

Rodings & Easters Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	403953
Inspection date	14 January 2008
Inspector	Deirdra Keating
Setting Address	Leaden Roding Village Hall. Stortford Road, Leaden Roding, Dunmow, Essex, CM6 1RB
Telephone number	07985 013977
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Registered person	Rodings and Easters 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 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?

Rodings and Easters Pre school opened in 1989. It is privately owned and operates from a large room in the village hall. A maximum of 26 children may attend the preschool at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during term time only sessions are from 09:30 to 12:00. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 38 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area and attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs six members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well because staff follow sound and consistent procedures that are documented and shared with parents. Good policies and procedures are in place to ensure children's health such as a health and hygiene policy which gives clear guidelines regarding illness. This ensures other children are not at risk from cross-infection. Staff actively promote hand washing before snacks and after going to the toilet. A bowl of water is provided for children enjoying messy play to enable them to wash their hands after activities.

Children receive good care if they are ill or have an accident because the setting has the correct and appropriate procedures in place. A well-stocked first aid kit is readily accessible and all staff have paediatric first aid training. A designated member of staff is responsible for checking the contents. Emergency treatment can be given as parents have provided written consents in written agreements. Accident and medication records are accurate and recorded clearly, these are signed off by staff and parents on collection. This ensures children's health is not compromised.

Children's health and dietary needs are met because practitioners work well with parents. Children with allergies are carefully catered for in close partnership with parents by staff who have attended specific training. Food is prepared in the kitchen following all recommended guidelines. Snacks feature breadsticks, cheese and freshly chopped fruit. Drinks are freely available throughout the session and this ensures children remain well hydrated. Children have access to fresh air and exercise. A large field and outdoor area enables children to go outside depending on the weather. Children also use wheeled toys and climbing equipment inside which encourages them to develop their physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a large hall that has been divided into different areas and allows children some choices about how to spend their time. The hall has an outside area and a large field which can be used for outside play. Children have access to a range of equipment that is adequately maintained and appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children's safety is considered by staff who carry out regular fire drills to ensure that children know what to do in the event of a fire or emergency evacuation. Children access the toilet with support from suitable staff. Staff pack away daily for other users which impacts on the range of resources they can make available for the children.

Children practise what they do in safe surroundings. Daily risk assessments are conducted to identify hazards, however these do not highlight the storage of stacked chairs around the room which could compromise children's safety. The premises are secure and management of the entrance door by staff ensures children cannot leave the premises unseen.

Children are protected from harm as the child protection coordinator ensures that staff understand their responsibility. Some staff have attended safeguarding training and cascaded it down to other staff members. A policy is shared with parents and carers, however children's welfare is not fully protected as procedures do not have regard to allegations made against staff members.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed by staff who are warm and approachable, they settle into the session as they choose between a variety of toys, books and activities. They play in small groups and develop their imaginary play using a wooden role play house and construction materials. Children are comfortable in the setting because parents share information about their needs, interests and experiences. Children comfortably access resources laid out on a carpeted area. They happily play with mini-environments using their imaginations with sensitive support from staff. Younger children explore natural materials such as wooden blocks and cardboard boxes. Children are able to make some choices about how to spend their time, however the session timetable requires children to sit for long periods.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Staff meet each term to discuss their planning, they provide long, medium and short-term plans that are broken down and clearly linked to the stepping stones. Plans are topic-based and assessments are made by staff through observations. These assessments of children's learning show that children are making progress towards the early learning goals. However, they do not identify next steps nor are they used to inform future planning. Some verbal information is gained on admission, however this does not provide enough information to gauge children's starting points.

Staff use a group time to consolidate children's learning, they go over the topic in order that children understand and appreciate different cultures. Group stories read by staff are fun and differentiated well. Books and story props enable children to become fully involved as they each take a part. Children enjoy this and engage in the story. Children's behaviour is good throughout the session. Staff make appropriate use of the accommodation, setting up activities to provide an adequate learning environment. The session pace allows children to start with activities of their choice. However, children sit for long periods as they wait for other children to finish their snack. Resources are generally stored to allow children independent access, however towards the end of the session there are few resources and little choice.

Children settle and quickly find their friends who they are clearly pleased to see. Children know right from wrong and have a good understanding of the behavioural expectations of the pre-school. They show care and concern for others and the environment as they effectively tidy away equipment. Children are developing their independence in some areas, however staff do not provide enough opportunities for children to develop their self-care skills. Children have opportunities to develop their early writing skills through a range of resources and are making progress. They look at books in the book corner and clearly enjoy group stories read by staff. These are brought to life using props and a story board. The children are actively involved in the story and are focused and engaged.

Children are making satisfactory progress in their mathematical development. They use mathematical language as they sort animals that are presented well in an appealing environment. They count their fingers as they paint them; this is supported well by staff who encourage them to count 'how many altogether'. Children start to recognise numbers as they use resources including a till and a telephone. They learn how to take one away using play dough which they improvise for buns to accompany a number rhyme. Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring through first-hand experiences. Children enjoy messy play, they cook each week and use play dough. Children learn about the world as

they play with plastic penguins and ice in a large tray. They start to understand about change of state as they observe the ice melting when they add warm water.

Children explore media by mixing paint and painting their fingers. They create individual pictures using their own preferred style. A range of instruments enables them to explore different sounds. Children roll and manipulate play dough using cutters and rolling pins. They develop their hand-to-eye coordination as they carefully paint the fingers on one hand using slow and careful movements with the other hand.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have a good sense of belonging and make some choices about their activities and care. Good methods for obtaining information regarding children's individual needs are in place and settling-in procedures work well. Children are treated with equal concern this helps them feel valued. Children are encouraged to discuss their home lives, this helps them feel accepted and part of the community. They make visits to the local school and take part in fundraising activities. Different sized groups encourage children to build relationships with each other. Staff ensure that the resources positively represent the children who attend as well as individuals from the wider community, this helps children develop a positive attitude to others. They celebrate a range of festivals and traditional days including Chinese New Year. The children are interested and motivated to find out about other cultures and beliefs through books, discussions and tasting activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The setting has a positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The designated member of staff has training and experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This enables her to meet individual needs well, working closely in partnership with parents and carers. Children understand good responsible behaviour as staff follow consistent strategies and have simple rules in order that children can understand and remember them. Children's behaviour is very good throughout the session, they show care and consideration for one another. Any occasional incidents are shared sensitively with parents on collection. Parents are very warmly welcomed and invited to join a parents forum, whereby parents can meet and discuss future initiatives. New parents are encouraged to visit and give good information on the pre-schools' policies and practice. Sensitive and caring staff offer reassurance to parents who have children who are new to the pre-school.

The partnership of parents of children receiving nursery education is good. Informal chats each day between parents and staff allow for the exchange of useful information to help children progress and develop. Parents are invited in each term to discuss their children's progress with key person staff. Development records are confidentially stored and available to parents at all times. Good up to date information regarding the curriculum is displayed creatively alongside an informative notice board. There is a procedure for making complaints, however it needs updating to ensure parents are fully informed of the process.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who have had all required checks and are appropriately qualified. Children are generally settled and secure as ratios are adequately maintained. However, staff

are not always effectively deployed throughout the session leaving children with few resources and little adult support.

The supervisor has a sound understanding of the National Standards and her responsibility to comply with these and the conditions of the registration. Children's safety, enjoyment, health and achievements are adequately supported by the policies and procedures. Most documents are in place to ensure the smooth running of the pre-school. However, some documentation is not up to date and in line with current legislation which could compromise children's welfare. Children's daily attendance is clearly recorded, however staffs' hours of attendance are not always recorded which potentially compromises children's well-being.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The group is privately owned and run by joint managers who lead a committed team. They work together to ensure that children continue to make progress towards the early learning goals. Staff discuss the effectiveness of the session as they pack away the hall daily. Termly meetings allow staff to review the curriculum planning in relation to children's individual needs. Staff are all aware of their roles and responsibilities and work well together. Training and developmental needs are identified during appraisals. Staff are committed to their training and development which improves outcomes for children. The children visit local schools who in turn visit the pre-school; this helps children during their transition period and encourages them to settle into school. The required documentation and consents are in place to ensure that children are looked after according to their parents' wishes.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to develop and implement an action plan that sets out how all supervisors will achieve an appropriate qualification. All supervisors have a level three qualification and are committed to their ongoing training. They were also asked to update documentation in line with current legislation. Some documentation has been updated and staff are continuing to address and develop this area.

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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- update and review all policies in line with current legislation with particular regard to the complaints and safeguarding policies
- ensure that all risks to children are minimised (this refers to the stacked chairs around the room)
- ensure that children are fully supported and that resources are readily available to ensure children's needs are met throughout the whole session.

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):

- improve opportunities for children to develop their independence, self-care skills and access resources of their choice throughout the session
- determine children's starting points and use to identify children's next steps in the planning.

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