

Evergreen Play Association & Adventure Playground

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	144572
Inspection date	27 March 2008
Inspector	Lesley Sharples
Setting Address	Evergreen Play Association, Evergreen Adventure Playground, Beehive Close, London, E8 3JT
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Registered person	EVERGREEN PLAY ASSOCIATION
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Out of School 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Evergreen Adventure Playground is situated in the London Borough of Hackney and provides play opportunities to local children aged from five to 15 years. The registered provider is the committee. The playground has been part of the community for 37 years and has been registered since 1973.

The playground occupies an acre site and has its own purpose-built play building which incorporates a large hall, soft play room, art room, kitchen, office and toilets. The building has full disabled access. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language.

Registration is for a total of 35 children from five to eight years. The group operates after school and during school holidays and on Saturdays. The group opens during term times on Tuesday to Friday from 16.00 until 19.00. During school holidays children can come from any time between 10.00 to 17.00. On Saturdays the setting operates from 12.00 to 17.00 term time only.

There are currently four permanent workers and four sessional workers in the team and numbers increase in the school holidays. Over half the staff hold a relevant childcare qualification. The setting is a member of Hackney Play Association, who provide advice, support and training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff promote good hygiene practices because they implement effective practice for children so that they learn about being healthy. Staff are vigilant about children hand washing after visiting the toilet or before cooking activities and after coughing. Hygienic facilities are provided, so that children wash and dry their hands properly, which helps to prevent the spread of infection. Written procedures also minimise the risk of infection to children as the sick child policy is detailed. Good reference relating to common illnesses and infections is held on file. Children's health is protected because a member of staff is present at each session with first aid certificates and basic food hygiene in line with current guidance. This means that they can prepare food hygienically and offer advice and support in case of accidents or illness. Consent is obtained for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment should this be required.

Children are not provided with any meals or snacks but have free access to a drinking water fountain at any time. This means they are kept well hydrated during play and are never thirsty.

Children's physical health and development are very well promoted through opportunities for regular fresh air and physical exercise. This is the main aspect of the provision and children thrive from opportunities to climb, swing, run, balance and jump on various equipment. They are eager to show what they can do and competently swing round on a large tyre, avoiding each other by being patient in taking turns and heeding comments from a member of staff to take care. Children also play out in the 'indoor outside', a covered area which offers space for ball games and which is most useful during inclement weather.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enter the provision and are acknowledged by staff. They immediately settle to play both indoors and outside and have total freedom to choose their own amusement. Staff take steps to create a well maintained, warm and welcoming environment for children. The building and adventure playground is colourful and bright and cared for. There are designated areas for different types of play so that children can choose soft play experiences, art and craft work or vigorous play in many forms. The outdoor area also offers peaceful settings, gardening areas and opportunities to observe nature at both high and low levels. The setting reflects work children have done and displays information and posters prominently in the entrance area for all who come in; this promotes a real sense of the provision belonging in the community.

Children are familiar with the setting's layout and move safely and independently around all areas identified for their use. Children use a range of appropriate play materials, equipment and furniture that are of a suitable condition. They can access some resources independently, for instance, art and craft materials, board games and outdoor resources, which means they can initiate their own play ideas. Staff regularly check items to ensure that children are kept safe. Children also have the opportunity to practise the emergency evacuation procedures and these are clearly displayed on the wall.

Children are safeguarded because staff are clear about their roles and responsibility to record and report to the relevant bodies any concerns relating to child protection. There is good reference held on file relating to the types of abuse and neglect and indicators which may lead to concerns. The government guidance flow chart is displayed but the written policy does not refer to procedures if an allegation is made against a member of staff, nor is it updated to reflect the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy themselves at the setting. They fully influence planning and are given autonomy in how they spend their time. Consequently, they make decisions and play cooperatively in their chosen activities. Staff ensure children can access a range of activities, especially in art and crafts and computer games, and they also include specially planned activities, such as trips out and cooking. Children particularly enjoy painting and contribute to the colourful setting by painting tiles on the wall and decorating the wooden drawers to their own designs. They proudly show their accomplishments to the staff and visitors. Games using technology are timed for fairness and children politely ask for this to be facilitated by staff.

The outdoor setting is greatly enjoyed by children. Children respond to new physical challenges as they play in this exciting and varied setting. They competently and happily show how they swing round on ropes and tyres and staff observe them, allowing them full decisions in their play. They use the play rocket, swings and climbing equipment enjoying different experiences. Vigorous play is balanced with opportunities for quiet reflection in the quiet area of the garden. They can go pond dipping under supervision, do gardening and enjoy many aspects of nature within the acre site. Football is a favourite pastime and fortunately they have an 'indoor outdoor' area for this with a safety surface which means inclement weather does not impact on this. The setting has deservedly won an award as the best adventure playground in the UK.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

There are good procedures in place which help children gain a sense of belonging and as a result, they fully benefit from what the setting offers. For example, one member of staff has responsibility for all aspects of inclusion. Children have themselves made a poster in relation to inclusion, and positive images contribute to children gaining a wider view and understanding of diversity. The provision has a member of staff who is the special educational needs coordinator, who liaises with other organisations to ensure that children with learning difficulties and disabilities have full opportunities to access the play scheme. The equal opportunities policy is understood and implemented by staff and shared with parents. As a result, staff ensure children are treated with equal concern and respect.

Children behave very well. Good behaviour is promoted and children are encouraged to share and take turns by reminders, only if necessary. Positive interactions from staff promote children's self-esteem. Children receive due attention and know to come to the office for requests, such as for games on the computer. There is, however, no written behaviour management policy on file to ensure staff are consistent in their approach and understand the requirements for incident recording relating to physical restraint. Children are involved in defining the boundaries as they help to draw up some basic ground rules. This ensures they feel involved and as a result they take responsibility for their behaviour.

Partnership with parents is based on obtaining required information about their children and gaining relevant consents. The requirements regarding complaints and their retention is understood. As the provision has been an integral part of the community for nearly 40 years, children attend whose own parents used to come when young themselves.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel settled and at ease in the welcoming environment. The staff organise the available space well to provide children with a range of activities. The children receive support as appropriate to their needs. They have opportunities to develop confidence with others and build their social skills as they mix with children of differing ages. They are looked after by staff who are suitable to do so. A team of four playworkers work full time and have clear roles and responsibilities allocated to them so that a high standard of provision is maintained. Regular team meetings ensure good communication is in place. Children benefit from staff whose personal development needs are identified and catered for by ongoing training and attendance at workshops. These include health and safety, British Sign Language and specific emergency aid. New staff undertake induction, so they are familiar with policies and procedures and their role within the setting.

The adult-child ratio is maintained and staff numbers are increased in the school holidays to accommodate increasing numbers. Children self-register. Established policies and procedures generally work well in practice to promote the safe and efficient management of the setting and promote the welfare and care of children. Certain policies and procedures still need to reflect current guidance. The required documentation is very well organised and stored to ensure confidentiality. For example, children's records hold relevant information so that staff can meet individual needs. This contributes to the efficient operation of the setting and meets regulatory requirements. The setting is involved in national research and identified in publications, they are also seen as a model open access facility.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was agreed to ensure that grassy areas are kept suitably maintained at all times. The recommendation has been implemented and the areas are safe and suitable for children. A team of volunteers comes each six to eight weeks to maintain the grassy areas. Children learn to manage any risk where there are shrubs, as they are part of their play experiences in picking fruit for making jams. This means that staff successfully manage risks to children when offering natural play environments.

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

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.

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 the child protection procedure in line with current guidance and include procedures if an allegation is made about a member of staff
- provide a behaviour management policy to include the procedures for incident recording relating to any use of physical restraint.

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