

Rainbow Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number EY372857
Inspection date 09/10/2008
Inspector Jane Hughes

Setting address Carr Junior School, Ostman Road, YORK, YO26 5QA

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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

Children only attend this setting before and/or after the school day and/or during the school holidays. The judgements in this report reflect the quality of early years provision offered to children during those periods.

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Rainbow Playgroup is a committee run group which operates from the Children's Centre at Carr Junior School in Acomb on the outskirts of York. The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Childcare Register. Children are cared for in an open plan room which has an area for babies and integral kitchen and toilet facilities. An enclosed area is available for outdoor play, which has both hard and safety surfaces. The playgroup is registered to care for 26 children from birth to five at any one time and is open Monday to Friday from 09.00 to 15.30, during term time only. The setting offers flexible sessions, 09.00 to 12.00, 12.30 to 15.30 and a lunch club from 12.00 to 12.30. Parents can choose to mix and match sessions to meet their individual requirements. Currently, 53 children attend the playgroup throughout the week. Thirty-four are aged two years. Of these, 20 have government funded places as part of the Pathfinder Project. Nineteen children are aged three. Children come from the local area. There are five full time staff and two relief workers. Staff hold suitable qualifications for their roles. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The provision meets the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) well and parents appreciate the flexibility and quality of care on offer. Strong leadership and management demonstrate a good capacity for continuous improvement within the setting. Effective teamwork by key workers and other practitioners encourages children to make the most of their time here so they learn and develop well. The child-centred approach established by the leadership ensures that the needs of every child are identified and addressed successfully. Even so, practitioners do not make efficient enough use of the information they obtain from regular observations of what children know, understand and can do to build on their previous learning. Children choose for themselves when to learn and play indoors or outside, although the outdoor environment requires further development to equal the high quality learning opportunities that characterise the provision inside.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- make better use of the detailed information that practitioners record about what children know, understand and can do to provide activities that build on these skills
- develop and use the new outdoor area to reflect the high quality provision indoors.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Experienced and capable leadership and management ensure that the playgroup provides a familiar and stimulating daily environment for children. Despite the fact that the setting has only recently moved to new premises, children are happy here because of the welcoming and happy atmosphere and the familiar daily routines. The leadership actively encourages the professional development of all staff. Practitioners contribute to weekly planning meetings and provide pertinent input to the setting's self-review process. Self-evaluation is good and staff are clear about how they wish the setting to develop. Practitioners regularly seek the opinions of children as they work alongside them. Parents complete questionnaires and the setting reviews its practices as a result.

There are well established systems in place to ensure children are safeguarded and this provision is good. Appropriate checks are made on the suitability of all adults in contact with children. There is close attention to issues of equality of opportunity and children's individual needs are sensitively met. Practitioners make the most of opportunities to explore elements of different cultures with children. For instance, visits to Kenya during the summer provoked amazed discussion among the children about what it would be like to share breakfast time in the garden with a giraffe, as one child did.

The setting establishes good links with other early years providers and support agencies. There is regular contact with the local infant school along with visits by children and discussions about children's learning and development before they move on to the school. The setting is held in high regard locally for the support it provides for children from Traveller families. Close links with outside agencies ensure that children with learning difficulties and disabilities or individual special needs receive just the right levels of care, guidance and support. In these ways, children's needs are met well.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

The strong emphasis on allowing children to choose for themselves what they play and work with during sessions enables children to learn and develop well. Children are busy with an exciting variety of enticing activities from the time they step through the door. They develop an increasing understanding of how to play safely. Skilful staff complement children's independent learning through well chosen interventions. For instance, during lunch club, staff chat easily with children about what is in their lunchboxes and children learn more about which foods help to keep them healthy.

Above all, children enjoy their time here and they achieve well. Staff make the most of spontaneous learning opportunities to offer stimulating experiences to children in all areas of learning. However, currently, the outdoor area is underdeveloped and does not as yet reflect the same breadth of opportunity for learning as the high quality indoor provision. This means that, although children enjoy working outdoors, they do not make as rapid progress in their learning as they do inside. Practitioners are keen to develop children's independence from their first visit to the playgroup. Children take responsibility for tidying away different areas and enjoy helping others at snack time. Many make the most of the cosy book areas to relax on comfy

cushions and carefully turn the pages in the books, looking under the hidden tabs with delight. These burgeoning skills and levels of achievement set firm foundations for children's future learning and well-being.

All staff are conscientious as they look, listen and record what children know, understand and can do throughout the year. However, they do not use this information to help them decide what activities they should provide to help children make the next steps in their learning.

Conscientious provision assures children's welfare and safety. Each child has a key worker who links closely with parents, carers and any other care providers. The key workers maintain individual children's records and take responsibility for a child's immediate welfare. Parents confirm that their children are happy here.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

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

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	Good
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	Good
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	Good

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	Good
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	Good
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	Good
How well are children safeguarded?	Good

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	Good
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	Good
How well are children helped to stay safe?	Good
How well are children helped to be healthy?	Good
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	Good
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	Good
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	Good

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.