

Rainbow Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sarah Williams

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Type of setting Childcare - Non-Domestic

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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 12noon and from 12.30pm until 3.30pm.

There are currently 75 children aged from two to five years on roll. Children aged three- and four-years-old 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 good.

Overall, children enjoy their time at the pre-school and have access to a range of activities and experiences within each session planned by the dedicated staff team. However, use of resources does not always maximise learning potential in activities. Staff know the children well and all of them make good progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points and capabilities. However, not all parents are active in contributing ideas to the planning cycle. Children's health and well being are generally well catered for, although, some aspects of hand washing are less effective in minimising cross-infection. Staff have established effective relationships with other settings and outside agencies to ensure children's individual needs are met. Self-evaluation has had limited impact on areas for development, but there is now a well-targeted action plan designed to bring about significant improvements and to ensure practice continues to evolve positively.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- review use of resources and staff deployment to maximise children's learning from the full range of activities offered
- review hand washing procedures in all areas to ensure children are fully protected from cross-infection, which may arise from shared water
- review systems for including parents' opportunities to contribute comments and ideas in planning for individual children.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of safeguarding procedures and children's safety and welfare is of paramount importance to them. Staff vigilance and regular risk assessments means that the environment is kept safe for the children in attendance, even though the building is in need of refurbishment and improvement in some areas. The programme for this refurbishment is about to be started and should result in an improved environment for all users of the hall and facilities. Vetting and recruitment procedures ensure that all staff are suitable to work with children.

Plans for the future are realistic and help to ensure the pre-school continues to improve the outcomes for children. The staff and students on placement all work well as a team to ensure children thoroughly enjoy the time they spend at the pre-school. The overall, organisation of the setting is good and staff work together to help sessions run smoothly. However, the deployment of staff and use of some areas, such as the role play area and book corner sometimes fail to make the most of resources to maximise learning. Staff know the children well and have warm and friendly relationships with each of them. The key person system ensures that all children have a detailed and well-presented development profile or learning journey and this includes next steps in development. While parents are invited to sign and date to say they have seen the profiles, few make any additional comments or provide ideas to extend children's learning. Children use the outdoor area for physical play and some mark-making, but currently free flow access is limited as staff have assessed the doors as unsafe in their present condition. Therefore, children have to be helped in and out by a staff member.

Equality and diversity practices are good and well understood within the setting. Activities are adapted to ensure all children are able to take part, including children with identified special educational needs and/or disabilities. Children with special educational needs and/or disabilities are very well supported. This is a strength of the setting and results in these children making very good progress. The manager is currently looking at some positive ideas she can incorporate to assist in raising boys' achievement following an inspirational talk she recently attended. Strong links have been forged with outside agencies and some of the other settings delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage, helping to ensure continuity of care for children. Parents enjoy newsletters and daily verbal feedback on an informal basis, as well as regular open days and evening meetings, keeping them well informed. They can access the group's policies online, as well as looking at a hard copy kept in the lobby area, which has a wealth of childcare related information.

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

Children have access to a range of activities and experiences on a daily basis. Some areas are well resourced, for example, the creative area is equipped with paint and sponges for children to explore and there is floor play with a doll's house and figures. Play dough and tools aid manipulative development and water play introduces ideas of volume and capacity. Children enthusiastically take turns at a computer, learning how to control the mouse and work through an educational program. A table has mathematics equipment for counting and matching cubes to number lines. The role play area is themed as a florist shop, with flowers and posters, a till and a telephone but there is no potential for mark making and the dressing-up clothes and props are located in a different area, diminishing the potential for a rich learning experience. Since staff take no interest in the area, children do not use the space well. The book corner has a good choice of books and soft seating, but children do not always readily use the books, preferring to use the space as a den for running in and out. Staff observe children on a regular basis and use the observations they make to inform the planning for individual children. All staff can talk knowledgeably about their key children and show genuine interest in helping them make good progress in all areas of learning. Children's starting points are assessed helping to give a clear indication that they are making good progress in their learning.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe through gentle reminders from staff during everyday experiences, such as climbing the steps up to the mezzanine room or passing through the doorway to the outside area. They demonstrate that they feel secure in their surroundings, as they are very used to the routines in place and know what is expected of them at all times, consequently, behaviour is good. They play well independently or with their peers and are able to share resources with ease. Children have access to resources that help them to learn about different cultures and the wider world. They celebrate world festivals, such as Divali and are taught to respect each other and their differences.

Snack time is taken as a whole group activity and children sit in groups with a staff member to enable them to enjoy conversation and learn good table behaviour and social skills. Children are taught to make sure their hands are clean before eating and have wipes at the table for thorough cleaning. However, hand washing at other times may include shared water and is, therefore, less effective at minimising cross-infection. Children are offered a nutritious and healthy snack mid-session and staff take account of children's allergies and dietary needs. The snack menu is posted up for parents to see. Children access tissues independently, which means that they begin to have an understanding of how to meet their own personal health needs.

A session devoted to physical play is designed to give children some experience of what to expect when they start formal school. They change into a PE Kit and enjoy circuit activities, such as, balancing, sliding, egg and spoon walking, goal scoring and hoop play. They enjoy a well-earned snack and a drink after this session and a story time before home. Children enjoy the circle time as it includes singing and

action songs. Overall, outcomes for children are good and as a result, they are learning important skills for the future.

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	3
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	3

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	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
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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