

The Playshelter at Snowfields

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Norma Ball

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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 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

The Playshelter at Snowfields registered in 2004 and operates from Snowfields Primary School in the London Borough of Southwark. It has access to two large halls, a spacious classroom, a dining room and a large secure playground. In total there are 44 children on roll, seven of whom are in Early Years Foundation Stage. At any one time Playshelter is able to care for up to 40 children between the ages of four and eight years, of whom eight may be in the early years age range. Children up to the age of 12 years also attend the play-scheme including any with particular needs. The scheme is privately run and offers full day care during four weeks in the summer holidays from 08.00 to 18.00 each weekday. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Full day care is also offered in the Easter holiday, and autumn and spring half terms holidays. The Playshelter provides a service for children from various schools in Southwark but also draws children from further afield, especially if their parents work nearby. Children bring their own packed lunches. A team of nine staff work with children, depending on the number present and activities planned. The majority of staff hold relevant child care qualifications. Playshelter is also register on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the childcare register.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding. Playshelter provides a secure, welcoming and stimulating environment for all children. Energetic and efficient leadership underpins the excellent relationships and inclusive ethos of this outstanding play-scheme. The safety and welfare of children is rigorously managed. An extensive range of enjoyable learning experiences are carefully planned to ensure that the needs and abilities of all children are met extremely well. Good relationships at every level have a positive impact on the confidence and excellent behaviour of children. Excellent resources and activities, and the great enjoyment shown by children make an outstanding contribution to their learning.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- ensure that a first aid box accompanies children when activities are based in the playground

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The leadership and management of this play scheme is of a high order and ensures an exciting and enjoyable learning experience for children within a well organised and safe environment. Staff are carefully selected and full safeguarding

checks have been carried out. Staff are enthusiastic and work as a close and dedicated team. They meet regularly with managers to evaluate all aspects of the work of the play-scheme and identify where improvements can be made in terms of the activities and outings planned for children, but reviews of the allocation of staff as key workers has yet to take place. Parents and children are also encouraged to be part of the review process to ensure all views are valued.

The safety and security of children is given the highest priority by all staff both in Snowfields and on the many trips and visits made by children. Regular risk assessments are carried out for all activities. Staff are well trained for their roles and the accommodation is secure ensuring no unauthorised entry. The playground activities are carefully supervised but no first aid kit is taken to the playground, which is some distance from the indoor provision, for the immediate care of minor injuries. Arrangements for the registration of children each day and their collection are meticulous. Policies and procedures for identifying potential risks in the setting, for liaising with parents and for dealing with a range of emergencies are very effective. Nominated staff have responsibility for issues relating to child protection and through the allocation of key workers the needs of all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well managed. The achievements of the scheme thus far, the regular and disciplined approach to evaluating its own effectiveness and the enthusiasm and ambitious drive of the staff team means there is excellent capacity to improve further.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Staff provide an excellent and varied programme of play activity which meets the needs of individual children extremely well. Activities are adjusted based on regular staff observations of children's involvement, interest and development. Children's progress is shared informally with parents. As a result of evaluation of assessment procedures all staff are currently working on refining and improving the recording of observations. Planning is a strength of the setting and ensures that each day contains a well balanced mix of physical, creative and practical learning experiences which are both fun and interesting. Activity plans show an excellent balance between indoor and outdoor activities. Adults also encourage independent child initiated activities to allow children to follow their own interests and explore play opportunities imaginatively. Staff are adept at gently encouraging children, talking to them and exploring ideas to ensure the maximum benefit is gained from all learning time. Children enjoy the full range of activities, playing enthusiastically and safely. The inclusive and very happy ethos of the setting is supported by the excellent behaviour and the caring attitude of older children who act as buddies to the younger ones both in activities and when at play. Children are confident they can confide their problems in the adults who care for them. Arrangements for lunch and afternoon snacks are excellent and ensure children eat healthily and have very good opportunities to relax and socialise.

An excellent range of resources are very well deployed and children's work is displayed with pride in the classroom and main hall. One boy took great pleasure in showing the mask he had just made saying enthusiastically, 'It's my mask. I decided how to do it and I really liked sprinkling the glitter on it because that made

it the best it could be'. A quiet book corner is available for children to share a book or just curl up quietly on their own. Board games, measuring and weighing and talking with staff help extend children's vocabulary and understanding of basic writing skills and numbers. Excellent use is made of the wealth of amenities in London with visits arranged to museums, places of historic interest, as well as visits to the cinema, bowling or even horse riding, to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world. Social skills and an awareness for healthy eating and healthy life style are well focused by staff, especially during the lunch break which is a sociable and relaxed time shared by children and adults. Children and parents appreciate the outstanding provision of Playshelter. One child said, 'I really love it here. I know lots of my school friends would like to have this much fun. I always tell my mum about the great things we do. I did that picture there, isn't it cool'.

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?	1
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	1

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	1

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	1
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	1
How well are children helped to stay safe?	1
How well are children helped to be healthy?	1
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	1
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	1

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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