

Rosebery Avenue Community Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253442
Inspection date	17 January 2008
Inspector	Clare Johnson
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Registered person	The Trustees of Rosebery Avenue Community 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 good. 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?

Rosebery Avenue Community Playgroup was established in 1979 and has been in its present premises for six years. The playgroup operates from a single storey building close to Boston town centre. It is within walking distance of all local amenities.

The playgroup have the use of a large play room and a smaller adjacent room, kitchen, toilets and a fully enclosed garden. There is ample parking for both staff and parents.

The playgroup is open daily during term time between the hours of 09.00 and 11.30 and on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday afternoon between the hours of 12.15 and 14.45. Children attend for a variety of sessions each week.

The playgroup is registered to provide care for 24 children between the ages of two and five years. At present there are 63 children on roll of whom 39 are in receipt of funding for three and four year olds. Staff have experience of working with both children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities as well as those who speak English as a second language.

There are eleven members of staff, all of whom hold child care qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from attending a setting where hygiene is a high priority. The staff promote good hygiene by keeping the pre-school very clean and by encouraging children to take responsibility for their own personal hygiene as well as helping to keep the pre-school clean. Children know that they should wash their hands after using the toilets, before snack time and after messy play as this helps to stop germs spreading which could make them poorly. Children are protected from infection as staff share with parents clear guidelines for when children who are ill should not attend. This reduces the risk of cross infection. Children are well cared for if they have an accident as all staff are well trained in first aid, have permission from parents to seek emergency treatment and so can respond appropriately and quickly. Children receive affection and comfort when they have an accident as well as medical treatment. This helps them to feel secure and well cared for.

Children are well nourished as they are offered healthy and nutritious snacks and drinks such as cucumber, raisins, cheese, milk and fresh orange juice. Fresh drinking water is available for children to help themselves to at all times from a water dispenser. This ensures they do not go thirsty throughout the session. Staff ask parents for information about their children's dietary requirements when they start pre-school. They put this information onto the snack register which ensures that all children's dietary requirements are taken into consideration and any allergies are taken seriously.

Children have access to an outside play area which they can use if the weather is dry. When outside, they enjoy using ride-on cars and climbing through tyres. These activities support the development of children's large muscle skills. There are also opportunities to develop these skills indoors as children take part in an activity using a large parachute where they have to use movements such as slow, fast, up and down. Although there are opportunities for active, physical play, these opportunities are not always consistent and are not always clear in the setting's planning. There are regular opportunities for children to develop their smaller manipulative skills through using a wide range of tools, materials and smaller equipment. Children also develop a good awareness of space and their own bodies as they have to navigate around the room, showing consideration for other children and equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming, child-friendly environment. The premises are clean and well maintained and are of an adequate temperature. Children have the use of a main play room which is well laid out to offer best use of the space, a smaller side room for quieter, smaller group activities and an outside play area. There is an abundance of equipment provided for children that is safe and appropriate for their age. However, there are limited examples of children's own work and photographs on display.

Children are kept safe as staff conduct daily risk assessments that are effective in reducing hazards. Staff are extremely vigilant and deploy themselves well to further ensure children's

safety. Fire drills are conducted each term to ensure all children and staff are aware of the evacuation process and to allow them to take responsibility for their own safety. Children are protected as the premises are secure and no one from outside can gain entry without first being identified by a member of staff. Staff ensure children are only collected by authorised people as they have a list of who can collect each child and talk to parents about the importance of informing them in advance if it will be someone different.

Children are safeguarded as staff understand their responsibilities regarding child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and would record any concerns they had about a child. There is a flow chart on display, clearly advising staff of the steps to take when seeking advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Although the setting's policy and procedure on child protection is generally comprehensive, the section detailing the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff is not correct as it states the committee would investigate the concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter the setting with enthusiasm and quickly become settled in their play. They are confident in their environment and this is a result of staff's efforts to make them feel secure and foster their self esteem. Children benefit from having staff caring for them who are interested in and value what they do and say. Children are grouped in key worker groups which benefits them as they have a dedicated member of staff to support them and really get to know them well.

Teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. The learning environment is arranged in 'zones' to give children opportunities to experience all areas of learning throughout the session. For example, there is a role play area, creative area, reading area and mathematics area. Staff plan adult-led activities that focus on specific learning intentions. This helps them to assess where the children are in relation to the stepping stones. Staff deploy themselves effectively around the room during the session so that they can support children's learning by asking them questions to make them think about what they are doing and by offering additional support and encouragement where needed. Staff have high expectations for children's behaviour and the children respond well to these expectations and as a result there are few incidents of negative behaviour. Staff are positive role models for children and children learn how to behave as a result.

Staff plan a range of activities across the areas of learning, however, these plans do not always demonstrate how all of the aspects in each area are being covered. Plans are not always adapted for individual children and although staffs knowledge of the children who attend means children do get the support they need, this is not always evident in the documentation. Staff use observations of the children to plan the next steps in their learning but again this is not always clearly evident in the planning and assessment profiles. Staff have quite recently introduced a new planning and assessment system with the support of an advisor from the local authority which is proving to be effective.

Children's creative development is being well supported. Children have regular opportunities to explore their creativity through art in various forms, music, dance and role play where they use their imagination. Children are confident to express themselves, for example, by singing through a play microphone to each other. They are proud of the art work they produce and

one child who is particularly proud will not let go of her picture until she gives it to her mother at the end of the session. Children's personal, social and emotional development is progressing. They have high self-esteem and confidence as staff support them to feel secure in the setting. Children are developing good relationships with each other and staff and their behaviour is good. They have positive attitudes to learning and this is setting them up well for a life-long love of learning. There are opportunities for children to be independent through self-selecting activities they want and through pouring their own drinks, for example, at snack time. There are less opportunities, however, for children to practice self-care. Staff have addressed this and are planning to support children with getting changed for physical activity and encouraging them to put their own coats on.

Children's communication, language and literacy is developed as they learn in a language-rich environment. There is a wide variety of books available and children choose to sit and look at them or ask staff to read them. Staff have a story time session each day that the children enjoy. These sessions are regularly supported by singing and playing musical instruments. Children are regularly engaged in conversation with each other and staff. This is supporting their language development. At the end of each session, children practise their handwriting by writing their name. Each child progresses at their own pace and is supported appropriately. There are some opportunities for children to write for a purpose, for example, in the home corner there is a white board that children can use to write on. However, these opportunities are somewhat limited. There are no examples of children's emergent writing on display.

Children have consistent and regular opportunities for mathematical development. There is a dedicated area of the setting aimed at mathematics and children learn about calculation, shape, space and measure and counting. There is less of an emphasis on mathematics around the setting than there is on communication, language and literacy, for example, in displays. Children have limited opportunities to use mathematics in everyday situations such as snack time. Children are developing their knowledge and understanding of the world through using a range of information, communication technology resources and through having regular opportunities to use their designing and making skills. There are less opportunities for children to develop their exploration skills and use natural resources.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are valued and included at the pre-school. Staff make an effort to find out about and meet children's individual needs through the registration forms that parents fill out and through discussion with parents. Children gain a sense of belonging as the staff make them feel special and individual because they make the effort to get to know them well. There are resources reflecting diversity such as books, puppets and small world toys. Children enjoy playing with these toys and can relate to them. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed at the setting. The environment is fully inclusive and staff work with parents to offer the best support. A nominated member of staff has recently received training around learning difficulties and/or disabilities which enables them to support children and other staff further. The setting work with parents and other professionals when they have identified that a child might need additional help to enable them to give appropriate support.

Children's behaviour is very good. They are polite and have respect for each other and the setting. This helps to create a calm atmosphere where children know they can play and learn without fear of being disturbed by inappropriate behaviour. Any minor incidents are dealt with by staff as they explain to children why they shouldn't do something and what effect it has on

others to help them understand the consequences of their actions. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are given good information about the setting, its policies and procedures in an information brochure. Regular newsletters are produced to keep parents up to date with important day to day information such as special events. The setting have their own website that contains a wealth of information for parents and if parents do not have access to the internet they are welcome to use the computer in the setting to view the website. Staff talk to parents regularly as parents come into the setting with their children at the start and end of each session.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Parents receive some information on the Foundation Stage in the settings brochure and there is a leaflet on the notice board, however, this does not give parents enough information for them to be actively involved in their children's learning. Staff have informal discussions with parents on an ad hoc basis about their children's progress. However, there is no formal system in place for parents to come in and discuss their child's progress towards the early learning goals. Parents have limited opportunity to support their children's learning at home as they do not have sufficient information about the stepping stones, early learning goals and six areas of learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by well trained staff who are committed to their learning and development. All staff have a relevant childcare qualification and some are embarking on higher level qualifications to further improve their knowledge and understanding of child development. The operational plan is well organised and clear and includes all the necessary documentation for the smooth running of the setting. The manager, staff and committee work well together and are clear on their roles and responsibilities. Staff work well together as a team and the atmosphere is positive. The sessions are organised well, making best use of space and resources and staff are deployed effectively to offer children the support they need. A high adult:child ratio is consistently adhered to which positively supports children's care, learning and development. Staff have regular meetings where they discuss areas for improvement and share information. This helps them to have an up to date picture on what is happening in the setting and to be clear on what needs to be done. The manager uses a system of appraisal to support staff development, however, she does not undergo appraisal from the committee. This could potentially lead to the manager not receiving the support she needs for development and means that the committee do not always have an accurate picture of the setting. Staff are retained well in the setting and so there has been no recent recruitment. The manager and committee are clear on their responsibilities regarding recruitment and know that they should check an applicants suitability rigorously before offering employment. The recruitment policy, however, lacks appropriate detail.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. There is a clear vision for the future of the nursery education from the manager and staff. They are working on developing the effectiveness of the curriculum planning and have many ideas such as wanting to introduce free-flow play between the indoors and outdoors and purchasing innovative equipment for indoor physical activity. Although the nursery education is monitored and evaluated, this is not always effective in highlighting weaknesses. When weaknesses are identified it can take a long time for action to be taken. Recently the manager and staff have been working on improving this and the setting is developing monitoring, evaluation and planning systems.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Four recommendations were made at the last nursery education inspection. The provider was asked to ensure the planning and assessment were achieving their intentions and were being used to inform future planning. This has been implemented as staff have been working with an advisor from the local authority to help them find a system that suits the setting. However, this has taken longer than anticipated and the new system has only recently been implemented. Learning intentions are clear and staff make observations of the children to help them assess whether the intentions have been achieved. Staff use their evaluations to inform the future planning.

The provider was asked to give children opportunities to answer predictive questioning. Staff now ask the children lots of questions, appropriate to their age and stage of development which helps them to make sense of things and challenges and supports more or less able children. The provider was also asked to give children opportunities to write for a purpose. This has been partially implemented as children can write whilst in the home corner and whilst at the creative table. There are, however, no other opportunities for children to write for everyday purposes.

Three recommendations were made at the last care inspection. The provider was asked to give the children opportunities for them to self-select activities and equipment. This has been implemented and as a result children have more involvement in their own learning. The provider was also asked to ensure that children have an appropriate range of resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. This has been implemented and children have access to books and toys that reflect diversity. They also enjoy visits from people reflecting diversity such as an African musician. These positive images of diversity help the children to gain an appreciation of the wider world. The provider was also asked to ensure that written procedures are in place concerning children who are uncollected or lost. This has been implemented and as a result staff are clear on what they would do in this situation and can react quickly and appropriately.

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 good. 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 all policies and procedures are in line with current guidelines with particular reference to the child protection, complaints and recruitment procedures
- make the premises welcoming to children and parents with reference to displaying more examples of children's work including examples of their emergent writing (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- ensure that the curriculum is effectively monitored and evaluated and areas highlighted for improvement are acted on
- ensure the curriculum planning covers all the aspects in the areas of learning, is adapted for individual children and is clearly linked to observations
- improve the information given to parents on the Foundation Stage so they can be fully involved with their children's learning
- extend opportunities for children to learn through everyday experiences, for example, at snack time.

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