

Rackets Pre-School Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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29/03/2011

Inspector

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Setting address

E.A.L.T.S, 14A Westbourne Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham,
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Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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).

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.

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Description of the setting

Rackets Pre-School Nursery opened in 1990. The nursery is situated in the club house of Edgbaston Archery and Lawn Tennis Club (E.A.L.T.S) and operates from four rooms within the building. The nursery serves the local area and has links with local schools. There is a fully enclosed play area available for outdoor play and the nursery also has its own entrance into the Botanical Garden. They make daily use of the children's play area within the gardens and the associated facilities.

A maximum of 32 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 64 children attending who are within the early years age range. Of these, 33 children receive funding for early years provision. This provision is registered by Ofsted on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register.

The setting supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, and who speak English as an additional language. Care is provided at ground floor level and ramps are available for access into the building and outdoor area.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9am until 3pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

The setting employs 14 members of childcare staff and many hold appropriate early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification Level 2, 3 and 4. There is one member of staff with Qualified Teacher Status and two members of staff are currently working towards higher level qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and is currently working towards a recognised quality improvement programme.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are safeguarded and exceptionally well cared for within this inclusive nursery setting. Their unique welfare, learning and development needs are extremely well known and catered for, ensuring children receive care and activities that are tailored to meet their needs. The effective leadership of the nursery and the qualified and committed staff team successfully support children to make outstanding progress in their learning and development. Excellent arrangements for partnership working with parents and other professionals contribute significantly to the high standards achieved. Regular self-evaluation by the manager, staff team, parents and children ensures that most priorities for future development are promptly identified and acted on, resulting in a service that is responsive to the needs of all of its users.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- update the safeguarding children policy and procedure to ensure it reflects the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures
- develop further systems of self-evaluation to ensure the setting's strengths and priorities for development are identified.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are extremely well cared for in this safe and secure early years setting. They are effectively safeguarded as the vast majority of the setting's policies and procedures are effective, current and up-to-date. Staff implement these and ensure parents are made fully aware of how the care of their children is organised. Staff have a strong understanding of their responsibilities to protect children in their care and have a clear knowledge of the procedures to follow in the event of a concern about a child. However, although recently reviewed, the written safeguarding policies and procedures have not been updated to fully reflect changes from the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB). However, the impact on children is minimal as staff clearly understand the correct referral procedures, with many staff having attended safeguarding training. In other respects, all of the required documentation for the safe and efficient management of the setting is well maintained. Children are well supervised at all times and there are robust systems for the recruitment, vetting and induction of staff, which ensure that children are cared for by suitable and knowledgeable adults who fully understand their roles and responsibilities. Staff are subject to regular appraisals and have excellent opportunities to develop and extend their professional knowledge and skills through access to relevant training. For example, through degree level qualifications and training to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children's care environment is safe and secure, and detailed written risk assessments and thorough daily checks ensure that positive action is taken to minimise potential hazards to children.

The manager and her staff team work exceptionally well together, with all involved placing children's best interests at the heart of their work. They implement the Early Years Foundation Stage with great success and are committed to ensuring children receive high quality care and education. Together they work with parents, children and other professionals to evaluate the service provided. However, while they have a good understanding of their many strengths, systems of self-evaluation are yet to fully identify all priorities for future development that will improve the quality of provision for all children. As a result, some areas requiring improvement have been overlooked. Positive action has been taken to address both recommendations raised at the previous inspection, which has positively impacted on children's care and learning. Staff are skilled in their work with children and are very well deployed to ensure children receive support in line with their unique learning and development needs. They actively engage in children's play, asking them questions to encourage and further their thinking and revisit activities and discussions to help children consolidate their learning. For example,

staff helping children to gain understanding of the French language, speak with them in French throughout the session and encourage them to tell other staff and children what they have learned. The setting is fully inclusive and all children receive care and education that is tailored to meet their unique learning and development needs.

Partnerships with children's parents are strong and contribute significantly to children's well-being and development. Staff actively seek their views and involve them in the life of the setting. Parents receive detailed information about the nursery and are kept well informed of current events through regular newsletters and well-presented displays. They receive an excellent range of information about the early years curriculum and their children's individual learning plans and assessment records. Children's family members are warmly welcomed into the setting to come and deliver activities with children. For example, helping them to create Mother's Day cards and to share Chinese artefacts with children when exploring Chinese New Year. Parents are encouraged to support their children's learning at home. For example, Alfie the albatross toy goes home with children, and with their families they write about their adventures during their time together. Children then share their activities with other children on their return to the setting. Feedback from parents and other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage at the inspection demonstrates their strong satisfaction with the staff and the care and education provided for children. The nursery has excellent systems in place for sharing information with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage. This ensures continuity and cohesion in children's care and learning when they attend more than one setting and supports their transition to school. Excellent partnerships with professionals from external agencies ensure all children benefit from care and learning opportunities that are tailored to strongly support their individual needs. The nursery environment is fully inclusive, and highly effective procedures are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities to ensure they receive as much support as possible. Children who speak English as an additional language are extremely well supported and highly positive action is taken to ensure that the care and learning environment is accessible, enabling and inclusive to all children who attend.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children relish their learning and make outstanding progress towards the early learning goals in relation to their starting points, capabilities and interests. They are active learners, are creative and think critically. They work extremely well independently and also with each other. Continuous systems of observation, assessment and planning ensure that children are provided with an excellent range of activities that support their unique learning and development needs. Staff have expert knowledge of child development and ensure that all children are provided with a vast range of adult-led and child-initiated play and games that cater for all six areas of learning. They successfully support and extend children's knowledge and understanding and provide many opportunities for children to consolidate their learning. Children are confident and communicate extremely well. They are articulate speakers and engage in conversations, taking turns and listening to

others. They enthusiastically join in with familiar rhymes and songs, acting out the associated actions. They play extremely well with their peers and engage others in their play, asking 'do you want to do this too?' when making Mother's Day cards. Children's independence is developing extremely well. They make choices and decisions about what they would like to play with and how they would like to spend their time. They freely flow between indoor and outdoor areas, selecting which toys and activities they would like to take part in from the wide range available to them.

Children make excellent use of and thoroughly enjoy daily access to the Botanical Gardens. They test and develop their physical skills and control on large scale apparatus in the adventure playground. They enjoy exploring the great outdoors and observe change as they watch frog spawn change into tadpoles and frogs and watch with interest as plants grow and develop throughout the year. Children also play in the setting's outdoor play area. They develop their pedaling skills using a range of bikes and gain skills when rolling hoops to one another. They play tennis with increasing skill and kick, catch and throw balls. Although children develop an understanding of good hygiene practice at certain times of the day, there are missed opportunities for children to learn about the importance of washing their hands before they eat their snack. Children enjoy healthy snacks which meet with their individual dietary needs and offer plenty of variety and choice. They have access to fresh drinking water at all times and develop their independence as they pour themselves a drink from the water bottle throughout the day. Many of the children recognise that they are thirsty after physical activity and staff promote their understanding that they should re-hydrate their bodies. Children have recently planted seeds in their onsite allotment where they tend to and observe the growth of potatoes, pumpkins, carrots and beans. These they will then share with their families and enjoy tasting within the setting. Children have fantastic opportunities to learn about keeping themselves safe. They regularly take part in emergency evacuation practices and develop understanding of stranger danger through discussion and vigilance when playing outdoors. They understand and follow agreed safety rules when playing at the Botanical Gardens and fully understand which areas they are allowed to play in. They wear high visibility jackets to ensure they can be easily seen at all times and are very well supervised by staff. Children benefit greatly from external professionals, such as, road safety specialists visiting the setting to talk to the children about safe and sensible road crossing techniques. They practise what they have learned when out for a walk to local shops. Children's behaviour is exemplary and they are busy and occupied in their play. They cooperate, share and take turns with their peers and benefit from much warm praise and encouragement offered to them by staff for their efforts and achievements. For example, as they show other children the Easter bonnets they have carefully created. Children learn about their community as they are taken on trips to indoor play areas, local nature centres and to the theatre. Parents are invited to join their children on outings to support their learning, for example, to farms and for a Christmas train ride.

Children enjoy books and listening to stories. Staff enthusiastically read to the children in imaginative and interactive ways that fully promote children's involvement in the story. For example, they ask children about what they think might happen next and question the children on the story, for example, why they

think the character needs an umbrella. Stories are well chosen to develop children's knowledge of, for example, history. They engage in conversations about dinosaurs and penny farthings and how the world has changed. Children's awareness of languages other than English is developing very well. For example, they learn French vocabulary in sessions with a French-speaking member of staff. They play games and learn how to introduce themselves and say hello. They learn about letters and sounds, vocalising these and singing along to songs about letters of the alphabet. Children have many opportunities to make marks, for example, as they write their names and make marks in their Mother's Day cards. Some of the children are writing their names very well, whilst others begin to form recognisable letters. Children's problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills are developing extremely well. They confidently count as part of the daily routine, for example, as they count together the 31 children present. Staff expertly integrate mathematical language into everyday play and games, for example, as they count down from ten to one when waiting for the rocket in the story to blast off.

Children celebrate festivals throughout the year in a meaningful and fun way. For example, they create rangoli patterns on their hands when exploring Diwali and enjoy tasting Chinese foods and developing their imaginations in the role play Chinese restaurant when looking into Chinese New Year. Staff work in partnership with parents over which celebrations they would like integrated into yearly plans to ensure they reflect the children's backgrounds and beliefs. Children are creative and enjoy making collage pictures and making marks as they paint outdoors with water. Their physical development is monitored and celebrated as children observe changes to their weight and height. These are recorded in children's development files as a lasting memento of their time at the setting. They learn about the care of birds as they create feeders to ensure they are well fed throughout the year. They enjoy using their imaginations to act out familiar stories. For example, as they recreate going on a bear hunt around the garden; exploring gloomy caves and stepping in mud.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	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
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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