



Office for Standards  
in Education

## COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN 203892

DfES Number: 581825

### INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 16/11/2004  
Inspector Name Patricia Mary Champion

### SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Sessional Day Care  
Setting Name Ramsden Preschool  
Setting Address Dowsett Lane  
Ramsden Heath  
Billericay  
Essex  
CM11 1JL

### REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name The Committee of Ramsden Pre-School 5088621 1105415

### ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Ramsden Pre-School  
Address 6 Stoney Hills  
Ramsden Heath  
Billericay  
Essex  
CM11 1JD

## ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

### Information about the setting

Ramsden Pre-School is run by a committee. It was founded in 1964 and moved into the current premises in 1999. The pre-school operates from the main hall and one room of the village hall building. This is located in a rural setting within walking distance of the local primary school. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Session times are from 09:30 until 12:15, except for Tuesday, which is 09:30 until 12:00.

There are currently 54 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these 43 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have special needs.

The pre-school employs 12 staff who work directly with the children. Five of the staff, including the supervisor hold early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The pre-school also employs a business manager, who is a qualified primary teacher. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP), the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA) and the Billericay Early Years Forum.

### How good is the Day Care?

Ramsden Pre-School provides good quality care for children.

Effective use is made of staff, space and resources so that children are well cared for. The enthusiastic staff team ensures that the pre-school operates in an efficient way. All children have settled into their surroundings, know the routine and freely choose their activities throughout the session. The premises are made welcoming and a wide range of good quality equipment ensures that children are cared for in a comfortable environment. The required documentation is mostly in place. A sound

set of policies and procedures underpin the practice of the group, although they have not yet been updated to meet the revised National Standards.

Children's welfare and safety is a paramount consideration and staff undertake a daily risk assessment inside the premises. The staff and children all know about fire safety procedures and access to the provision is monitored to keep children safe. Staff sensitively promote good hygiene procedures and healthy eating. They are well aware of their child protection responsibilities.

A balance of spontaneous and structured play is provided through the wide range of activities planned for each day. Good use is made of outings and the neighbouring recreational field to provide interesting learning experiences. The children are happy, confident and enjoy their play. The staff promote language development by asking questions, reading stories and singing songs and children respond well to the staff's high expectations for behaviour and play co-operatively with each other. The staff know the children well and show high levels of care and concern for their individual needs. A strong system is in place to support children with special needs.

There is a friendly partnership with parents; they have full access to information about the setting and are kept informed about their individual children through daily contact with staff and access to their records.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

Following the last inspection staff have been cleared through Ofsted and the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). There is now an action plan for training detailing how the group are working towards half the staff holding early years qualifications. One member of staff is currently training and three other staff plan to start their courses in September 2005.

Steps have been taken to improve the welfare and safety of children by resolving the issue of the problematic fire doors.

#### **What is being done well?**

- There is an effective key worker system and the staff develop very good relationships with the children. They spend time working directly with the children, providing a warm and caring environment where children feel happy and settle well into the pre-school. There are very effective arrangements for sharing records with parents to keep them informed of their child's progress.
- The staff work hard to make the premises welcoming to children and parents. Although they are unable to permanently exhibit posters or artwork they use display boards to good effect.
- All staff consistently apply comprehensive safety procedures. They are vigilant about the children's security.
- There is a clear policy covering equality and diversity. Resources such as books, dolls and role play equipment reflect cultural differences. Prior to a child starting the pre-school, parents provide written information on an "All

about me" form so that staff understand relevant individual needs. All children are included in activities and encouraged to feel valued and good about themselves.

- There is a very effective system in place to support children with special needs. The appointed Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) is well qualified, enthusiastic about her role and works with professionals to enable children to reach their full potential.
- Staff work calmly with children and have positive strategies, promoting respect by sharing and turn taking. There are visual prompts displayed for children to boost self-esteem. Children behave well and have a clear understanding of the boundaries.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- consent agreements
- policies and procedures within the operational plan.

#### **PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)**

There are no complaints to report.

#### **Outcome of the inspection**

Good

#### **CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION**

*All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.*

*As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.*

#### **WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**

#### **The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
7	Request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.
14	Review and update policies and procedures to meet the revised National

	Standards and develop the operational plan. (This refers to Standards 2, 7, 10 and 12)
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## INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

### How effective is the nursery education?

The provision for nursery education at Ramsden Pre-school is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals.

Teaching is very good. The staff have developed a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage through training or by following the detailed written planning. Each focussed activity is labelled and has a learning outcome linked to the stepping stones. Key workers consistently observe children as they learn through play and keep detailed records of their achievements and progress. Staff support and promote the children's language skills, extending their vocabulary and using conversation to encourage them to think and develop their knowledge. Activities are well managed, sustaining children's interest, imagination and participation. Children are provided with frequent praise and encouragement, fostering good self-esteem. They behave extremely well in response to the high expectations and support of staff. Provision for children who need extra support is excellent.

Leadership and management are very good. The supervisor and deputy are responsible for the day to day running of the group and are strongly supported by the pre-school management committee and the staff team. Ideas are shared at the staff meetings and all staff have input in delivering the curriculum. Staff appraisals are held and activities are now evaluated. The staff team are strongly committed to the improvement of care and education for all children.

Staff have built up very good relationships with parents. A welcoming environment is provided in which parents are able to discuss their child's development and written reports are shared. Several parents were spoken to, they are all very happy with the care and education their children receive.

### What is being done well?

- The staff are enthusiastic and work well as a team. They have an effective knowledge of how children learn and plan a wide range of stimulating activities to enrich each individual child's learning.
- Children are confident, independent learners, able to choose and initiate their own activities and explore new experiences. They are making very good progress in all areas of learning.
- Planning is fully inclusive, taking into account the developmental level of the individual children. Key workers are completing individual learning plans for each child. The planning cycle is comprehensive and complete, therefore informing the next steps of learning.
- Excellent use is made of the local environment to help develop all areas of the children's learning. As well as the pre-school's own outdoor play area they benefit from the adjacent recreational park. Every child brings a pair of

Wellington boots each day. The children go on regular nature walks around the park to find spider webs, molehills and leaves. Good use is made of venues such as Tropical Wings to further extend the children's knowledge and understanding of the world.

- Thoughtfully prepared role-play encourages children to use their imagination and to re-enact familiar scenarios. Plans show how the role-play area changes regularly and is developed over time. Children enjoy playing with the excellent range of resources, props and puppets. The provision of both real and play food with a range of kitchen equipment and utensils, ensures role-play of sustained quality.

#### **What needs to be improved?**

- continue to evaluate activities and use of resources in order to maintain high standards.

#### **What has improved since the last inspection?**

The last inspection for nursery education was undertaken in July 2000 prior to the current supervisor taking up her post. Very good progress has been made and all issues raised have been addressed effectively.

The children's assessment records are now comprehensive and link directly to all areas of learning and the stepping stones. The key workers observe and record what children do and use their observations to plan the next steps for each child's play, learning and development.

Parents and carers are now fully informed about daily activities. Good use is made of notice boards in the entrance hall to share the learning outcomes for each planned activity. Parents are well informed about the letter or number of the week and children bring in items to link with the theme. The staff have also devised a personal, social and emotional chart, where they praise and encourage children who have helped the staff or their friends. This boosts the children's self esteem.

The staff are now using the outdoor area daily and this is included within the planning. They take a range of equipment outdoors and plan appropriate activities. Children wear Wellington boots and warm coats and enjoy the opportunity for large outdoor physical movement.

## SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

### PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are busy, interested in their play and curious about the activities. They demonstrate high levels of concentration when completing their tasks and confidence in self-care by independently washing their hands, managing snack or putting on their own boots. Children are building strong relationships with the staff and show care and concern for each other. They demonstrate good social skills by sharing equipment, taking turns on the computer and showing respect by thanking their peers.

### COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Very Good

Children's spoken language is developing well. They express their feelings and imagined experiences in puppet shows and role play situations. Activities are planned to develop descriptive language. Children recognise their name and have started to link sounds with letters. Children write for a purpose, making lists within role-play. Older children are writing their name on artwork and practise handwriting with one to one support. Books are handled carefully and looked at for enjoyment.

### MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children show interest in numbers and counting. They can reliably count up to ten and higher with support. Children recognise numerals as labels and can name shapes in the environment. They participate in meaningful activities such as working out how many pieces of apple are needed for snack time. They follow patterns when threading beads. They are starting to understand the concept of number problems by comparing and sorting objects and using the vocabulary involved in calculation.

### KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Very Good

Many first hand experiences are provided for children through observing the weather and going on nature walks. They explore and investigate when playing with sand and water. Children mix icing sugar when decorating biscuits. They make models using construction toys. Staff support children's investigations of other cultures and customs. Children extend their understanding of information technology by using the computer, Leap Pad toy and tape recorder.



### **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy developing their coordination and balancing skills both indoors and outside. Children move confidently and have a good awareness of space as they climb inside the barrel and jump on the trampoline. The parachute games are particularly effective for practising new physical skills. Children have very good opportunities to manipulate dough by kneading and squeezing. They use small tools and utensils in a variety of activities with increasing control.

### **CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT**

Judgement: Very Good

Children enjoy exploring colour and texture through a range of media and materials. They enjoy mixing colours during the free painting activity and with 1:1 adult support make Christmas decorations. Children join in enthusiastically, singing familiar tunes and are building up a repertoire of nursery rhymes. Imaginative play is extremely well planned. Children have opportunities to play musical instruments. Children use their senses when identifying noises heard on the tape recorder.

**Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.**

## **OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION**

The provision is acceptable and is of high quality. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

## **WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT**

*There are no significant weaknesses to report, but considerations should be given to improving the following:*

- There are no significant weaknesses to report, but consideration should be given to improving the following:
- continue to evaluate activities and the use of resources to maintain consistency regarding the quality of nursery education provided at each session and further enhance children's learning experiences.

*The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.*

## **SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS**

### **STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON**

*Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.*

### **STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION**

*The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.*

### **STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY**

*The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.*

### **STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

*The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.*

### **STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT**

*Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.*

### **STANDARD 6 - SAFETY**

*The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.*

### **STANDARD 7 - HEALTH**

*The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.*

### **STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK**

*Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.*

### **STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES**

*The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.*

### **STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)**

*The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is*

*proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.*

#### **STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR**

*Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.*

#### **STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS**

*The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.*

#### **STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION**

*The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.*

#### **STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION**

*Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.*