

# Wapping Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119632
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 March 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Sarah Johnson / Deirdra Keating
<b>Setting Address</b>	Wapping Youth Club, Tench Street, LONDON, E1W 2QD
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 7481 2023
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Wapping Playgroup
<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 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?

Wapping Playgroup opened in 1980. It is a registered charity and is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the playgroup. It operates from a room within a youth centre in Wapping, East London. A maximum of 12 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open Monday to Thursday, during term time only. Sessions are from 09:15 to 11.45 and 12:30 to 15:00. Children have access to a nearby enclosed outdoor play park.

There are currently 18 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, five children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area and attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs three members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well because staff follow careful procedures and share a good range of information with parents. A good range of information regarding communicable diseases is displayed for parents to prevent the risk of cross-infection. Children are learning about health and hygiene practice through consistent routines such as washing their hands with anti-bacterial soap before snack time and after using the toilet. Colourful picture prompts displayed in the toilets show children effective hand washing routines. Children receive good care if they have an accident or become ill whilst at the setting. A member of staff has first aid training and a first aid kit is kept central to all activities. All written consents are in place and accidents and medication requirements are correctly documented and signed off by parents on collection.

Children's health and dietary needs are met because practitioners work well with parents and clearly identify any individual dietary requirements. Healthy and nutritious snacks are prepared in the kitchen where high standards are maintained by staff who have attended food hygiene training. Clear guidelines are proactively displayed in the kitchen to ensure food is stored and handled safely. Children enjoy wholemeal toast and freshly chopped fruit with milk or water. Snack is a social time with all the children sitting around two tables; they learn new skills such as pouring drinks and spreading butter onto their toast. Drinks are offered at snack time and are available on request, however, children cannot independently access the drinks as they are stored on a high unit. Children go outside to play in a small enclosed park that is close to the playgroup and accessible via a grassed area. This ensures they get exercise out in the fresh air, they run around and play ball games and team games in the secure play area.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a colourful, child-friendly environment that is well-maintained. Children's art work, photographs and posters create a welcoming environment. The layout comprises of one main room and kitchen with toilets situated down the corridor. Staff carefully take children to the toilet and escort them safely back into the room. Children use a good range of equipment which is safe, hygienic and provides sufficient challenge. Toys are stimulating and consequently children are interested to play with what is available. All equipment has been listed to ensure that it provides a balanced range of activities. A child-sized and colourful computer desk provides an appealing technology area and children use low-level furniture.

Children are cared for in a safe environment where staff take positive steps to minimise all risks. Daily safety checks ensure that all areas of the premises are suitable and ready for purpose. The premises are secure and arrival and departure times are managed safely and effectively by staff. Children regularly use the park where the staff have developed very good procedures to ensure that children are well protected from danger. They use appealing and child-friendly resources to ensure children walk safely. Staff carefully ensure that children are secure by locking the gates in the park on their arrival. Written consents are provided by parents and road safety is discussed with the children to help them understand the dangers.

Children are well protected from potential harm because staff are vigilant and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the protection of children. A safeguarding

policy underpins all practice and local contact numbers are detailed within the policy. Long serving staff know the children and families well and have attended specific training to ensure children's ongoing well-being is prioritised at all times.

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

The provision is good.

Children settle well into activities of their choice as they arrive and are encouraged to initiate their own play. Staff plan confidently using the 'Birth to three matters' framework and their knowledge and observations of children to provide activities that will help children develop and learn. The session timetable allows children to sustain their play and fully develop their imaginative ideas. Children enjoy freedom of movement and use the whole room as they transport resources from one area to another. Children who are unsure about group activities are supported very well by staff who help them play with an established group of children. Intuitive staff are very attentive to children's needs. A child who becomes upset is quickly observed and adults are effectively deployed to support them. The low numbers and small room enable staff to fully attend to children and be directly on-hand as minor problems occur. Children develop a strong sense of self through this positive interaction with adults. Children thoroughly enjoy washing up at the water tray, they use real materials and products to wash a plastic tea set. An effective key worker system enables staff to know children well and maintain very good working relationships with children and families.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have very good understanding of how children learn and are experienced in using the Foundation Stage guidance to plan for children's learning. Children benefit from a broad range of activities that are based loosely on meaningful themes such as 'homes and families', 'minibeasts' and 'journeys'. Staff work together to plan daily activities, identifying clear learning intentions and ensuring all six areas of learning are covered each week. Children are offered a good balance of adult-led activities and time to move around freely and initiate their own play. They are interested in the activities offered as staff use the children's individual interests and developmental needs as a starting point when planning. For example, when staff observe children's interest in playing with dolls, they respond by providing more role play resources to enable them to wash and care for the dolls. Children continue to make good progress towards the early learning goals because their key person makes effective use of regular observations to assess the next steps in each child's learning.

Staff use a good range of methods to support children in their learning. They talk to them about what they are doing, asking questions and taking advantage of spontaneous learning opportunities. For example, staff get fully involved when children play at making them drinks and food, encouraging them to reflect on their real-life experiences in their role play. Children are generally encouraged to make decisions about the activities that they would like to undertake. However, their ability to develop their independence and to self-select are not fully maximised as many of the resources are stored out of their reach or not presented in a way that fully promotes their interest. This particularly relates to their access to craft materials and the layout of the book area. A very good range of strategies are used to support children's behaviour, therefore helping to create an effective learning environment. For example, children learn to walk safely to the local park as they are encouraged to hold on to the side of the long soft toy crocodile. Children respond well to the pace of the sessions and are familiar with the routine. However, they are not always grouped appropriately to ensure they can all get involved

in shared activities. For example, some children lose interest during group story sessions as they struggle to see the small book and become distracted as they eat snack at the same time.

Children form good relationships with each other and happily engage in conversation with adults, confidently talking to them about what they are doing and involving them in their play. They are sensitive to the needs of their peers as they show concern for a child who is upset, softly asking them why they are unhappy and comforting them by offering them a nearby seat. Children are developing good levels of self-esteem as they share photos of themselves as babies and talk about their family life. They show increasing independence as they are encouraged to take responsibility for everyday tasks such as handing out the cups and pouring their own drinks at snack time. Children are developing their competencies in speaking, listening, reading and writing. They are working towards using writing as a means of recording and communicating. For example, they use a range of realistic resources such as diaries, notepads and envelopes which encourage them to practise their mark-making skills in their imaginative play. Children practise these skills further when painting freely with paintbrushes on the easel and making marks on the passports they have made. Children speak clearly when they contribute to group story sessions and some children show awareness of the listener as they wait their turn to speak.

Children enjoy opportunities to explore shape, size, measure and patterns through a variety of practical activities, which include exploring sand, water and construction materials. They use problem solving skills as they decide on the best way to join different shapes in order to represent a boat. Children can count reliably to 10 and beyond, and are beginning to recognise numerals. For example, they are encouraged to look at numerals as they stick their photograph on the number line to self-register. Children have opportunities to explore the concepts of addition and subtraction through fun activities. With help from staff and visual props, children begin to subtract as they sing the 'Five Green Bottles' song. Good opportunities are offered for children to explore the natural world around them through first hand experiences. They find out about living things and the environment during a nature walk in the local park, searching for minibeasts and talking about their natural lifecycles. Staff support children to use a mouse to control a simple programme on the computer and offer them opportunities to learn about the use of everyday technology such as telephones, cameras and a kettle.

Children are creative and enjoy exploring art, music and imaginative play. They have regular opportunities to make collages, paintings and models, mainly during planned adult-led activities. For example, they use their hands to make prints of spiders and fill plastic cups with dried pasta and rice to make musical instruments. They like to dress up and role play as they act out preparing meals and going to the shops. Children develop their skills when using small apparatus, tools and equipment through a wide range of physical activities. For example, they safely handle scissors during craft activities and carefully use a hammer to tap pins into boards. They refine their larger movements as they pretend to crawl like caterpillars and join in with the actions whilst singing the 'Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes' song.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children in the setting are valued and have an excellent sense of belonging. All children are included as staff promote a fully inclusive environment through objective evaluation of the settings policies and the impact they have on the children. Children's pictures are displayed on the walls giving a personal sense of belonging to each child. A notice board of photographs of the children and their families encourages children to talk about their home lives, helping them feel accepted and part of the community. The playgroup proactively recruits children from the

local community and invites them in for sessions which are carefully staffed to support new prospective families. Children gain an excellent sense of community through fundraising events that are organised by the dynamic staff team.

Parents with expertise and specific cultural knowledge are invited in to share their skills with the children, broadening their understanding of the wider world. A wide range of resources such as posters, role play toys and dressing up clothes include positive images and examples of diversity, expanding children's understanding. Different sized groups encourage children to socialise and build relationships with each other. Children are extremely helpful and show kindness to each other during activities offering to help and assist one another. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The playgroup has an extremely positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds and children with additional needs are welcomed into the playgroup. All staff have attended specific training providing them with extremely good knowledge and skills which they use to support individual children. They encourage children to play inclusively tailoring support skilfully to the needs of the individual children. Staff maximise on the support of other professionals extremely well, working closely to provide a focused approach. Clear and concise targets are set for children in close conjunction with parents. These are achievable, realistic and flexible, providing clear and agreed aims for children requiring additional support. Consequently, support is carefully planned for each child which comprehensively meets their individual needs and promotes effective equality of opportunity for all children.

Staff have proactively attended specific training and consistently use positive reinforcement to encourage children's good behaviour. Excellent use of praise and encouragement helps build children's self-esteem. The staff have realistic expectations of children's behaviour and use extremely well timed strategies and interventions. Children wanting to use the same resources are quickly given a timer and very good explanations about waiting for their turn. Skilled and sensitive staff always follow consistent strategies and have a few golden rules in order that children can understand and remember them. Children are given extremely clear and positive guidance from staff about where to put resources such as aprons and how to tidy up the toys. Consequently, children's behaviour is of a high standard and they show care and respect for their environment.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. The staff are fully committed to working very closely with parents to ensure their children are cared for fully in line with their wishes. The staff prioritise time at the beginning and end of sessions to talk to parents and they encourage parents to sign up to the 'park rota' so they can be actively involved during sessions. Parents receive highly informative written information about the setting including an attractive notice board displaying all the policies and procedures and information about the staff. Parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress whilst at the setting, ensuring children's well-being and development are fully promoted. For example, the curriculum planning is displayed prominently in the playroom and staff actively promote parent's involvement in children's assessment records. For example, parents are asked to highlight their children's starting points on a 'development flower', ensuring staff are familiar with children's individual needs from the beginning. Newsletters and notices are regularly used to inform parents of the main themes and skills children will be learning. For example, staff creatively design posters which raise parent's awareness of their children's physical development. Children's learning is enhanced as they are encouraged to borrow books to read with their families at home. Parents

speak very highly of the staff's extremely supportive and approachable manner and feel consistently well informed.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the effective organisation of their care. They are safeguarded because there are clear recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure all adults are suitable to be in contact with them. For example, accurate records are kept detailing the Criminal Records Bureau checks carried out for each member of staff and any students. Children receive good quality care because the small team of staff is suitably experienced, well qualified and supported effectively by the strong management committee. Children experience good levels of direct support as staff are well-deployed and the required ratios are consistently maintained. They are able to take part in safe outings on a regular basis as staff work well to foster the involvement of parents and students who provide extra support for children.

A good range of concisely written policies and procedures are in place and are effectively implemented in order to promote good outcomes for children. Daily attendance registers for staff and children are recorded in line with requirements, contributing positively to children's safety and well-being. Children are protected as all personal information relating to them is stored confidentially in secure filing cabinets.

The leadership and management is good. There is a clear vision for the provision of high quality early education, which is shared by the staff team. The manager and her deputy have formed a strong partnership and show a clear commitment to continual improvement. For example, they spend considerable time gathering evidence to support their progression through a quality assurance scheme and continuously fundraise to make improvements to the provision for children. Children benefit as the staff are reflective about what they provide. For example, weekly staff meetings are used to discuss strengths and areas for improvement for the playgroup. As result, staff are clear about the areas that they want to develop such as preparing for the introduction of the new Early Years Foundation Stage. They routinely participate in further training and have fostered strong links with advisors at the local authority, ensuring that children can continue to benefit from the new knowledge and good practice ideas they gain.

Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure that children make use of the hand washing and drying facilities available. This has been addressed and children do access the sink where they wash their hands. A recommendation was also made to ensure that the contact telephone numbers for the child protection team are readily available. These are now all detailed in the safeguarding policy with the correct details.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to look at different ways in which activities can be extended for the four-year-old children. An effective planning system has been developed which identifies children's individual stages of development and ensures appropriate opportunities are planned to extend their learning.

## 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):

- ensure that children have independent access to fresh drinking water.

### 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):

- improve opportunities for children to develop their independence and access toys and resources of their own choosing, with particular reference to craft resources and books
- ensure the grouping of children during adult-led activities offers children appropriate space and support to maximise their learning.

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)