

Inspection of Robert Blair Children's Centre and Extended School Services

Robert Blair Primary School, Brewery Road, LONDON N7 9QJ

Inspection date: 6 February 2024

Overall effectiveness **Good**

The quality of education **Good**

Behaviour and attitudes **Good**

Personal development **Good**

Leadership and management **Good**

Overall effectiveness at previous
inspection Good

What is it like to attend this early years setting?

The provision is good

Children enjoy warm, close relationships with staff who take time to get to know each child well. They help children to feel secure and highly valued, for example, by using children's likes and dislikes to provide enjoyable activities. Staff have high expectations of children and manage their behaviour in positive ways. For instance, they use praise to encourage children to behave well and talk about acceptable ways to behave. Children learn to share and to take turns well, such as when they play organised group games.

The curriculum is wide, varied and supports good progress for all children. Children gain good early mathematical skills. For instance, staff use mathematical language to describe quantity, such as 'heavy' and 'light' as children scoop pasta into containers. They sing number songs and rhymes to support children's counting skills. Children learn about the world around them effectively. For example, staff teach children about the life cycle of a butterfly and how they grow from caterpillars. They plant and grow beans with children to teach them how things grow. Children learn about difference. For instance, staff provide children with soft toys, dolls and books that reflect different races and cultures. Staff discuss special religious and cultural events, such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. Staff support children's learning in the out-of-school club well, for instance, by linking activities to their interests.

What does the early years setting do well and what does it need to do better?

- Children have good physical skills. Babies and toddlers learn to walk and balance, for instance, by using push along and ride-on wheeled toys. Older children enjoy various challenges, such as climbing across frames and steer wheeled toys carefully outdoors.
- Staff teach children good communication, language and literacy skills. For example, children to bring items from home to show and talk about in front of others to support their communication skills. Staff read a wide range of stories and sing songs and rhymes to support children's language skills. Children learn how to create their own stories using pictures as prompts.
- Children develop good independence skills, for example, they put on and take off their own coats and shoes. Younger children learn to feed themselves, while their older peers prepare their own snacks and pour their own drinks.
- Staff support children's creative development effectively. Children under two years enjoy a wide range of sensory experiences, for instance, they explore different textures such as wood, metal and shiny materials. Older children enjoy exploring the effects of printing using mesh and paint.
- Staff work successfully with parents. For example, by providing access to a wide range of workshops to promote best outcomes for children, such as language

development and healthy eating. Parents borrow books to share with their children at home to support their learning. Staff keep parents well informed about children's progress in effective ways, such as daily conversations and secure electronic diaries.

- The manager provides good support to staff. She meets with staff individually to discuss work and promote staff development. For instance, staff attend a wide range of courses, such as supporting outdoor learning which led to improvements in this area.
- The manager evaluates all aspects of the nursery well and sets clear goals for improvement. For example, she plans to model best practice in group rooms to enhance teaching and learning.
- Staff prioritise children's safety. They check the nursery, toys and resources, indoors and outdoors to minimise the risk of hazards. The manager carries out robust background checks on staff as part of the recruitment process. This helps to keep children safe.
- Staff ensure that children have nutritious meals and snacks, and daily physical exercise outdoors as part of their healthy routines. They promote children's awareness of oral hygiene effectively. For instance, children practise toothbrushing on large tooth and gum models.
- Generally, staff interact with children and structure their learning well. However, at times, some staff do not give children time to think and respond to questions, for example, as children play with construction sets.
- There are occasions when children are unclear about what is happening in the nursery at different times and it takes them a while to settle, for instance when it is group story time. This does not fully support children's learning.

Safeguarding

The arrangements for safeguarding are effective.

There is an open and positive culture around safeguarding that puts children's interests first.

What does the setting need to do to improve?

To further improve the quality of the early years provision, the provider should:

- consistently give children more time to think and respond to questions to support their thinking skills further
- help children to understand what is happening throughout the day to support their understanding more securely.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY333836
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	10305003
Type of provision	Childcare on non-domestic premises
Registers	Early Years Register
Day care type	Full day care
Age range of children at time of inspection	0 to 3
Total number of places	36
Number of children on roll	23
Name of registered person	Robert Blair Primary School Governing Body
Registered person unique reference number	RP526238
Telephone number	02076074115
Date of previous inspection	8 February 2018

Information about this early years setting

Robert Blair Children's Centre and Extended School Services registered in 2006. It is located in the London borough of Islington. The nursery is open from 8am until 6pm each weekday for most of the year. The nursery also provides care before and after school for children attending the school nursery. The provider employs 11 members of staff to work with the children, all of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. This includes the deputy head teacher, who has qualified teacher status. Other staff are qualified at level 3 and level 2. The provider is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two and three years.

Information about this inspection

Inspector

Jenny Beckles

Inspection activities

- This was the first routine inspection the provider received since the COVID-19 pandemic began. The inspector discussed the impact of the pandemic with the provider and has taken that into account in their evaluation of the nursery.
- The manager carried out a joint observation of a group activity with the inspector.
- During the inspection, the inspector went on a learning walk around the nursery with the manager to discuss the aims of the curriculum.
- The inspector observed the interaction between staff and children and spoke with children, when appropriate.
- During the inspection, the inspector held a meeting with the Head of Centre and sampled some documentation.
- The inspector considered the views of staff and parents during the inspection.

We carried out this inspection under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the early years foundation stage.

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