

Munchkins (TC) Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY258434
Inspection date	12 February 2008
Inspector	Lorraine Wardlaw
Setting Address	Teviot Centre, Wyvis Street, London, E14 6QD
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	The Trustees of Munchkins TC Playgroup
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Munchkins Playgroup opened in 2001 and is situated in a self contained play room at one end of the Teviot Community Centre in Poplar in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets. The playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee and grant aided by Sure Start. Children have exclusive use of the play room during opening times and a secure outdoor play area. The playgroup opens from 09:00-11:30, Monday to Friday, during term time and can provide sessional care for 20 children aged from two years to five years. Currently the playgroup has 16 children on roll all of whom receive funding for nursery education. Most children attending the playgroup are from the local community. The group is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and who speak English as an additional language. The committee employs a play leader and bi-lingual deputy to work with the children. Both the play leader and deputy are qualified to National Vocational level 3 in pre-school practice.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children's health is at risk because staff do not have a secure understanding of the medication procedure, consent is not sought from parents to give medicines and a medication record is not maintained, both of which shows a breach of regulation. Policies on the medication procedure written by the registered person are confusing and unclear. Although, there is a first aider available on the school site across the road, neither of the staff hold a current first aid certificate which has a further impact on the children's health. Children's accidents are recorded appropriately by the staff. Children learn good hygiene routines; they independently wash their hands at the low level sink in the playroom using soap and water before they eat, and are encouraged by the staff to independently select a tissue to blow their nose. Children's nutritional needs are met well; children enjoy a good variety of healthy snacks mid way through the session. For example, they eat chopped carrot, cucumber, tomato and cheese with their cheesy biscuits and a small yogurt. They can choose from milk or water to drink, but fresh drinking water is not available to children throughout the session. Children enjoy daily exercise outside in the fresh air where they can develop their physical skills. They pedal three wheeled bikes skilfully around the soft play surface, crawl through the colourful caterpillar and are able to confidently use the stepping stones the staff have set up. However, there is less emphasis by staff to develop children's fine motor skills by providing a variety of tools for children to use such as scissors during a craft activity or spoons to select their vegetables during snack time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Although the premises are safe and secure for children, staff have not put into place basic safety procedures to protect children. A fire drill has not been carried out with staff and children for a couple of years and the setting does not keep a visitors book to monitor who is present at the setting on a daily basis. The management committee are not all fully checked; some have outstanding criminal record bureau checks, because the committee are not vigilant enough to ensure checks are completed in a timely fashion which puts children at risk. Children have the use of safe, good quality resources, equipment and furniture which are colourful and inviting to them; these are regularly cleaned and checked by staff. Children are able to appreciate their art work because staff display it on low level display boards such as the shapes they decorated. Children are encouraged to think about how they can keep themselves safe during their play. For example, they are told by the staff not to run inside in case they fall over and are encouraged to put the books away that they have finished looking at to prevent tripping hazards. Children are adequately protected from possible abuse because staff are aware of the safeguarding children procedure and can seek out more experienced staff for advice. However, they have not undertaken up-to-date training in this area of their work, the child protection policy has not been updated and the setting does not record existing injuries to children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children happily settle at the playgroup; they are eager to come in each morning and choose from the play activities laid out for them. Some seek out their friends to play with and talk confidently to staff who are interested in what they say and who respond sympathetically to their needs. For example, children excitedly go into the role play area, dress up and pretend to

make meals taking them round to the adults in the room. They complete inset puzzles, draw at the easel with pens or 'wash up' in the water trough. Children have fun with the adults as they play 'hide and seek' in the outside play area; they laugh together and learn the names of those children in the group as the member of staff pretends not to see everyone.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals because staff are familiar with the Foundation Stage curriculum and offer a practical, learn through play environment. Overall, they interact with children well encouraging their learning and development across most of the six areas of learning, but staff's knowledge of some of the aspects is not very secure, which inhibits children's progress. Staff make observations of children's capabilities, but they are not confident about knowing and planning the next steps for children's learning or using the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance as a teaching tool. Written planning of the curriculum has been recently changed by the early years advisors, and as a consequence staff are not, as yet, fully confident in its implementation. They are receiving guidance in this area of teaching.

Children engage in conversations with others and are developing sound communication skills. Some talk with confidence to the inspector and other quieter children are encouraged to speak to the staff when they discuss a book they are looking at or to name their favourite food during the paper plate activity. Staff mainly ask open ended questions which develops children's thinking skills and they introduce vocabulary such as 'aubergine' and 'lambs' during their play activities. Many children handle books with interest; staff pick up on this, sit with them on the floor and read a short incidental story to a small group. Children are learning to recognise their names when they first enter the playgroup and at snack time. They are encouraged to write their names emergently on their drawings and are proud of their achievements; showing the adults in the room. There is less emphasis by the staff to encourage children to write for a purpose in other area's of the playgroup such as in the role play house.

Children are learning to count and to recognise numerals through activities such as a mathematics programme on the computer, through puzzle play resources and from staff who promote counting in their everyday activities. Children enthusiastically sing 'five little men in a flying saucer' using their fingers to deduct one each time, until there are not any men left. They learn to recognise two dimensional shapes when they create a wall display and try to balance scales using small figures. Children freely paint, learning that if they mix two colours together they get brown and freely draw at the easels. They experiment and explore water and sand daily with a variety of resources. They build models with construction sets such as stickle bricks using their imagination to make a 'birthday cake with candles'. Children enthusiastically sing favourite rhymes such as 'zoom, zoom, zoom we're going to the moon'. They have opportunities to use the computer; they are learning to use the mouse and are beginning to learn a sense of time through the use of the sand timer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children receive a warm welcome at the playgroup where staff have a good understanding of equality of opportunity. The mix of children attending the group is diverse; children celebrate various festivals and their knowledge of other cultures is being extended. For example, children experience an Eid party and a Christmas party. Resources, labels and posters around the playgroup reflect diversity positively, which helps children to embrace differences and become

accepting of others. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities integrate into the playgroup and receive support from the staff. Although staff are not yet qualified in special needs they work with other professionals such as the hearing impaired teacher and area special educational needs co-ordinator to meet children's individual needs. They consult with their parents and complete a home visit to get a bigger picture of how they can work and support the child. Children's behaviour is generally good; they help to tidy away the resources at tidy-up time and thrive on the positive praise offered to them by staff which builds their self esteem. They learn the boundaries of behaviour by staff who are consistent and firm in their practice. Children are curious about visitors to the group and some approach them confidently asking them questions. They are learning the concept of sharing and taking turns through the staff's guidance. Children operate independently in the playroom as they select their own activities and are encouraged to do things for themselves, such as getting the water apron and putting it on. However, there is less emphasis by staff at snack time to promote children's personal independence. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents speak positively of the communication between themselves and the playgroup with regards to care issues; staff chat informally and incidentally to them about their child, there is an informative notice board available and regular brief, letters on closure days. This communication is effectively aided by the bi-lingual deputy who talks to parents who are learning English. Parents receive a 'guide to Munchkins playgroup' when their child starts but some of the policies are not accurate. In particular the medication and the complaints policies. Complaints received by the management since the last inspection have not been shared with parents and dealt with rigorously in line with regulation, which means a breach has occurred. Planning is on the wall for parents to view if they wish, but there is minimal, formal, communication about how children are progressing through the stepping stones, on working together on children's next steps and linking the learning that takes place to the child's home environment. However, parents are offered on site centre activities such as accessing the toy library service or a workshop on 'building stronger families and communities'.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Children are happy and are looked after by caring, sympathetic staff but their welfare has been compromised by several breaches in regulations. The registered person have an insufficient grasp of their responsibilities to ensure that all committee members and the play leader are suitably checked and Ofsted is informed of changes in the committee and play leaders. The play leader's induction has not prepared her fully for the senior role she was promoted to, which has had an impact on the outcomes for children. However, the play leader is fully aware that training is the way forward and is committed to making improvements to benefit the children who attend the playgroup. The organisation of resources and the available space fully meets the children's needs. Ratios are adhered to by the staff which means that children have suitable supervision. Not all the policies reflect the practice that takes place in the playgroup and some documentation and record keeping is insufficient. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management for nursery education is satisfactory. The play leader shares her responsibilities of delivering nursery education with the deputy which is the only other staff member. They discuss planning each week and although they have a clear understanding of how children learn they need to gain more knowledge and confidence in implementing the Foundation Stage curriculum. Currently there are not any systems to monitor or evaluate the curriculum offered to children and reflect on how improvements can be made and implemented.

Both the deputy and the play leader attend Local Authority workshops such as 'making observations of children' and 'physical development' to increase their knowledge, and receive guidance from the Local Authority.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting were recommended to organise snack time to provide opportunities for children to develop independence and self help skills. The play leader was not working at the playgroup at the time of the last inspection and was not aware of the changes that were made. However, during this inspection it was noted that staff do not fully promote children's independence and self help skills during snack time, therefore, this remains a recommendation but for Nursery education. This was the first Nursery education inspection that the setting has had since it opened.

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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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- obtain written permission from parents before administering medication to children and ensure a written record is maintained of medicines administered
- ensure a record of visitors is maintained and fire drills are regularly carried out
- keep a summary record of complaints relating to the national standards, since October 2005, any action taken and make available to parents and inspectors on request
- ensure all committee members and the play leader undertake checks as prescribed by Ofsted
- ensure Ofsted are informed of significant changes/events at the playgroup and the registered body are aware of their roles and responsibilities

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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 staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure they can plan the next steps in children's learning across all six areas and all aspects
- develop the partnership with parents by linking the learning at playgroup to their home, regularly informing parents of children's progress through the stepping stones and work together on children's next steps
- monitor and evaluate the continuous curriculum offered to children to ensure opportunities are maximised in particular to developing their personal independence at snack time, using a variety of tools and ensuring all aspects within the areas of learning are regularly covered

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