehensive policy to follow should they have concerns and a large document issued by their local safeguarding board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are building sound relationships with staff who are warm and caring and offer them their time and attention. This helps them form friendships and feel secure in their environment. A high percentage of them speak English as an additional language and the staff are particularly talented at supporting them because they have common languages to share. They help them to understand learning concepts in both languages. Consequently they are growing in self esteem and confidence and are making choices within their play. A very small percentage of children do not receive nursery education funding, however their learning and play opportunities are incorporated into the planning for the whole group.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning for children who receive nursery education funding is satisfactory. Practitioners demonstrate a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and the six areas of learning. They are enthusiastic teachers and this engages children in activities. Planning takes account of the group's needs and focuses areas of learning to a satisfactory level. Children are assigned a key worker who is responsible for monitoring their development. Starting points are not yet clearly established but practitioners are developing skills in making observations, and assessments. However, they are not yet confidently able to demonstrate how their assessments inform planning to ensure that all children's needs are met including adapting for those who have additional educational needs and those whose learning needs to be extended. The practitioners make good use of resources to develop children's interests. However, the acoustics of the room sometimes inhibits learning.

Children show good dispositions and attitudes to learning, they move around confidently from one activity to another enjoying the free flow system. They have time to focus on activities and change direction. They are motivated and interested in the activities available. Their social skills are developing and although some children choose to play on their own or parallel to others, increasingly they are building friendships, playing in small groups and join in with large group activities. They are using self control and generally play harmoniously together.

Children use a number of different ways to communicate their needs, including gesture, body language, through pictures and verbally. Shared experiences such as circle time when they play with rhymes and familiar songs help children's intonations and build skills in speaking. Bilingual practitioners use both languages to help children to understand, offering them time and one to one attention when working on different activities. Those that are confident speakers chat and spend time together in conversation, they talk to staff who listen and respond appropriately. The use of role play areas such as the home corner help them to practise language and use it to re-create familiar roles. Some practitioners were skilled in using language which help children to think through and develop their understanding in learning situations. They are enjoying books, looking at the pictures in warm and cosy corners cuddled up to soft toys who shared the experience with them. They are learning to turn the pages right to left and understand that writing has a purpose and stories have a beginning, middle and end. Most of them recognise their names in written form which they select from the table as they come in. Some can write the first letter of their name on the top of their work, others are able to write their whole name. However, this is not always actively encouraged by staff.

Children are learning to recognise numbers, they see these on posters, in puzzles and art and craft activities and are counting to ten in sequence and beyond. They are noticing patterns and comparing and matching colours in a variety of different activities such as construction equipment and puzzle making. Equipment provided in sand and water help them to build a basic understanding of volume, size and capacity. They are beginning to understand and develop skills in calculation understanding terminology such as one more and one less and numbers before and after.

Children are building a sense of the world they live in. They are learning about the passage of time and sing the days of the week and are building knowledge about the different seasons and life cycles of mini beasts and plants. They focus on Easter and Harvest festival time to help them understand how things grow, change and mature, then wither and die. At other times of the year they learn about the planets and the universe. They are building a sense of responsibility for their planet by looking at and practising recycling, helping them to understand that they can collect and reuse materials for different purposes. The setting has just recently purchased a computer for the children which is not yet available but they hope to increase their knowledge and understanding of communication and technology in this way. They are learning about problem solving such as how one piece of construction equipment fits into another in order to make complicated models. Substances such as sand both wet and dry, water and play dough, help them to learn how to manipulate materials and how materials change when mixed with others, offering them pre school science experiences.

Children have access to drawing and art and craft materials. However, it is difficult to surmise if they have free access to paints and modelling materials which they can explore and be creative with. Both physical and photographic evidence of creative art seemed overly directed and offered little room for children's own creativity. The use of different sorts of music from around the world, role modelling play and small world equipment, help children express their imaginations in different ways.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are building a sense of moral responsibility towards the natural world by building knowledge and understanding of the world around them. Project work on 'all about me' and 'my friends and family' help children to see themselves as individuals and build a sense of self. Children and staff come from the diverse local community, a number of different languages are used and heard by them and they are building friendships across different cultures. This is encouraged well by the setting who have introduced music from different cultures, and have a variety of positive images within their resources which build their self esteem and help others to understand that although we are all different we have many similarities. They have been learning about a variety of different festivals celebrated around the world such as Diwali, Ramadan, Eid, Chinese New Year, Christmas and Easter. Each child celebrates important days, such as birthdays adding to their feelings of self worth and wellbeing.

The setting is currently supporting children with special educational needs and disabilities. They have several nominated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinators (SENCO) who link well with other agencies. Sound partnerships with parents and other professional bodies helps in assessments and provides a basis to support children, they use these to plan for their individual learning programmes. The setting has good disabled access and a disabled toilet available. They are committed to making all reasonable adjustments to care arrangements to ensure that children are not disadvantaged including an inclusive approach to activities.

Children demonstrate they have good levels of self control and they manage their behaviour well. They are learning about how to play harmoniously together, waiting patiently for popular pieces of equipment such as the physical play vehicles. They have a good understanding on how the timer marks each child's turn and those who are using the equipment give the equipment up easily without a fuss. Likewise they are taking turns on the slide and sharing other play resources around the room. Children generally behave with respect towards each other and are learning to be kind and helpful. All join in with tidy up time. Staff have clear strategies in place which are age appropriate and takes account of children's understanding, they have a comprehensive policy to follow. The community hall in which the setting operates is large and noise bounces off the walls, but staff manage this well and it doesn't adversely effect the behaviour of the group. Consequently, children were well behaved.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents receive appropriate information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the six areas of learning. They have opportunities to become involved in their children's education through supporting project work and are invited to play an active part in the pre-school's sessions. Children's work journals are accessible throughout the year and parents have consultations with their key workers during coffee mornings.

Children settle more easily when relationships between parents and carers and staff are supportive. Separation is handled sensitively and children quickly form trusting relationships with staff. Parents have access to information about the service and this allows them to make informed choices about their child's care. The pre-school ensures that they collect all regulated information on children to help them meet each child's individual needs. A suggestion box offers parents opportunities to share their thoughts, daily opportunities are available for parents to share information. Parents offer positive comments about the setting and feel acknowledged

and supported. There is a complaints procedure in place, however it gives inaccurate information which can be confusing to parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children feel secure because they are cared for by staff who are kind and caring, the team holds the appropriate level of childcare qualifications and appropriate vetting procedures. The staff team are established and work well together, their duties well defined. The setting organises space and resources to meet children's needs appropriately, they encourage them to be healthy because they organise routines which help them understand and practise personal hygiene, eat well and exercise. Good observational skills and reminders to children, helps them build an understanding on how to keep themselves safe. Children enjoy their time at the setting, they are motivated and challenged, achievements are acknowledged and celebrated. They are contributing to their own community and are building a sound understanding of how to respect others' feelings.

Children's care is generally underpinned by documentation. However, documentation such as confirming when staff are present and how they are deployed, fire drill practises and risk assessments demonstrate that the setting does not always adhere to accuracy and detail. The setting ensures that all records are stored securely and staff understand issues of privacy and confidentiality. They ensure that children's records are maintained once children have left care arrangements.

The leadership and management of this setting is satisfactory. The manager has a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the Birth to three framework. They ensure staff training is monitored and allocated according to need. They use both their local authority's training programme and offer in-house training to support the needs of the staff team. A sound understanding of day to day issues faced by their team helps the managers to support them in planning and recognising strengths and weaknesses. They are continually looking to improve opportunities to play and learn, which includes new ways of planning and evaluating children's development, currently this is being reviewed and evaluated. The team meet regularly, they meet informally to look at staff strengths and weakness.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was given several actions to address within a specific period of time, which included providing an action plan setting out the grouping of children, deployment of staff and how the setting will provide sufficient and appropriate toileting facilities for additional children and those with disability. This has been met and ensures the welfare and care of children is prioritised. They were also asked to provide a risk assessment of the premises and take action to eliminate hazards to both children and staff. This has been partly met by introducing a daily risk assessment, however this is ineffective and continues to be an area for improvement. Consequently children's safety is placed at risk.

In addition the setting agreed the following recommendations which included to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. This has been fully met and safeguards children's welfare. Also to ensure that anyone responsible for the preparation and handling of food is aware of, and complies with, Environmental Health requirements. This has been fully

met and ensures the health of children. The provider was asked to ensure that children have an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice (gender and disability). Again this has been fully met and provides children with a range of resources which reflect the diversity of the group and helps them to build knowledge and understanding of others who are different to themselves. Finally to improve fire drill records and ensure written details in relation to time of the event are accurate and specific. This has not been met and continues to be an area for development. Consequently children's safety is not effectively protected or monitored.

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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On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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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):

- ensure that correct documentation is completed and sent to Ofsted with regard to changes in the management system, ensure that staff attendance and deployment are recorded
- ensure that documentation for risk assessments clearly relate and reflect any hazards and action those issues identified, ensure that all children regularly practise fire evacuation procedures
- review the complaints procedure and bring in line with changes in Regulation October 2005

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):

- continue to develop planning demonstrating clearly links between observations, assessments and planning for individual children, ensuring that activities are adapted for younger or less able children and extended for more able children (also applies to care)

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