

Daisy Chain

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	128461
Inspection date	16 November 2007
Inspector	Angela Jackson
Setting Address	Hermon Hill, Wanstead, London, E11 2AR
Telephone number	0208 530 1230
E-mail	
Registered person	The Committee of Daisy Chain Pre-School
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 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?

Daisy Chain Pre school has been registered since 1991 and is run by an elected parent management committee. The group operates from Wanstead Methodist church hall, close to the High Street, and serves children from the local urban area. Children have access to two halls, two toilet areas and an enclosed, hard surfaced, outside play area. The group operates for four days a week in the large main hall of the church and on Mondays uses a separate small hall. They operate term time only, morning sessions from 9:15 to 11:45.

There are currently 35 children aged from two to under five years old on roll. They attend various sessions. The group currently supports six funded three-year-olds.

There are six staff, including the manager, working directly with children. All staff have childcare work experience, four have Level 3 qualifications in early years childcare and education and one staff member is currently working towards the NVQ Level 3 qualification. The group is a member of the Pre-school Alliance. They receive support from the Local Authority Early Years Pedagogy and Advisory team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for, and their good health promoted, by staff who provide for individual needs and preferences in a relaxed and inviting environment. The toilet areas are chilly but staff have taken this into account and made good arrangements to minimise the number of times children go there to wash hands by having a low level sink unit for use in the hall. Children are learning about how their body works and ways to protect and keep themselves, healthy. They ask staff to take them to the toilet and wash and dry their hands at the basin, where a booster step, liquid soap and paper towels are provided. Nappy changing is done in the disabled toilet and there is a clear nappy changing procedure displayed on the wall in that area.

There is a good procedure in place for notifying parents and carers when children injure themselves or are given first aid. More than half the staff have an up to date first aid qualification and the well stocked first aid kit is readily available to ensure children have immediate access to treatment. In the event of a more serious incident, parents give permission at the outset, for staff to seek emergency medical treatment in their absence thereby minimising any delay in obtaining professional help.

Fresh fruit is provided for children by parents. It is prepared in the clean kitchen area where good hygiene practices are followed by parents and staff. The procedures established by the member of staff responsible for food safety, are clearly written and displayed in the kitchen. Tables are wiped down before use and the risk of sickness in children is minimised further by children taking care to wash and dry their hands before sitting down to eat. Staff are aware of children's allergies and preferences as parents provide this information on the registration forms. Children choose from a wide selection of fruits such as kiwi, banana, apples and oranges and staff serve them from a platter. Milk and water are offered and children are asked if they want to help pour this for themselves. Children have access to a jug of water throughout the session to avoid risk of dehydration. This encourages self-help skills and independence.

Access to toys and equipment that provide children with opportunities to develop large muscles and coordination, is available throughout the session. Indoors, in the centre of the hall, large scale equipment such as soft climbing cubes are built up to form different levels on which to practise balance and control. Children go outside to play year round. There are bikes and scooters available along with smaller toys and resources that are changed regularly to maintain interest and encourage development and skills in several areas. For example, hoops to wriggle their bodies round or to roll, and skittles to practise eye to hand coordination and awareness of space and distance. On cold days children put on their hats and coats for the exercise in the fresh air. Their outdoor clothes are hung on hooks on a rail close to the external door. This gives them easy access to their belongings on their way out. However, on their return, they become frustrated with looking for the correct hook as the labels are small and difficult to identify. As a result, they rely on adults hanging up their clothes for them and miss the opportunity to take responsibility for looking after themselves.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff provide a warm and secure environment and that helps children and parents feel welcome. The areas used by children are spacious and organised to good effect, allowing children to

move freely and safely between the tables and equipment. Children quickly settle to routines and develop confidence and self-sufficiency in choosing from the wide range of activities set up for them. The hall layout is the same each day to help children become familiar with knowing where to find what they want and help them feel secure. There are ample resources including a good number of suitably sized chairs and tables. These are clean and kept in good repair. Effective risk assessments are carried out regularly. Remedial action is prompt and designed to eliminate dangers to children. For example, all bulbs in the garden area have been dug up and replaced with non-poisonous plants.

Children regularly practise emergency evacuation procedures and staff actively seek advice, and act upon recommendations, from fire officers. There is an outings policy that is followed when children are taken on visits, such as to the local library. Children learn about road safety during the year and staff ensure equipment such as a mobile telephone and first aid kit, are taken out with them. This allows immediate access to emergency services or parents, in the event of an accident or incident. Children are supervised at all times by staff or adults that have been vetted as suitable.

Children are further safeguarded as staff have good understanding and knowledge of child protection. They are aware of signs of abuse and how to record and refer concerns to the relevant agencies or organisations.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children participate in a number of exciting activities throughout the course of the morning. They move around keenly, making choices from options such as painting, dough making and racing or navigating remote control cars. There are many opportunities for children to explore their feelings and make sense of everyday life. They make up games and scenarios together in the home corner such as cooking and caring for families or booking holidays in a travel agency. Boys and girls thoroughly enjoy dressing up and, during the course of a morning may change from being super hero to princess. Children benefit from the extensive, innovative, and varied, range of activities planned for them over the course of the year. Session plans are evaluated and modified in order to meet individual children's needs and match the interests and abilities of different age groups and abilities. Children's achievements are highly valued as can be seen from the colourful displays of individual and group, artwork arranged around the hall. The comfortable book corner provides children with a quiet area for relaxation and enjoyment. They sit back against the cosy bean bags, legs crossed, reading a good book or sit and share favourites with staff and friends. A love of books is further promoted just before home time when they come together and sit captivated as they are read stories made real by staff's excellent use of tone and expression.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. There is a wide range of imaginative activities planned and organised to develop skills and understanding in each of the six areas of learning. For example, children learn about mathematical concepts such as weight and measurement. They feel and discuss how heavy a spoon is and measure and compare the width of a water tray to the width of the door to see if the tray will go through. In addition to focused activities such as these, cross curricular work, such as, growing beans in the garden, promote children's knowledge and understanding of the natural world as well as mathematical and social skills. They see beans sprout and get taller and later form flowers that develop into beans. Children

tend the plants, measure them regularly until they are ready to be picked, then prepare them for cooking. There is shared pride in having produced food they all eat and enjoy together.

Each day, children are given opportunities to explore properties of matter and to see how changes such as adding water or heat affect density or turn solids into liquids. For example, they experiment by adding yellow coloured water to dry white flour and watch as it turns into yellow dough that can be manipulated, flattened and cut into solid shapes. Children investigate the different textures by rubbing the flour between their fingers and then prodding and rolling it as it becomes sticky and compact. They watch their fingers disappear into the dough and the hole left when they pull their fingers back out. Language used by staff to describe the changes is limited to everyday words and, as a result, children are not challenged to consider new words and to expand their vocabulary. Their creative development is extended by use of paints and chalks and in music and song. There is a good range of musical instruments and children listen as tapes are played for dance and movement.

Children see and use, mark making for many purposes. For example, during free play time there are pencils, crayons, paper and note pads for children to use to make shopping lists and to take messages. They use telephone books and appointment diaries when they have the travel agent or hairdresser business set up for role play. Children recognise their names and find the correct name label when they sit down for fruit. They are learning to write their names and beginning to want to write it on their work, for themselves. Interest in books is promoted through stories and visits to the library.

Staff have good understanding of children's achievements and interests based on information from parents and through informal assessments. Each child has a key worker who meets parents on a regular basis and who is the initial point of contact. Next steps for each child are identified and they are supported according to individual need, as they make progress towards the early learning goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered because the setting's policies are used to excellent effect to ensure a fully inclusive environment where individuals are respected for themselves. A wide range of resources such as books, dressing up clothes, posters and play people, promote children's understanding of the diversity of the local community and the needs of others. Parents are encouraged to share information about their backgrounds and to be actively involved in teaching children about the customs of other nations and groups. Planned activities include learning about festivals and events celebrated within different faiths. For example, children brought in food for harvest festival and took it into the church and for Eid they decorated their hands. For the Jewish festival of Sukka, children visited the local synagogue to find out at first hand, about Jewish traditions and celebrations. This visit provided a foundation for children to learn about how and why a Sukkot is built. Staff are committed to providing a high level of care and support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and to make the premises suitable and accessible to all. For example, arrangements are being made to have the steps leading to the outside play area, replaced with a ramp and handrail. Staff are proactive in seeking to work with parents and other professionals to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and have very good systems in place for assessing and monitoring progress towards identified targets.

Children are well behaved and cooperative. They are learning to share and to take turns and are developing excellent awareness of what is right and wrong. They respond promptly to staff requests to tidy up or to help others and do so confidently and good naturedly. Staff praise and encourage children and deal consistently and fairly with any concerns or issues. This helps children to develop a sense of justice which underpins the warm and friendly atmosphere within the setting. Parents are invited to be fully involved in the management and work of the pre school. They form most of the committee and there is a rota for helping out with fruit preparation for the morning snack. Parent's views are taken into account as they are regularly asked to complete a questionnaire. The comments and suggestions made in response to the questionnaire are discussed and considered by staff and often result in action and improvements, such as the notice board being tidied and organised so that information is more easily accessible.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. A new system has recently been introduced for parents to provide comprehensive information about children's skills and abilities before they start. This is in addition to the information already asked about children's needs and preferences, and enables staff to form a full and clear picture of where a child is, in relation to the early learning goals. Used with staff's own assessments carried out at intervals throughout the term, enable the setting's plans to be adapted and modified according to individual need. Examples of children's work, often selected by children themselves, are collated in a book and shared with parents as a basis of discussion for agreeing new targets. In this way, parents and staff are working together for the benefit of children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children benefit from the rigorous recruitment procedures in place that ensure children are cared for by fully committed, experienced and trained staff all of whom, bar one, is either qualified to level three or else working towards that qualification. The appraisal system identifies staff training requirements such as first aid and areas specific to individual professional development. This enables staff to be deployed effectively so as to make optimum use of their skills and expertise in providing worthwhile experiences for all children. The manager successfully maintains minimum adult:children ratios at all times by organising staff and space to allow children to play in any one of a number of areas of their choosing, at any time. Children are closely supervised at all times by staff who have been through an enhanced vetting process.

The setting's policies and procedures are comprehensive and clear. They are in compliance with regulations and reviewed annually. The manager efficiently organises and stores all documentation and has high regard for confidentiality. There is a confidentiality policy in place that all staff, including students, are expected to honour in order to safeguard and protect children. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The manager and her deputy lead by example and provide good role models for staff. There is a positive team spirit with staff being valued for the contribution they make to children's learning and care. Individually, and then as a team, staff look at their own practice, and that of the setting, to identify areas for improvement. This system of self evaluation is proving effective as the group makes steady progress towards its own goals and aspirations. Staff meet regularly to update each other and to discuss plans. They know to what extent children are learning and developing and use the shared information to advise parents of progress made. Parents trust the staff and praise their efforts in providing a happy environment in which children learn to confidently make choices and to try new experiences for themselves.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the setting has devised and developed policies for uncollected and lost children, child protection and complaints. All policies and procedures are readily available and accessible to parents within the setting. Regular observations and assessments of children are recorded and used to ensure children make progress towards the early learning goals. These improvements have been made as a result of recommendations made at the last inspection.

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):

- encourage children to take responsibility for their belongings by providing easily identifiable labels for their coat hooks

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 opportunities to extend children's vocabulary across all areas of 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