

Swiss Cottage Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	EY302576
Inspection date	26/01/2009
Inspector	Chris Banks
Setting address	Swiss Cottage Community Centre, 19 Winchester Road, London, NW3 3NR
Telephone number	020 7916 7090
Email	
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).

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

Swiss Cottage Pre-School for children aged between three and five years was originally registered in 1994. Following redevelopment of the site, it was re-registered in 2005. Organised and managed by The Pre-School Learning Alliance it operates from a community centre in the NW3 area of Camden. The setting is open during term time between the hours of 10.00 and 12.30.

Children have access to a main playroom and occasional use of an adjoining hall. There is also an enclosed outdoor play area. Facilities are accessible for wheelchair users. There are currently 16 children on roll. A maximum of 16 children in the early years age group may attend the playgroup at any one time.

A team of three staff work with the children, two of whom hold recognised qualifications in early years childcare. The setting receives support from the local authority. The setting is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

The pre-school provides a satisfactory level of care and education for children who are making some steady progress in their learning and development. The overall welfare needs of children are suitably met, with improved support for children who speak English as an additional language. Arrangements for monitoring and evaluating children's progress have improved, but require further development. There is a commitment to maintain continuous improvement through training and a suitable process of self evaluation.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop effective systems for recording and assessing childrens progress and planning for their next steps.
- improve opportunities for children to explore information technology
- ensure there is a comfortable area for children to rest if they become ill or are tired

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are cared for by a suitably qualified staff team who are clear about their roles and responsibilities in key areas. This is now firmly underpinned by the effective implementation of revised policies and procedures following requirements made at the last inspection. These include updating procedures to safeguard children from possible abuse. New staff now receive a more comprehensive induction with unqualified staff preparing to undergo training to further develop

their childcare skills.

There is a commitment to maintain continuous improvement. Previous inspection requirements have been addressed and the setting is working in partnership with other childcare and teaching professionals to raise the quality of provision. A process of self-evaluation has also successfully identified some areas for improvement.

Children's overall health is well promoted. Good hygiene standards and a clear sickness policy helps ensure the risk of infection and spreading of contagious illnesses are minimised. Decisive action is taken if a child becomes ill and staff are well prepared in any emergency as two are qualified in first aid. Parents are contacted promptly if a child becomes generally unwell, but there is nowhere comfortable for children to rest until they arrive.

Children's safety and welfare is better protected. There is now a clear, separate emergency evacuation procedure to follow, which is practised with children and recorded. Children's attendance records are also now well organised and indicate the arrival and departure time of all who attend the group. Staff are well informed about their role and responsibility in protecting children from possible abuse and have clear, up-to-date procedures to follow. This includes what to do if any allegations are made against a member of staff.

All required information about children is gathered and recorded at the start of each placement, but records do not include establishing what a child enjoys, already knows or can do. This impacts on evaluating how children are progressing.

Parents are made welcome. They are positively encouraged to share their cultures and traditions with the group of children as part of planned activities, such as the celebration of various festivals or events. Some also become active volunteers.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children are happy and very well settled. All children feel valued and included because staff take good account of their individual needs and now offer better support to children who speak English as an additional language. Each member of staff has different language skills, which are effectively used to reassure some new children. Simple words of a child's home language are also used as part of the settling-in process. Children play happily alongside their peers, occasionally using their own imaginative form of sign language to communicate with other children and make new friends. Should any child require support in other areas, staff have previous experience of successfully working with parents and outside agencies to provide an inclusive service.

Staff are gradually becoming familiar with the new framework governing the care and education of young children, but have yet to adapt systems for recording and assessing children's progress. This inhibits the effective planning of children's next steps in their learning as these do not include children's starting points.

Children attending the pre-school group engage in a suitable range of play activities. These are helping them make some steady progress towards reaching their early learning goals before they go to school. One particular learning area, however, requires further developing as there are no opportunities for children to explore information technology. Many children are familiar with well loved stories, such as the Hungry Caterpillar and excitedly predict which prop will magically appear out of the bag to support the storyline. Stories and role play are also used to help children understand about road safety. Visits from the local community police officer are also successfully used to help promote children's understanding about other safety aspects.

Children are learning about their bodies and its growing abilities through a range of challenging indoor and outdoor physical activities. Most thoroughly enjoy adult-led music and movement sessions and are learning to cooperate well. Those who struggle with sharing and who perhaps have had no previous contact with other children are gently guided and supported by staff, gradually becoming more self-assured and confident.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is 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?	3
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	3
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	3

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	3
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	3
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	3
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	3
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	3
How well are children helped to stay safe?	3
How well are children helped to be healthy?	3
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	3
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	3
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	3

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 the last inspection.

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.