

Rainbow Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 508748
Inspection date 11/05/2011
Inspector Patricia Champion

Setting address Chelmer Village Hall, Chelmer Village, CHELMSFORD,
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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*.

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Description of the setting

Rainbow Pre-school is run by a committee. It opened in 1982 and operates from the main hall, lobby and additional room within the Chelmer Village Hall in Chelmsford, Essex. All children share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area. A maximum of 40 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Session times are from 8.30am until 12pm and from 12.30pm until 3.30pm.

There are currently 86 children aged from two to five years on roll. Children aged three and four years receive funding for early 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 educational needs and/or disabilities. The provision is registered with Ofsted on the Early Years Register.

The pre-school employs 11 staff, of whom seven, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is inadequate.

Children are happy, settled and make good progress in their learning. The effective sharing of information with parents and other professionals enhances the children's learning and development. An inclusive and generally stimulating environment is provided where every child really matters. However, very limited self-evaluation, staff appraisals or monitoring of the pre-school impact on the safety and well-being of the children. There are breaches of specific welfare requirements in relation to meeting the requirements for first aid and keeping appropriate records regarding the staff's suitability checks. Consequently, the management of the pre-school is not effectively safeguarding children's welfare.

Overall, the early years provision requires significant improvement. The registered person is given a Notice to Improve that sets out actions to be carried out.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To comply with the requirements of the EYFS the registered person must take the following action by the specified date:

- ensure that at least one person who has a current paediatric first aid certificate is on the premises at all times when children are present (Safeguarding and promoting children's welfare) 27/05/2011
- ensure that the information used to assess suitability 27/05/2011

includes the unique reference numbers of Criminal Records Bureau disclosures and the date on which they were obtained (Suitable people).

To improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- develop further the plans for the refurbishment of the additional room to provide a richer and more varied environment and to ensure that indoor spaces are planned so that they can be used flexibly
- develop self-evaluation and reflective practice to identify the areas for development and widen the scope for improvements
- improve the system for staff appraisals to identify the training needs of staff.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Most of the essential documentation that supports the smooth running of the pre-school is easily accessible for inspection. The written policies and procedures have recently been updated and there are plans to share these new documents with parents. Suitable risk assessment is undertaken to ensure that children are safe on the premises and while on outings. The safeguarding policy is clear and in line with the requirements. However, children's safety is compromised as some safeguarding procedures are not fully robust and some details about the staff's enhanced disclosures through the Criminal Records Bureau are not held on the premises. Although staff have basic knowledge of how to deal with minor injuries, none of the staff team hold a current first aid certificate. These breaches of specific welfare requirements potentially impact on the safety of the children.

Successful improvements since the last inspection include the renovation of the outdoor area and the pre-school has recently acquired use of an additional room. The staff team are aware that refurbishing this room will provide greater flexibility in space and offer an even richer and more varied play environment. While self-evaluation is in the early stages of development, there is no formal method of monitoring the success of how the pre-school operates in relation to the Early Years Foundation Stage. Although a few areas for improvement have been identified, there is not a strong enough focus on addressing the weaknesses. For example, missing details in important documentation are not identified and action is not always taken in a timely way. While there are opportunities for staff to attend training courses, priority has not been given to arranging first aid training when certificates lapse.

Parents and carers are encouraged to share what they know about their child when they first start, which helps staff to have a secure knowledge of each child's background and needs. The staff promote and support diversity well to help the children understand the society they live in. This ensures that children feel good about themselves and acquire a positive attitude towards each others' differences. The staff team work very well together, supporting each other to ensure consistency of care for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities.

This includes liaising with specialist teachers or therapists, offering one-to-one support, using Makaton sign language and devising visual tools to enhance understanding.

The partnership with parents and carers is friendly and very helpful. Good quality information is provided for the families that use the pre-school. Display boards include information about planned activities and there is a very informative and easily accessible website. Good quality verbal feedback is also given and key persons encourage parents to become involved by contributing observations of children's achievements at home. Parents also become involved in their children's learning in other meaningful ways. For example, a successful book share scheme operates. Parents are invited to contribute ideas and suggestions through questionnaires. They make complementary comments about the pre-school and the staff team. The staff work very effectively with teaching staff from the local primary schools to ensure that children confidently start full-time education. Links have also been developed with other early years settings that children attend to enhance continuity in their learning.

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

Children receive a warm and friendly greeting from the staff when they arrive at the pre-school and most separate from parents confidently and are eager to play and learn. A good variety of activities are planned, both indoors and outside, to enhance children's future economic wellbeing through developing their problem solving, numeracy, literacy and technology skills. A comfortable area has been created where children can choose to play quietly or look at books. Easy access is provided to the laptop each day and consequently, children are very confident as they adeptly use the mouse to control movements on screen when they play educational computer programs. Children understand the need to share or take turns as they independently use timers and can explain how long they need to wait.

An effective key person system ensures that individual children's learning is monitored and next steps are highlighted and planned for. All staff observe children and make notes to inform records and identify individual learning priorities. This ensures that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. The staff are directly involved in the children's learning and actively encourage them to join in, try new games and extend their skills. Children enjoy the warm, caring and playful interaction of the staff. Good use is made of careful questioning that encourages children to think and give interesting answers. Children communicate clearly and confidently and give animated responses when they chat to the staff and visitors about real and imagined experiences.

There are good opportunities for children's creative and imaginative play through resources that are tactile and sensory. Children enjoy using all of their senses investigating natural and man-made materials such as shells and bark or jelly and bubble wrap. They imaginatively act out role play scenarios such as taking a pet to the vets or making appointments and working in an office. The good quality and

easily accessible resources mean that children can make decisions and incorporate their own ideas in tasks and activities. Their problem solving and scientific skills are developing well as they work out the best way to make paper aeroplanes, or through investigating how the sun dries their water and chalk marks on the paving outdoors.

The opportunities for exercise and fresh air and appropriate hygiene routines ensure that children remain healthy. Children eat wholesome, freshly cooked snacks such as pizzas, in social groups. Drinking water is freely accessible so that children can independently pour themselves a drink when they feel thirsty. Children behave responsibly and know what is expected of them. They are told about safety in the various areas of the pre-school and this message is re-enforced throughout each session. Fire drills are regularly practised so that children and staff can swiftly evacuate the premises in an emergency. However, children may have a false sense of security due to the safeguarding issues detailed earlier in this report.

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?	4
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	3

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	3
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	4
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	4
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	3
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	4
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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