

East Plumstead Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	401755
Inspection date	09 November 2007
Inspector	Marcia Robinson / Gillian Cubitt
Setting Address	East Plumstead Baptist Church, Griffin Road, London, SE18 7PZ
Telephone number	020 8855 6544
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Registered person	The Trustees of East Plumstead Baptist Church
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?

East Plumstead Preschool is a committee run group and is a registered charity. It opened in 1969 and operates from the East Plumstead Baptist Church hall situated in a residential area in Plumstead in south east London. A maximum of 24 children may attend the preschool at any one time. The preschool is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.15, during term time.

There are currently 21 children on roll and all are in receipt of funding for early education. The preschool supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The preschool employs five members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications with one member holding a Level 4 qualification. A further member of staff is working towards a qualification in early child care and education. The preschool has received accreditation from the Preschool Learning Alliance and is a member of the Greenwich Preschool Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are protected from infection and cross contamination through excellent hygiene routines. Practitioners regularly clean surfaces, toys, equipment and especially before preparing snacks. They are proactive in helping children gain a thorough understanding of hygiene and create in them a real desire to become independent in their personal care; for example, children help themselves to wet wipes to clean their hands before eating snacks and they use the readily accessible tissues to blow their noses, depositing them in the bins provided. Children proudly show their bright clean teeth and talk about keeping their teeth clean and strong. This is further helped by talks from the visiting dental hygienist and the topics 'about me and my body'; all of which gives children meaningful information of how their bodies work. With this knowledge, children thoroughly enjoy the abundance of fresh fruit at snack times. They select fruits of the season, relishing the experience of chewing into whole pears, peeling bananas and helping themselves to grapes and water from the dispensing machine. Snack times are an integral part of the morning programme; they are unhurried, social occasions which help children to enjoy nutritious foods as part of a healthy lifestyle. Special attention is given to children with particular diets or allergies; practitioners are conscientious in their food preparation and adhere to the displayed guidelines for children's dietary needs. Thorough procedures are followed for recording accidents, administering medication and managing sick children. Practitioners' thorough understanding of first aid and how to use Epi-pen, in an emergency, ensures that children's wellbeing and health are secure.

The outdoor play areas are a particular feature with children being able to choose whether they wish to play inside or out. Most children choose to go outside which enhances and significantly contributes to their good health. They know to wrap up warm before going outside to play. Here, they participate in extended play and learning with plenty of resources to excite and involve them in rigorous physical play; extending their physical skills as well as linking into their curiosity with regard to the changing seasons.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in well maintained, spacious and clean premises. A parent's notice board with useful information, colourful posters, photographs of the children playing and children's work displayed creates a welcoming atmosphere. Children and parents are warmly greeted as they arrive. Children benefit from plenty of space and suitable facilities indoors and outdoors. The hall is arranged well to provide different areas for play, rest and snacks. Consequently, children have a very good sense of belonging. They move around the environment confidently and express their needs and thoughts freely.

Children have access to a good range of quality resources which are suitable for all ages and abilities, clean and safe. Resources are well organised so that children can select them easily. Children develop independence as they confidently choose their own activities from the tables and display containers. They happily select tools, such as paper, crayons, glue and scissors when making marks and designing their own pictures.

There are good, effective systems for keeping children safe and secure. Regular risk assessments are conducted, recorded and action taken when needed. Children are supervised by a good

ratio of staff to children who are alert to their needs and any potential safety hazards. Children learn the importance of keeping themselves safe through planned topics and every day routines. They understand how to evacuate the premises safely in an emergency as they practice the fire drill regularly. Children's understanding is also reinforced because local fire fighters talk to children about fire safety. Children's climbing equipment is fully surrounded by safety mats and practitioners make children aware of their own safety by applying simple rules such as no running whilst inside.

The protection of children is maintained as staff have a knowledge and understanding of safeguarding children. They are aware of their roles and understand the procedures they must follow if they suspect abuse or neglect. Most staff have attended appropriate training and a written statement has recently been updated which is understood by staff. This helps to secure children's welfare and wellbeing.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in their environment, they are keen to participate in activities. They benefit because they have a spacious hall which is thoughtfully planned with an abundance of toys and activities. Children enjoy their well-known everyday equipment and resources such as the climbing apparatus, sand and water which promotes their confidence in repeating well-loved tasks. Practitioners also introduce new and exciting concepts which stimulate the children's imagination. The thematic approach to planning is good in that children become focused on a subject such as 'the seasons'. They have fun crunching the autumn leaves when playing outside and then creating their own leaf prints inside. Roller painting also attracts children; they cluster around the table to participate in squeezing the paint from the tubes and using roller and hands to create interesting and creative patterns. Children's ideas develop in a fun-filled, free-flow session where time seems to pass in purposeful activity.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make steady progress because staff have sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and know how children learn. Children's achievements are noted but records are not clearly recorded to show children's progress towards the early learning goals. Staff plan the curriculum together, covering all areas of learning but they do not include details of the individual clusters within each area, resulting in certain aspects of children's learning that are not fully promoted or extended. The activities organised by staff are occupying and interesting the children to learn from a sufficient range of activities and experiences, although at times children's play and learning is limited. This is evident during water play activities when an insufficient amount or lack of water in the water tray, is not always available to sustain and interests children's play and learning. Also, opportunities are limited during creative activities when the organisation of the butterfly painting activity does not allow children's interest to be extended. However, there are some staff that are able to demonstrate appropriate skills and confidence needed to extend children's learning through effective questioning and support.

Children are progressing well in their personal, social and emotional development. They are confident with staff and socialise and work well together in activities, such as building with construction toys, using the computer and when cutting and sticking. They are developing skills in taking turns and sharing as they begin to settle in at the pre-school and build relationships with each other. Older children confidently wash their own hands and younger

children sometimes require support. Children also help themselves to drinks throughout the day and select their own materials, thus promoting their independence and self help skills.

Children are learning about the world they live in, they have access to resources that reflect diversity, such as, books, dolls, cooking utensils and dressing up clothes. They see and hear words in different languages through displays, books and from communication between staff and children who are bilingual. They have sufficient opportunities to take part and learn about different celebrations, such as, Diwali, Chinese New year and Christmas. Children enjoy playing imaginatively, often for long periods either independently or alongside their peers. They use telephones, calculate with play tills and talk confidently on the phone to their imaginary friend, saying 'I'm going to Lakeside, can you me back later'. Children are excited as they have good opportunities to explore using their senses and investigate features of living things for example, ants and bugs during activities both in and outdoors. A range of programmable equipment is available and children have daily opportunities to use the computer which develops their skills in dragging and moving the mouse. However, there is less emphasis on discussions in every day activities, relating to past and present events.

Children are developing their creativity through a wide variety of art and craft activities including painting, drawing, making collages or using dough to make models. They sing familiar songs such as Old McDonald and enjoy using a range of musical instruments. Children develop an understanding of the natural environment as they use compost when planting their sunflower bulbs.

Some aspects of children's communication, language and literacy are good. For instance, children are beginning to understand that print has meaning as they handle books appropriately and have access to a good range and variety. They sit comfortably in an inviting area, looking at books independently or in small groups. Children concentrate well when staff are reading their favourite books to them, such as 'the three little pigs' and they show interest when looking at and discussing facts in reference books, especially when they are linked to the theme in progress. However, children quickly become restless and loose interest during the large group story time session, because they are not always effectively grouped in ensuring that their individual needs are met.

Children move confidently both in and outdoors, showing an awareness of space and others around them. They are skilful in their use of wheeled toys which they push, scoot or pedal with good co-ordination. They use small equipment, such as brushes, scissors and pencils with increasing control. They have good opportunities to find out about the importance of staying healthy through the daily routine of outdoor play and healthy eating.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individuality is acknowledged at the preschool. They are all included in the activities, ensuring their particular needs at met. By playing an active part in cultural activities, children explore diversity and differences in others. They benefit because the preschool is rich in cultural diversity and parents support the group by giving talks; for example, they prepare for the excitement of Diwali with a parent joining the group to tell the children the story of the festival and engage them in dressing up in saris and colourful Indian costumes. Children's different languages are noted and parents provide some helpful key words that helps initial communication with children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children gain awareness of their local environment and the wider world through access to good resources that promote positive images. They participate in outings to the fire station and enjoy visits from local professionals such as the dentist and police. Staff have an understanding of working with children with identified special educational needs or disabilities which ensures all children are supported and included. However, there is a lack of understanding of how to detect first signs that children may need assistance which impacts on effective early intervention to support children's progress.

Children's emotional wellbeing is promoted by effective and consistent practice in behaviour management. Children learn to play well with their peers, to share toys and wait and take turns. Minor disagreements are quickly settled by the effective intervention by experienced practitioners.

Parents and practitioners work well together. There is a good level of information displayed for parents including a detailed prospectus and annual newsletter from the committee which parents take home. Parents speak well of the high standard of care their children receive which helps children to settle well and make progress.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They are made to feel welcome in the setting and positive relationships are well established, promoting children's welfare. Parents are provided with some information about the Foundation Stage curriculum through posters, and written details in the pre-school prospectus. Although, a comprehensive system to inform parents about their children's achievements and progress in the six areas of learning is planned for, it has not yet been implemented. Consequently parents are not formally updated with the progress their children are making during their time at pre-school. They do however, receive some good quality information about the setting, for example, through information displayed on the notice board, newsletters, photographs of the children in their activities, displays of children's work and access to the group's policies and procedures. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the pre-school, as some form part of the management committee, help out on the parent rota and they share their skills and talents when celebrating festivals. Parents spoken to say they are very happy with the care provided, information received and the approachable staff. There are some opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning, for example, by borrowing books from the pre-school and sharing these at home with their children. However, the provision does not seek all relevant information from parents about children's starting points. Consequently, children's learning potential is not fully maximised to help improve outcomes for nursery education.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Good recruitment and vetting procedures and a sufficient induction for new staff, help to ensure that children are safe and well cared for. Practitioners are well led and work well together as a team to ensure the setting runs smoothly and children are provided with good quality care. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities and are deployed effectively to ensure children have a good level of attention and support. Children benefit from the effective organisation of the group; the key worker system and the clear routines make them feel secure. Activities are well planned and presented. Organisation of space, time and resources is good, promoting positive outcomes for children's safety, care and learning.

Practitioners show a good commitment to developing their knowledge and improving their practice through training. They are all trained in first aid and they enjoy taking part in the variety of childcare courses to develop and extend their learning and skills.

Policies and procedures, and all legally required documentation, are effectively in place and regularly reviewed and updated. These contribute to the children's health, safety and well being. The clear system of registering times of attendance of all children, practitioners and visitors, ensure that there is accurate information of everyone present in the building.

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

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The play leader and chair are both new to their roles, though they share the same commitment towards making the necessary improvements. The play leader utilises the strengths of individual staff by delegating different areas of responsibility, relating to health and safety, plus a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO). Staff work well together as a team where they are supported in their work through regular staff meetings and opportunities to take up training. They maintain observational records for individual children and are beginning to use this information to inform planning and to plan the next steps in children's learning and development. Some clear communication systems are in place such as daily discussions and planning meetings. However, there are no systems such as staff appraisals to monitor the quality of teaching and identify staff training needs to support children's learning. Despite this, the play leader has correctly identified some of the areas of weakness and demonstrates a commitment to improving outcomes for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous care inspection recommended that the preschool conducted a risk assessment of the premises to ensure children's security is maintained. As a result, there are now regular risk assessments of the premises and all exits are well secured which promotes children's safety.

There were no significant weaknesses under the last inspection for education but the provider was asked to give consideration to providing a wider range of experiences for children to gain a sense of time to find out about past and present and; provide a wider range of activities to allow children to recognise changes in their bodies and how to stay healthy. As a result, children now have a wider range of experiences to gain a sense of time and; to recognise changes in their bodies so they stay healthy. They are now familiar with the daily routine and themes based on 'the seasons' along with picture and time displays in the role play area, supports children's learning of the sense of time. In addition, there are good opportunities for children to recognise changes in their bodies through free access to fresh drinking water throughout the day, daily opportunities for active play both inside and outside, visits from the Dentist and healthy eating is promoted at snack time, thus promoting a healthy and active lifestyle.

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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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):

- develop staff's understanding of the Code of Practice for the identification and assessment of children with Special Educational Needs

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 the use of staff appraisals to monitor the quality of teaching and to identify staff's future training needs
- reassess systems of communication with parents in order to provide more opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's learning and introduce formal systems for updating parents of their children's achievements and progress in the six areas of learning
- continue to develop the planning and evaluation to ensure that every aspect of each area of learning is planned and included in the curriculum for children and; ensure children are consistently organised and grouped to match their individual needs

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