

# Barnard Park

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY229686
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Barnard Park Adventure Playground is situated at the corner of the park off Copenhagen Street near St Andrews Primary School in Islington. The setting has been running for many years. The site was registered by Ofsted in 2002 to provide open access to the out of school and holiday care for a maximum of 30 children aged between five and eight years. The playground also caters for children aged up to 15 years. There are seasonal variations in attendance patterns.

The setting operates between 15:30 and 18:30 after school, term time and in school holidays between 10:00 and 17:30. The setting usually closes for lunch between 13:00 and 14:00 each day but may offer full day sessions for a minimal cost.

The low-level building is used for indoor activities and art and craft session. There are suitable cloakroom facilities and a small kitchen. The setting does not provide any food. The extensive grounds provide children with a wide range of free play opportunities.

Islington Council manages the service and employs a core team of appropriately qualified staff who are led by a project manager or senior play worker. Additional staff are employed during school holidays to reflect the overall increase in attendance. At the time of the inspection

during an after school session there were approximately 10 children between the ages of five and eight attending.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's physical health is promoted as they have free use of extensive adventure play apparatus. Children are encouraged to explore their own physical boundaries as they climb, balance, swing and make up games on the large purpose built structures. Children also have opportunities to practise their sporting skills and to develop their own games with the equipment that is readily available to them.

Children are learning about healthy eating as they take part in a range of topics that develop their understanding of where food comes from. The allotment project encourages them to take part in the preparation of the site, digging and sowing the seeds and bulbs of the vegetables that will be harvested later in the year.

Policies and procedures are in place to ensure any health needs are identified and met. Children's personal care is promoted as the setting provides clean and well maintained cloakrooms. These are monitored closely as the children come in from outside play, the area can become muddy and dirty very quickly.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children's safety is of extremely high priority. The adventure playground provides children with a secure area to play, there are boundary fences but the open access means that older children are free to come and go as they please. Children under eight are monitored, a register is in place to record their attendance. The experienced staff are very aware of the potential security issues for the site, they deploy themselves sensitively around the playground to ensure children are safe but do not impact on their play. Children are encouraged to explore their own limits and make decisions about how to extend their play in a well maintained setting. Fire drills are carried out on a regular basis, the information is included in the weekly plans for the holiday sessions. The adventure play apparatus is checked on a daily basis. A comprehensive risk assessment for the site and the building is in place and highlights areas that need to be attended to with an action plan in place.

Children's well-being is maintained by qualified staff who are all aware of the importance of child protection procedures. They are extremely vigilant in monitoring the open park land adjacent to the play ground. They are confident in dealing with incidents, working closely with the Community Police Officers who have a good working relationship with the setting. Children have a positive and friendly approach to the officers who are frequent visitors to the site. All staff have a good understanding of child protection issues. Policies and procedures are in place in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. However, parents are not informed of the policies that are in place or the commitment that the setting has to protecting their children and ensuring a safe environment to play.

The setting is working in line with the Common Assessment Framework (CAF) which brings agencies together to provide a safe environment for all children and young adults. All staff are first aid qualified, two staff take responsibility for health and safety issues on site.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The large adventure play structures provides children with excellent opportunities to explore and to extend their physical skills in a well-maintained environment. Children attending the holiday play scheme for the first time have an induction session to ensure they are comfortable in the new setting and aware of the routines and opportunities available to them. The free play ethos of the adventure play ground gives the children total responsibility for their play decisions. Barnard Park site often links with other play sites in Islington for outings and trips.

The grounds are set out to provide various areas for the children to play. They develop team and ball games on the hard standing area. The stage and amphitheatre gives opportunities for dance and performance arts. A new gardening and allotment area is being developed by the children. The building provides a quiet area where children can listen to music, read or use the imaginative play resources. A large art area provides an extensive selection of craft materials for children to extend their creative ideas. Resources are sought from the local scrap bank.

During the school holidays, when children may stay all day a flexible plan of activities is in place. Children make the final decisions about what activities they take part in. The 'menu' gives them ideas and reminds them of the resources that can be made available to them. Children are encouraged to redesign and rebuild the wooden structures, they make camps and adapt areas for their own play ideas. They seek advice from the play workers who prompt discussion and ask the children what would be the best action to take. Children are learning to trust their own judgements and assess the risk elements of their play.

Children are taken out to explore the park land and nearby canal waterways. They take part in nature hunts and learn about the many different aspects of their local community. The large park is used for some team games and sporting activities, such as football that cannot be accommodated in the adventure playground site.

Children are busy and happy, they are well supported by staff who have an extremely good understanding of the importance of free, child centred play. Staff ask appropriate questions to promote and extend children's individual play ideas.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children show a strong sense of belonging, as they come to the site they call out to the staff who put them on the register. Strong friendships have developed, some children travel from nearby boroughs to access the adventure play setting.

The setting strives to ensure all areas are fully accessible, they adapt and make apparatus to take into account children with limited mobility. A large swing has been built to accommodate a wheel chair. They work in line with the local authority code of practice. However, on a practical level the site is still working towards organising the environment and plan activities to ensure all children can take-part at a level that is appropriate to their needs. Issues have been identified as part of the recent access audit.

Children behave well and act responsibly. They are developing a good understanding of how their actions impact on others with appropriate support from the staff team. Children are good at discussing their ideas and adapting their play to take the needs of others into account. Emotions and behaviour with regards to bullying are explored with a board game that makes children reflect on their behaviour and how others feel about their actions. They learn through a positive approach and well supported behaviour management strategies.

The Borough of Islington provides extensive information for parents about their children's services, childcare and play provision on their website and in brochures.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a very enthusiastic and committed team of play workers. Their individual skills are recognised by the project co-ordinator who carries out regular staff appraisals. The team work well together to promote the adventure play setting and the child centred play ethos. The setting has recently been accredited with a level 2 quality in Play. This award is in conjunction with Investors in Children, Surestart and the London Play organisation. This reflects their hard work and commitment to providing a stimulating and challenging environment for children to explore and to play. They are currently working towards the level three accreditation. The setting is also involved in a range of projects such as ASDAN which promotes young adults in achieving and being acknowledged as part of a team. This provides all children with good role models with young adults taking part in their play and activities.

All required documents are in place to ensure the well-being of the children and the smooth running of the setting. Information for parents is limited and although the site is generally a child-centred environment parents are not informed about the registration with Ofsted for out of school care, the inspection report, the complaints procedure, the quality of staff or their commitment to providing an inclusive environment for all children and their families. This means that parents are not fully informed about these important aspects of the service provided. Overall the provision meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the time of the last inspection the setting was given three recommendations: ensure arrangements for checking fire fighting equipment are recorded, ensure the procedure for making a complaint is made known to parents, ensure there are arrangements to share child protection procedures with parents.

Children are protected as fire fighting equipment is in place, with relevant records to show service history. The setting does not inform parents of the procedures that are in place with regards to child protection and complaints. These recommendations have been raised again at this inspection.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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):

- ensure parents are informed of the setting's commitment to child protection and safeguarding children
- ensure parents are fully informed about the registration with Ofsted, the inspection process, the report and Ofsted's complaints procedure
- ensure parents are fully informed about the setting's equal opportunity policy and their commitment to equal access for all users.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)