

Redwood Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	508659
Inspection date	25 February 2008
Inspector	Vivienne Rose
Setting Address	The Bell Centre, 3 Holloway Road, LONDON, E11 4LD
Telephone number	020 8539 8559
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Registered person	Redwood Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Redwood Pre-School and Holiday Play Scheme opened in 1971. The current registration commenced in 1999. It operates from purpose-built premises, consisting of six rooms, with access to staff, office and kitchen facilities, and children's bathrooms. The pre-school is situated on the Cathall estate in Leytonstone in the London borough of Waltham Forest.

The pre-school is a community-run charity and has a management committee. A maximum of 56 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:15 to 15:45, for 39 weeks of the year. The holiday playscheme opens during the Easter and summer holidays from 09:30 to 16:30 (five days per week). All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 52 children, aged from two to under four years, on roll. Of these, 36 receive funding for early years education. Children come from the surrounding catchment area. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The setting provides

various additional services for the community, including family learning workshops and a health visitor drop-in.

The pre-school employs 17 members of staff. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification. The manager is a qualified teacher.

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 good routines. Staff provide children with a clean environment which promotes their health in all areas. Children learn about good hygiene practices through conversation and gentle reminders, such as staff talking to children about washing their hands before having snacks. Children are well supported from an early age to become independent in their personal care. They learn to use the toilet independently, and to find their own coats and put them on to play outside. They wash their hands confidently at the child height sinks. Nappy changing facilities are hygienic and provide privacy for children. The staff use disposal gloves and wipe down the changing mat with antibacterial wipes. Staff record accidents when they occur. However, they sometimes forget to ask parents to sign the accident record.

Children's individual medical and dietary needs are recorded appropriately and staff are aware of these. Staff preparing snacks and drinks check that children are able to have the food and drinks provided. They ensure that children with specific needs are catered for sensitively. Children attending the playgroup are able to make healthy choices from a substantial bowl of fresh fruit. Juice and water are offered at drink and snack time. Children have access to drinks of water throughout the session to fully support their good health. Substantial and nutritious snacks are provided at the holiday activity centre. Appropriate guidance is given to parents providing packed lunches. This ensures that children's nutritional needs are met.

An effective key person system and good settling-in processes mean children receive appropriate emotional support. Where necessary, staff reassure children on arrival, encouraging them to take part in activities and assuring them of their parents' return.

All children take part in rigorous physical activity throughout the day. Good use is made of the large outdoor area to access a wide range of activities, such as climbing, balancing, cycling, pushing, pulling and kicking balls.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Good use is made of the space to provide children with a wide range of activities. The smaller rooms are used effectively for small group times, which children enjoy because of good preparation by staff. Areas are well laid out before children arrive, providing a welcoming, child-focused environment. Children access resources with enthusiasm. The thoughtful use of space means that children are able to move around safely and with freedom of choice to access the range of activities put out for them. Regular checking and cleaning systems organised by staff ensure that toys and play resources are kept in good condition. Toys and resources are

stored safely, often at low-level beside activity areas so that children are able to extend their play, for example, in the design area.

High staff ratios and effective staff deployment help to keep children safe. Children are encouraged to sit properly on their chairs "in case you fall and hurt yourself". A clear notice is displayed regarding the fire drill. However, this has not been practised recently to ensure that children learn about the process should an emergency occur.

Staff are aware of their responsibilities regarding child protection. The manager and staff are very aware of the need to act swiftly and appropriately should they have any concerns about a child in their care. The manager has recently attended training to update her knowledge of recent changes to procedures to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded. However, the procedure for recording incidents outside the setting does not always safeguard children's confidentiality, and the policy is in need of updating in line with current changes and the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and happy in the setting. They take part in activities with interest and confidence and enjoy being together. Children enjoy singing heartily at song and rhyme time. They are supported to enjoy the story about the 'Hungry Caterpillar' using the story bag resources to help them to fully participate. Children who are quiet and finding it difficult to communicate are helped by staff on a one-to-one basis to participate. Younger children become involved in activities, such as using the 'feely' bags to identify everyday objects, to extend their vocabulary. Staff encourage children to make their own decisions. Children are able to choose from the wide range of activities and resources available to them, which helps them to develop their independence.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A key person system is in place which ensures that staff know the children well. Children are supported by staff that have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and they record observations to clearly record children's progress towards the early learning goals in all the six areas of learning. However, these observations are not fully evaluated to enable staff to plan for children's next steps in their learning. Staff plan some good activities, however, these are not always fully extended to support the older, more able children.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet staff and each other on arrival. They are motivated and eager to learn. They show concentration and complete tasks, such as putting the railway track together, building towers with bricks, or completing a puzzle. They are very engaged in their play as they select and carry out activities, such as finding the twin pushchair in the garden and making sure the babies have a warm cover, or making a picnic in the book area.

Children enjoy listening to stories and some are beginning to write and recognise their own names from the name labels on their clothes peg and on the heart tree. They are beginning to learn the sounds of the letters of their names from the name cards used at circle time. However, there are fewer opportunities for children to write for a purpose in every day routines, such as role play to associate marks to meaning.

Children are beginning to count, for example, when they use the counting bears and when they sing rhymes and songs which help them to understand simple adding and subtraction. They weigh and measure ingredients when they make the gingerbread people. However, there are fewer opportunities to use simple calculation, for example, to predict how many bears may be left.

Children begin to develop a sense of time when they talk about what they did over the holidays and on outings with their parents. Children learn about light and shapes when they use mirrors and kaleidoscopes. They gain some knowledge of the environment and the living world when they go out into the garden to record and observe the daffodils. Children are beginning to understand and use technology, as they use the computer to identify objects. They learn to use the mouse with skill and accuracy when they play with the mother and baby game. Children are involved in discussions and celebrations to increase their knowledge about social events in their lives and those of others when they celebrate Chinese New Year and other festivals.

Children learn about growth when they measure themselves for the growth chart. They develop their physical skills well as they balance, climb and use the tunnel and various outdoor equipment. They learn about healthy eating when they discuss what is good for you at snack time. Visits from the dentist and road safety specialists help children to understand how to keep themselves healthy and safe.

Children have free access to painting and a range of craft activities to enable them to express their own ideas and designs. Children use their imagination well, creating their own scenarios both in the role play area, for example, arranging a birthday party and singing 'Happy Birthday', and when accessing physical resources in the outdoor area, for example, when a child decides to take her twins shopping. Children enjoy singing nursery rhymes and songs and listening to Indian and Caribbean folk music. They learn about different sounds by using the musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children learn about the local community and their own cultures through festivals such as Christmas and the Chinese New Year, when children talk about the Dragon and use a mask to illustrate the occasion. Good use is made of visitors to help children gain an understanding of the wider world.

Appropriate systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff work closely with other professionals to formulate individual educational plans and keep parents well informed. Children use a variety of equipment, and photos and posters that are displayed within the environment reflect positive images. Staff are committed to providing an inclusive environment for all children. Children show good levels of confidence and self-esteem. Children have a sense of belonging which helps them to feel included. Staff are good role models, speaking to children and each other with respect. Clear, specific praise when children do well helps them to develop their self-esteem and to understand right from wrong.

Children benefit from the friendly informal relationships between staff and parents. Parents feel comfortable in the setting and are confident to speak with key workers and to stay and play with children. They receive good quality information in the policies and procedures pack. Recent parental questionnaires and regular discussion with parents help them to feel involved in their child's development.

The partnership with parents of the children who receive nursery education funding is good. Parents are well informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum and how their child is progressing. Parents fill in information sheets identifying their children's likes and dislikes and starting points, named 'parents' petals', when their children join the group. Open evenings are held each term to explain children's progress and to answer any questions.

Parents are well informed about the aims and objectives of the group through a prospectus. The setting is community-based, with a parental committee, and information is displayed clearly in the setting. A recent parental questionnaire demonstrated parents' satisfaction with the group. All complaints are dealt with effectively, using current methods for recording, which helps to ensure that children's well-being is safeguarded.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Effective organisation in most areas of the provision helps to provide children with secure, positive learning experiences. Staff work well as a team to promote children's health, welfare and

enjoyment. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and confidently set up rooms before the children's arrival. This ensures that no time is lost when children are present. Appropriate systems are in place to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children.

Children develop a secure sense of belonging because the daily running of the setting is well organised and the key worker system means that staff know the children well. Staff are well supported by the manager through annual appraisals and are encouraged to attend further training and workshops. However, team meetings are held less frequently. Staff deployment and high staff ratios mean that children are well supervised, which promotes their safety and helps to ensure that their individual needs are met.

Leadership and management are good. Children are generally busy and learning. They are confident and relate well to the staff. The policy for the induction of new staff has recently been revised to ensure that they are clear about their roles and responsibilities. There is a good system for evaluating the quality of teaching in place. Planning works generally well and the management has developed a comprehensive system for recording children's developmental progress through rigorous observation. However, this is not always extended to maximise the opportunities for all children. As yet, staff have not fully implemented a secure system to evaluate observations and to plan the next steps for children to secure their learning and achievement. However, the management has taken steps to rectify this and has enlisted the help of the Pre-school Learning Alliance to support them in this process. The setting is also seeking advice from the early years service to further develop the quality of the provision.

All the documentation regarding the care of children is in place. It is up-to-date, well organised and appropriately stored with an awareness of confidentiality. Most policies are regularly reviewed and updated and the manager ensures that she keeps herself aware of changes to legislation. However, the staff sometimes overlook the fact that a parental acknowledgement must be obtained for all accidents. The method used for recording incidents sometimes lacks confidentiality and fire drills need to be held more frequently. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the provider has developed a system of parental evenings three times a year. This ensures that parents have regular opportunities to obtain information about their child's developmental progress.

Children's progress records have been developed and clearly show children's achievements. The management is working towards the development of a system to evaluate these to their best effect. Children now have some opportunities to count, and use simple addition and subtraction when they sing number rhymes and songs.

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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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 that parents are requested to sign an acknowledgement of all accidents when they occur; all incidents which occur outside of the setting are recorded in a way that maintains confidentiality

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 the planning and evaluation of activities to; show clear learning outcomes; take account of what children know and can do, by setting different goals for older and younger children; and plan next steps of children's learning and development. (also applies to care above)
- increase the opportunities for children to use simple calculation in every day routines; use writing for a purpose

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