

# Wanstead Park Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	128491
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Natasha Parsons
<b>Setting Address</b>	Park Road, London, E12 5HQ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Wanstead Park 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 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?

Wanstead Park Playgroup is run by a management committee of parents. It opened in 1978 and operates from a large room at St Gabriel's Church Hall. It is situated in a residential area in Aldersbrook, Wanstead, in the London Borough of Redbridge. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.15 to 11.45, during term time. Children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 27 children aged from two to under five years on roll, of these six children receive funding for nursery education. Children live in the locality. The playgroup currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and children with English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs five staff. The manager and all staff, except for one, have appropriate early years qualifications.

The setting receives support from a mentor from the local authority and is a member the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The playgroup operates in appropriately maintained and clean premises, which is shared with other users. The hall is large, ventilated and has natural and artificial lighting. Children benefit from the low level toilets and hand basins. They learn about satisfactory hygiene practices when they wash their hands after using the toilet with the liquid soap and dry their hands with the paper towels. However, the current practise of using a communal bowl of water for hand washing before snack time and after finishing creative activities, does not protect children from the spread of germs.

Children are learning about the value of healthy living when they are provided with healthy foods at snack time, for example apples and pears. In addition, the community dentist visits the group to talk about healthy eating, supported with a puppet show, which children enjoy. Posters show images of fruit and vegetables and remind children of the importance of healthy eating.

Children are protected as a member of staff has appropriate first aid training. Another has completed food hygiene training and uses this knowledge when preparing snacks for children. The playgroup does not care for unwell children, and only administers medication for allergy related conditions. They obtain the required parental consent and undertake training if needed. Accidents and incidents are appropriately recorded, and parental consent has been obtained for the seeking of emergency medical attention.

Children enjoy jumping and balancing on the foam circles, as they dance to music. Children develop their physical skills and competence when they play on the slide, rockers, tunnel and stepping stones. They have access to a good sized, mainly grassed garden, which is equipped with a slide and sand and water activities. This area is used weather permitting.

Snack time is a relaxed occasion, when children have the opportunity to choose a drink and snack. They sit in small groups and chat with each other and staff. Children are protected as staff are aware of children's dietary and allergy needs, these are recorded and displayed for reference. Children benefit from the healthy, freshly prepared food provided. However, children's independence skills are not promoted as staff pour their drinks and place food into bowls for them.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The playgroup is sited in a safe, maintained and secure church building. Staff follow appropriate action to ensure children remain safe as they arrive and leave the building. As the kitchen is accessible, staff appropriately supervise children to ensure their safety. Children play in a secure and enclosed garden, and benefit from the setting's commitment to keep this area appropriately maintained and clear of rubbish, ensuring it is safe. Children, staff and visitors' registers are appropriately maintained

Measures in place ensure children remain safe. The front door is appropriately secured once the session is in operation, the stage is inaccessible, and water and radiator temperatures are regulated. The supervisor completes informal daily risk assessments before the session begins and old and broken equipment is replaced. A comprehensive safety policy is in place and includes

the checking of fire exits to ensure they are not blocked. Fire prevention recommendations are met including easily identifiable fire exits and a fire blanket appropriately sited. Children are protected when regular fire and emergency escape plans are practised and recorded.

Written information about the collection of children informs parents of the importance of contacting the playgroup if they are going to be late, and alternative contact numbers are recorded on children's information forms. However, while staff know what action to take if a child became lost or missing, there is no written policy for staff to follow.

Children are safeguarded as there is a comprehensive child protection policy. There are appropriate systems in place to record concerns and incidents, and there is an appointed child protection officer who has completed relevant training. Staff have the details of the local safeguarding team whom they discuss and share child protection concerns with. In addition, the setting are aware of the action to take should an allegation be made against a staff member.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy within the setting and their confidence develops with adult support. Unsettled children are appropriately managed and are encouraged to participate in activities when they feel comfortable to do so. Staff work well as a team and ensure sessions run smoothly. They work hard to overcome the difficulties the storage and access to the garden presents. Staff challenge existing practises and try new things for example, ways to develop children's independence skills. Activities provided are appropriately sited. They are packed away only at the end of the session to minimise disruption and enable children to play for long periods of time undisturbed. The atmosphere is calm and relaxed and children move freely about the setting. Child-led play enables children to self select and explore activities independently. For example, children spend time exploring glue, they paint it onto plastic containers, pass it between containers and explore its smell.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff team are organised. They appropriately prepare for the arrival of the children and welcome both children and parents into the group. Staff plan for children's time within the setting using a weekly curriculum plan that covers the six areas of learning based on themes, although some aspects are not given sufficient emphasis. Children are learning about a variety of topics for example, summer, spring and people who help us. Staff take time to observe new children when they join the group to get to know them. They operate a key worker system and regularly complete on-going observations of children's progress. These observations are shared with parents and help staff plan for children's development by adapting activity plans to mainly meet children's needs.

Children enjoy their time at the setting and benefit from the relaxed and calm atmosphere. They move between activities and the snack table, which is available for most of the session. They play both alongside their peers and co-operatively when they work together to take food from the oven in the home corner. Adults support and help to initiate play when for example, they talk to children about making sandwiches and the ingredients required to make cookies. Children's independence skills are not fully promoted as they do not pour their own drinks, serve their own snack, or select their own activities.

Children develop their physical skills when they use equipment to balance and jump, and when they move in time to music. An enclosed garden enables children to use climbing frames, rockers and bikes. Children develop their finer motor skills when they thread cotton reels, and use their fingers to illustrate actions in rhymes for example 'Incy Wincy Spider'.

Children practise mark making as they play in the post office, fill out invoices in the builders yard, and prescriptions at the doctors and vets. Children learn that print carries meaning when they select their name card as they arrive, from the low level posters displayed in the book corner and large text in the reading books. However, opportunities for children to be exposed to the written word on display in their environment is restricted by the limited display space available. Children develop an awareness of number when they sing along to rhymes such as 'Five Current Buns', and count the number of frogs in the water tray.

Children enjoy time working in large groups when they sing, share experiences and listen to stories. They have daily opportunities to experience creative play when they use paints, chalk, play dough, modelling materials and glue. An appropriately equipped home corner is also used as a doctor's and veterinary surgery. However, there are limited opportunities for children to use information and communication technology to support their learning and develop their skills.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing an awareness of a variety of religious festivals when they celebrate Eid, Chinese New Year and Christmas. A range of resources including books, puzzles, puppets and dressing up clothes help children to develop a positive awareness of diversity. Children's cultural and religious dietary needs are met. An appropriate equal opportunities policy, which parents receive a copy of, outlines the playgroup's commitment to promote equality. It contains information about admissions, festivals and resources. It reinforces that anti-discriminatory language or behaviour is unacceptable and is not tolerated within the playgroup.

Children benefit from the playgroup's commitment to offer an inclusive environment for all. Staff support children in the group and complete training so they can meet children's individual needs. An appropriate policy outlines the playgroups practices and children benefit from being supported, observed and their needs planned for.

Children learn about right and wrong when they are reminded that they need to share, and when a member of staff reminds children, with humour, to make her wet with the water 'is not nice'. Children behave well because they are occupied. They are influenced by staff who act as good role models and are courteous and considerate to each other. Staff support children when they work at their level, the atmosphere is calm and relaxed. Children benefit from staff's interaction when dealing with conflicts when they are encouraged to talk through difficulties and reach a solution. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents remain informed about their children's progress through regular verbal and written feedback, staff share their observations and involve parents in the planning for their children's development within the group. Parents are provided with a welcome leaflet about the group which contains appropriate information for example a policy statement, settling-in, fees, fun fund, collection of children and a daily timetable of activities.

The playgroup is run by a management committee made up of parents, who are actively involved and meet regularly. Parents make positive comments and value the work the playgroup does with their children within the community. Staff provide regular feedback to parents and have recently introduced parent consultation meetings. They have relevant policies and procedures for parents and a notice board is used to display information. Children are settled according to their individual needs and are assigned a key worker to support them. Children who become distressed are appropriately supported and offered choices, parents are consulted and reassured by staff.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The playgroup is a well established community based group. The staff team are committed to the group continuing, and staff have taken on management roles to ensure the group can continue to function. A parents' management committee is in place, which meets on a regular basis, actively fund raises and supports the group and staff team. Staff are appropriately qualified and vetted, and sufficient staff to children ratios are maintained. Staff have team meetings each term, when they are given opportunities to discuss and raise issues and are provided with on-going support in their roles.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager has appropriate aims for the playgroup, ensuring that children are prepared to go into school. Staff plan and provide play activities and experiences to support children's learning, enabling them to make satisfactory progress. Provision is monitored, for example, plans are in place to extend the home corner and replace the existing climbing frames. Staff keep records and share these with parents. Staff have opportunities to develop their knowledge through relevant training, for example, staff are provided with training opportunities to develop their knowledge of the Foundation Stage, the stepping stones and how children progress. In addition, training undertaken in effective communication influences staff's understanding of the value of work sheets and that children's early writing skills can be developed in more effective and meaningful ways. Unqualified staff are encouraged to complete professional training.

The playgroup has most of the required policies and procedures, however there is no lost or missing child policy. This is a breach of regulations. The playgroup reviews its policies and procedures to ensure they reflect the groups practices. Staff are aware of the groups policies and procedures. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the time of the last care inspection the playgroup was asked to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures. Children are now safeguarded as the supervisor has attended appropriate training and a comprehensive child protection procedures are available. Staff have sufficient knowledge overall.

In addition, the playgroup was asked to locate fire fighting equipment suitably. A fire blanket and extinguishers are now suitably placed. They were also asked to risk assess the premises. Staff now follow an informal procedure when they conduct a daily risk assessment to ensure the building is safe and suitable. These steps enhance children's safety. The playgroup was also asked to ensure nappy changing facilities met appropriate standards. Nappies are now changed in a hygienic and safe manner, and are appropriately disposed of, protecting children's health.

At the last nursery education inspection, the playgroup was asked to increase children's opportunities to develop their calculation and problem solving. Children now have access to a designated area for maths where they have opportunities to develop these skills. They were also asked to provide additional challenge in design and construction. Children have access to a satisfactory range of materials that develop these skills. In addition, the playgroup were asked to involve parents in their children's learning and development. Staff now share observations and information with parents about their children's learning and development.

### **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 further action in order to meet 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 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):

- review current hand washing practises, at snack time and after children have participated in creative activities to ensure the spread of germs is minimised
- develop and implement a procedure should a child be missing or lost.

#### **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):

- increase opportunities for children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world, with particular regard to the use of information and communication technology
- provide sufficient opportunities for children to develop their independence and make choices.

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)