

Rainbow Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127492
Inspection date	16 January 2008
Inspector	Beth Kingsland
Setting Address	149 St. Richards Road, Deal, Kent, CT14 9LD
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Registered person	Tracy Hawkes
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?

Rainbow Pre-school opened in 1993. It operates from the main hall of the Godric Centre in Deal. There is a fully fenced outdoor play area. The Pre-school serves the local area.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The Pre-school opens five mornings and Tuesday and Thursday afternoons, a week term time only. Sessions last from 09:00 to 12:00 and 12:30 to 15:00 for the afternoon sessions.

There are currently 41 children on roll. This includes 24 funded children. Children attend a variety of sessions each week.

There are eight time staff working with the children, of these. Over half the staff hold an early years qualification to NVQ level 2 or 3.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is well maintained in the event of an accident as practitioners have relevant first aid training and know how to deal with accidents effectively. Secure procedures are in place to administer medication and record details sharing this information effectively with parents. Written information is obtained relating to children's medical history and parents provide written consent for their child to receive medical treatment, which helps promote their health in an emergency situation. Children begin to gain a good understanding of the importance of healthy eating because this is promoted across the pre-school through discussions and activities linked to topics. They talk about different foods recognising those that help their body to grow and taste a wide variety of fruits and vegetables at snack times.

Children gain an appropriate awareness of how to look after their bodies and talk about why it is important to wash their hands before eating. They are reminded to do this by practitioners. However, this is not fully promoted at snack time, as children do not follow hand washing routines. Staff provide hand gel, therefore children do not learn about the importance of washing their hands before they eat. They stay healthy because practitioners implement effective health and hygiene procedures ensuring good standards of hygiene are maintained across the pre-school. For example, they wipe tables and changing mats using anti bacterial spray and wear disposable gloves when changing children's nappies.

Children have opportunities to develop their physical skills and gain in confidence using a range of equipment. Children play with bats and balls and confidently balance on beams. They show skills in riding a range of different sized bicycles, cars and scooters. The children have access to an enclosed outside play area, which contains a range of equipment. However, children only have access in clement weather.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is promoted throughout the pre-school because practitioners have a good awareness of safety issues and ensure risks and hazards are minimised within the setting. Consequently, children are able to move around the pre-school freely. They begin to gain an understanding about how to keep themselves safe talking about the need to handle scissors correctly. Plug sockets are inaccessible to children and there are very effective procedures in place to protect children from unwanted visitors. There is an established procedure for emergency evacuation. However, staff do not ensure that fire doors are fully operational. Therefore, in the event of an emergency children's safety could be compromised.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment, which is warm, welcoming and inviting to both children and their parents. Children have use of a good range of equipment, furniture and play resources, although this is not used to its full potential across the session. Suitable procedures are in place to ensure this is clean, safe and well maintained.

Children are safeguarded from harm because practitioners have a good knowledge of how to implement pre-school and local safeguarding procedures. They recognise their role with regards to protecting children in their care, and ensure parents are informed of this as part of the

registration process. Systems to record staff, children and visitors to and from pre-school are secure, which helps to keep children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are extremely happy and settled in the pre-school provision. They have a wonderful time and benefit from the secure, homely and loving environment. Young children thrive because practitioners have a secure knowledge of child development and recognise how young children learn most effectively. Good interaction between practitioners and children ensures they develop a strong sense of self assurance and belonging to the setting. They put their arms out to practitioners climbing onto their laps for a cuddle and a story. Relationships are well enhanced because of the effective implementation of a key worker system, which helps to develop strong bonds between practitioners, children and their parents.

Staff observe and monitor children's individual development. However, as yet, this information is not effectively used to guide their planning and is not linked to the Birth to three matters framework to ensure that experiences offered are tailored to individual children's needs.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make sound progress because practitioners know their capabilities extremely well and recognise how young children learn effectively. The organisation of the day provides opportunities for children to engage in self chosen play, as well as spending time in small groups. Consequently, they play an active role in their learning and are engrossed in their play. Children enjoy building models from a range of construction materials and negotiate with their peers how they should fix the train track together. They are encouraged to solve their own problems, for example around size and shape, when completing jigsaw puzzles, and recognise and compare different shapes.

Children are encouraged to be independent, learning to dress and undress for physical activities, and helping to prepare snack. They count confidently and begin to compare numbers and have many opportunities to recognise letters and words around their classrooms. Children play number games with practitioners, which develops their understanding of mathematical concepts.

Children develop very good communication skills and use a rich range of vocabulary to describe what they are doing. Practitioners are extremely effective in the way in which they introduce new vocabulary to children through play and encourage them to sound out letters and sounds when they attempt to write their names on their work.

Children have opportunities to select from a range of books. However, their organisation does not allow children to select freely, as the majority of books are piled on top of each other. The children join in with group story sessions. However, due to the organisation of the session, children are told to listen to the story in preference to having independent choice. As a result, children become restless.

Children have access to a good range of resources to promote their investigative skills. For example, children observed how ice melts and discussed how igloos are made, using sugar cubes to construct their own models. Children learn about their home and family life. However, opportunities for children to develop an awareness of their local community are limited.

Practitioner's support children's imaginative play well, providing them with a range of opportunities for role and free play. They provide resources, which help to stimulate children's imagined ideas, such as the shop, home corner and travel agents. Children scream with delight pretending to be booking 'holidays' and participate enthusiastically in singing and music sessions. They enjoy creative activities and use a range of media, textiles and materials, such as sand, wet spaghetti, custard and shaving foam.

Children engage in a good range of planned activities and experiences, although the system for planning is not fully developed. Staff know children's abilities and use effective teaching techniques to help support their individual learning. However, the system for planning and assessment is not sufficiently secure to ensure children receive sufficient challenge throughout the session. Although staff highlight children's next steps in learning, this information is not used to inform the planning of activities. Practitioners do not use their knowledge of individual children to help plan future learning experiences and there are currently no links between planning and assessment. Whilst many aspects of teaching are very good, systems to ensure children are able to achieve their individual potential are not fully developed.

Children are extremely confident with the daily routine and begin to develop their understanding of time. The pre-school have a very good range of resources and equipment and children have access to this across each term because it is built into their planning. However, the organisation of the session and accessibility of some resources impacts on children's ability to access the full range of activities and equipment. Consequently, although children are happy, opportunities to fully extend their learning potential are not effectively promoted.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children develop high levels of self assurance and confidence because they are cared for by practitioners who know them extremely well. Their behaviour is generally good and they know what is expected of them. However, at times, children become over enthusiastic within their physical play and do not receive sufficient guidance from staff. Children talk about why it is important to look after their toys as they help pack away, which helps develop their sense of responsibility within the pre-school.

Children gain an understanding about themselves and others through discussions with practitioners, stories and playing with equipment reflecting diversity. Children are introduced to a range of traditions and customs, and special events and cultural festivals are incorporated into the planning. They talk about their families, recognising the differences and similarities between their home life and how other people live. Children increase their awareness of the wider world through activities linked to topics. However, they have fewer opportunities to learn about their local community and surrounding area.

The pre-school promotes a fully inclusive environment and has very strong systems to support those children with additional needs, ensuring progress is made and consistent strategies are implemented. Every child is treated and valued as an individual. As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children settle well and secure procedures are in place to obtain information about children's individual routines, which helps ensure consistency between home and pre-school. Children are well supported by practitioner's who are sensitive towards their needs and this support is extended to the whole family. Children enjoy their time at pre-school because secure links are

in place between home and the setting and friendly informal relationships are established between parents and practitioners. Parents are well informed about pre-school policies and procedures. Policies are in place to record and act on any complaints received by parents.

The partnerships with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are helped to understand how their child learns through play as weekly play plans are displayed and parents receive monthly newsletters advising them about topics and activities their child will be involved in. They receive ongoing information about their child's achievements through informal daily discussion. Parents are aware of their children's key workers and procedures for assessment. However, systems to share evidence and discuss children's progress towards the early learning goals are not fully developed.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit because practitioners work extremely well as a team and share the same vision. Secure systems are implemented to ensure communication takes place between practitioners, for example through formal meetings and daily discussions. Children's care and learning is enhanced because practitioners have a good understanding about child development and have appropriate qualifications and experience. However, procedures are not in place to recruit, appoint and induct new practitioners. The current system used is not robust or sufficiently rigorous to ensure children are fully protected. For example, a new member of staff was appointed without a post being advertised and with no interview or references being taken. This is a breach of regulation.

Leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. Practitioners have an overall understanding about the Foundation Stage curriculum and recognise the links between children's play, planned experiences and the areas of learning. However, their understanding of the stepping stones and how to use these to promote learning across all aspects of the session are not fully developed. Practitioners meet regularly to plan activities linked to pre-school topics. However, staff fail to draw their observations of children's next steps into the planning of the curriculum.

Procedures are not in place to evaluate the effectiveness of daily session. As a result, the daily programme is not monitored. This results in weaknesses in parts of the session. For example, some children ride bikes for the long periods of time, while the latter part of the session is spent with children all joined together, not having access to any equipment and being insufficiently supported by staff. This results in children becoming restless and having to wait for long periods of time.

Documentation is appropriately maintained and the required records are in place. Secure systems are in place to maintain confidentiality storing records securely, and effective procedures are implemented to share most of the documentation with parents.

Staff performance and development is reviewed on a regular basis and training is actively encouraged, which impacts on the experiences offered to children. The staff are dedicated to the pre-school and have developed a strong bond with the children. As a result, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the pre-school was asked to, ensure all accident recording procedures are followed, develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and review complaints procedures. Progress has been satisfactory. Accident records are completed accurately and staff have developed their knowledge of child protection issues. Parents are fully informed of the procedures for complaints.

At the last education inspection the pre-school were asked to, improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, use assessment to identify children's next steps, ensure a system is in place to regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the setting and provide opportunities for parents to learn about the full range of the activities. Progress has been satisfactory. Staff show an understanding of how children learn, and provide a range of experiences that children enjoy. Staff assess children's progress and identify children's next steps. However, this is not used to inform the planning of activities. Systems are not yet in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the setting. Parents receive good opportunities to learn about the full range of activities.

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

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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):

- ensure children are introduced to healthy hand washing procedures throughout the session
- risk assess the fire doors to ensure they are fully operational at all times
- ensure there are vigorous and robust recruiting procedures in place

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):

- review the pace and routine of the session to ensure children receive a broad and balanced range of activities(this also applies to care)
- review the organisation of the session to ensure children are suitably supported; are not left waiting and have access to suitable resources throughout the whole session(this also applies to care)
- continue to make effective use of assessment to identify children's next steps in learning and to inform the planning of activities

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