

Dinosaurs Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number

140414

Inspection date

21/06/2011

Inspector

Jill Nugent

Setting address

Campsbourne Play Centre, Newland Road, Hornsey, N8
7SL

Telephone number

020 8341 9008

Email

Type of setting

Childcare on non-domestic premises

The Office for Standards in Education, Children's Services and Skills (Ofsted) regulates and inspects to achieve excellence in the care of children and young people, and in education and skills for learners of all ages. It regulates and inspects childcare and children's social care, and inspects the Children and Family Court Advisory Support Service (Cafcass), schools, colleges, initial teacher training, work-based learning and skills training, adult and community learning, and education and training in prisons and other secure establishments. It assesses council children's services, and inspects services for looked after children, safeguarding and child protection.

If you would like a copy of this document in a different format, such as large print or Braille, please telephone 0300 123 1231, or email enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk.

You may copy all or parts of this document for non-commercial educational purposes, as long as you give details of the source and date of publication and do not alter the information in any way.

T: 0300 123 1231
Textphone: 0161 618 8524
E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk
W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

© Crown copyright 2011

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.

Please see our website for more information about each childcare provider. We publish inspection reports, conditions of registration and details of complaints we receive where we or the provider take action to meet the requirements of registration.

Description of the setting

Dinosaurs Playgroup registered in 1999. It operates from the Campsbourne Playcentre, adjacent to Alexandra Palace Park in the London Borough of Haringey. Children have the use of one room in the centre and access to a secure outdoor play area. The playgroup is in receipt of funding for free early years education. It is open during term-time from 9.15am until 12.45pm every weekday, except on Fridays when it closes at 11.50pm.

The playgroup is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. A maximum of 16 children may attend the setting at any one time. Of these, none may be under two years. There are currently 22 children in the early years age group on roll and four staff employed to work with the children. All staff have appropriate early years childcare qualifications. The playgroup supports children who have special educational needs and/or difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is satisfactory.

The playgroup provides a welcoming play environment for children where they enjoy a variety of indoor and outdoor activities. Staff prioritise children's well-being through their attention to individual needs, although they are not sufficiently rigorous regarding the promotion of safe and healthy lifestyles. Their systems for supporting children's learning are effective in promoting learning but not as effective in extending learning. Children benefit especially from opportunities to be creative in arts and crafts, although the play environment is not sufficiently enabling in other areas. Staff liaise with parents to ensure that children are well cared for and happy, however there is limited feedback about children's progress. The manager encourages staff to reflect on their practice so that they maintain a capacity for continual improvement. However, she is not rigorous in maintaining an effective organisational framework which enables staff to strive towards better outcomes for all children.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To meet the specific requirements of the EYFS, the registered person must:

- review the risk assessment regularly, at least once a year or more frequently when the need arises (Safeguarding and welfare) 29/07/2011
- take all reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children, both indoors and outdoors, are kept to a minimum (Safeguarding and welfare). 29/07/2011

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

- provide parents with up-to-date information about the setting's policies and procedures, and actively encourage them to be more involved in their children's learning
- review the use of play space and resources in order to provide more enabling indoor and outdoor learning environments for all children
- review the system of observational assessment and planning, to enable staff to challenge and extend children in different learning situations
- review the organisation of snack and lunch times, so that children are encouraged to become more independent, and more aware of personal health and safety issues.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The playgroup's documentation provides a basis for staff's practice, although policies and procedures are not reviewed regularly, and as a result, parents do not always receive up-to-date information about the playgroup's procedures for safeguarding children. Staff carry out risk assessments of the premises and also daily safety checks. However, risk assessments are not carried out regularly, that is, at least once a year. This is a breach of requirements. Neither are safety checks sufficiently well organised, so that staff can take all reasonable steps to minimise risks to children on the premises. This is also a breach of requirements. As a result, there is a potential risk of accidental injury to children for example, from untidy or broken equipment in the outdoor play area.

Staff risk assess all outings that children take part in, to ensure that safety guidelines are adhered to on outings. Staff have recently updated their training in child protection, and also first aid, and know what to do if they have any concerns relating to child protection. Children's attendance and medical records are well maintained and all staff are aware of any special dietary needs. Children take part in regular evacuation practises so that they know how to evacuate the building in the event of an emergency.

Staff set up various activities in the playroom each day to interest children when they arrive, including a focused creative activity linked to a theme. Children are able to access resources that promote learning in each of the six learning areas, and are well supported by staff who join in and enhance their play. However, the choice of activities is limited at times, leading to children becoming a little restless before outdoor play is made available. The range of learning opportunities is not mirrored in the organisation of the outdoor play area, leaving children with very limited choices at this time, as all indoor resources and activities are cleared away.

The playgroup maintains good adult to child ratios. Staff supervise children well, encouraging them to participate in activities and engaging with them in conversation. As a result, children feel valued and develop a sense of belonging.

Children develop close relationships with others in the group and enjoy playing with friends. Staff promote an awareness of diversity, through providing resources that reflect diversity in a wider world, and also planning activities around cultural and religious festivals. They help children to share their own cultural backgrounds within the setting, through their links with families.

Staff work in partnership with parents and carers, providing information about the Early Years Foundation Stage for new parents and exchanging information with parents on a daily basis. Parents are very happy with the care provided for their children at playgroup and especially appreciate their children's profile books, containing collections of artwork and photographs. These provide a visual record of children's time at playgroup. However, parents are not actively encouraged to be involved in their children's learning whilst at playgroup for example, through having easy access to children's observation folders or opportunities to share information more formally with key persons.

The manager is aware of the need to work in partnership with other professionals and providers, in order to provide continuity of care for all children. In particular she works closely with other professionals, to support children who have special educational needs. She works alongside staff in the setting, encouraging them to take on different responsibilities and to develop their own practice, through attending extra training events. She has recently introduced a process of self-evaluation to encourage reflective practice amongst staff. They are aware of their strengths and are also beginning to highlight aspects for further improvement for example, the planning of the educational programme and access to outdoor play.

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

Children are well-settled at playgroup and on arrival each day, become happily involved in explorative play. For example, they enjoy exploring magnets and modelling materials, drawing pictures and sharing books. They are well supported by staff who show an interest in children's choice of activity, talk with them and offer help if needed. For example, staff interact to increase children's awareness of shapes as they match pictures or cut play dough. Children are enthused as they take part in creative activities, investigating different materials and learning new techniques. They enjoy opportunities for role play and devise imaginary situations with friends in a 'home' corner. They have much fun outdoors playing with sand and water, discovering the different properties of these as they dig, carry and pour together.

Staff make regular observations of children's learning. They keep records of their observations in order to guide their planning for individual children and thereby, meet their learning needs. They ensure that children are making progress in all learning areas by noting their achievements in individual progress records. However, the system is not yet effective in enabling staff to pick out relevant next steps of learning for each child. This means that their plans for each week's 'focus children' are not adequately focused, to move those children on in their learning.

Consequently staff do not make the most of opportunities, to challenge and extend children in their learning, or to actively encourage the acquisition of useful skills for the future. Although children enjoy a 'circle time' after lunch, when they can join in songs and rhymes, staff do not always plan for group times to be beneficial learning experiences for all children for example, extending children's learning around a story or theme.

Children are confident in approaching adults and are well-behaved, responding positively to instructions from staff. They show interest in the activities on offer and are keen to have a go at special creative activities. They enjoy the social aspect of lunchtimes as they sit around the tables eating and chatting. However, snack and lunchtimes are not well organised to promote children's learning. At snack time children wander around the playroom eating their snacks and are not made aware of the associated risks to their personal health and safety. At lunchtimes, although there is an interesting menu on display with various healthy options, in practice children are not always offered highly nutritional meals for example, lunches prepared using fresh ingredients. Neither do staff make good use of lunchtimes to encourage children's independence through, for instance, serving themselves at the table. Children benefit from opportunities to enjoy physical activities outdoors and this encourages them to develop different skills using resources such as, swings, balls and climbing equipment.

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?	3
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	3
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	3
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	3
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	3
--	---

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	3
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	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
--	-----