

Rainbow Pre school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221758
Inspection date	18 May 2007
Inspector	Heidi Falconer
Setting Address	Church Street, Great Shelford, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB22 5EL
Telephone number	07985 216603
E-mail	
Registered person	Rainbow Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Rainbow Pre-School is run by a voluntary committee. It opened in 1983 and operates from a mobile classroom at the rear of Great and Little Shelford School, in the village of Great Shelford, Cambridgeshire. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9:00 until 11:30. The pre-school currently operates a session on a Thursday afternoon from 12:30 until 15:00.

There are currently 44 children aged between three and five years on roll. Of these, 40 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school serves the local area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well nourished and they are learning the importance of eating a healthy diet. For example, each day the children are encouraged to bring in a piece of fruit for their mid-morning snack. The setting supplements this snack with a biscuit and a suitable drink. At snack time children are becoming increasingly independent. They pour their own drinks and use a 'banana slice' to chop up their bananas. Topics on 'being healthy' help children to learn about foods which are good for them.

Children have plenty of opportunities for exercise and physical play, which contributes to their good health. Each day the children have time to 'free-flow' between the indoor and outdoor area, ensuring that they benefit from plenty of fresh air and exercise. Outdoors, children show co-ordination and a sense of space as they steer scooters and bikes around others and obstacles in the garden. Children also have weekly opportunities to use the school hall to practise and develop their physical skills by participating in ring games, rolling on mats and balancing on low beams. Children show increasing skill as they use scissors to cut pictures from magazines, use play dough presses and thread ribbon onto a plastic fence.

Children's good health is maintained as staff consistently follow well-established daily routines to keep the setting clean and hygienic. For example, before snack time, all of the tables used are cleaned with an anti-bacterial spray. Children learn the importance of good hygiene practices. For example, recently they had a visit from a nursery nurse who came in and used a 'hand washing machine' and light to show the children how effective their hand washing had been in removing germs. In addition, children need few reminders from staff to use soap to wash their hands and use paper towels to dry them. This practice also helps to prevent the risk of cross-infection. Children receive appropriate treatment if they become ill or have an accident at the setting. All staff hold current first aid certificates and appropriate records are kept of all accidents and children's medical needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. For example, the room is attractively set up with a good range of resources to interest children and their art-work is on display. Each day one member of staff greets children and parents in the entrance area as they arrive. As a result, staff are on hand to help the children settle and separate from their parents. The premises are generally suitable for their purpose. However, shower curtains are used as doors in the toilet area and these are ineffective in providing sufficient privacy for the children.

Children play in a generally safe environment. Before each session staff carry out a daily check of the premises. This ensures that most areas used by the children are safe. However, the staff have not considered the impact on children of keeping the main door unlocked. As a result, visitors are able to enter the premises unannounced, thus compromising children's safety. Children are learning about how to keep themselves safe. For example, they confidently explain the procedure they should follow in the event of a fire.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff are familiar with the child protection policy and know what to do if they have concerns about a child in their care. This knowledge is in line

with the procedures as set out by the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The child protection policy has recently been updated to include written details of the procedures the committee would follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff, in order to protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are happy, settled and enjoy coming to the pre-school. They arrive confidently greeting staff and their friends, saying 'good morning everybody' as they walk into the main room. At registration, staff talk to the children about the activities which are set out, explaining any special additions such as pasta to the sand tray or bubbles to the water tray. Children confidently ask for additional resources such as the toy cameras or for red food colouring to be added to the water tray. Children are well supported by staff that spend the majority of their time working directly with the children. Staff have had some training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They use the knowledge gained from this course to ensure that all activities can be adapted for younger children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and use this to plan a good range of activities and experiences, which cover all six areas of learning effectively. As a result, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a good understanding of how children learn and use this knowledge to plan interesting activities which develop children's natural curiosity. For example, the staff have recently developed their garden to include an area where children can search for bugs under logs and rubber tiles. Children eagerly explore this area using magnifying glasses and show great delight as they find insects such as centipedes. Staff assess children's progress by thorough observations and keeping examples of children's drawings and pictures. These records are transferred into each child's individual profile, which shows their progress. The assessments are currently being updated to include children's next steps in learning.

Children's mathematical skills are being developed well. Children develop a sense of numbers as they sequence numbered t-shirts on a washing line in the garden. Children confidently count the number of children present each day, with some children being able to count up to 16 and over. Some activities are also planned to help children develop an understanding of adding and subtracting numbers. As children discuss patterns in play dough and cutters they use they are able to talk about different shapes and sizes, saying 'I used that one and it is really big'.

Children's communication skills are developing well. They confidently talk about their home life and describe in detail their trips to Colchester Zoo as they play with tickets in the literacy box. Children are keen to attempt to write their own names. For example, as they come in each day they write their names on the fruit chart, to indicate what they have brought in for their snack. Children are beginning to link sounds and letters. As they take part in rhyming songs such as 'Ant on my arm', they offer suggestions to other words which rhyme. Children use books to gain information. For example, the provision of topic books allows the children to look up insects, which they have found in the garden. However, children do not regularly choose to look at books for pleasure.

Children are keen to explore and investigate a variety of materials and resources. For example, as they use sponges in the water tray they describe how they squeeze the sponge to create

bubbles and describe the bubbles as 'soapy foam'. Experiments are regularly set up for the children to talk about and see the changes in materials. For example, one experiment is 'what happens to pasta when it is in wet sand for a week'. Children describe the change and say that the water in the sand 'melts it'. Children are able to operate simple equipment and use programs on the computer. For example, they independently turn up the volume on the computer to listen to a musician play rock music on a computer program.

Children use their imagination well as they use role play equipment to act out real situations. They enjoy dressing up outside in a range of clothes, pretending to be people they have seen in real life, such as a police officer and fire-fighters. They extend this play further by using telephone books to 'find addresses' and pretend ride-on toys are fire engines.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are learning about the world around them. They take part in planned activities such as celebrating Diwali and Chinese New Year. In addition, staff organise for visitors to come into the pre-school to talk to the children about different topics. Recent visitors have included scientists and a vet who brought in snakes and lizards for the children to see. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities are well cared for. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that they are able to effectively meet children's needs.

Children learn the rules of the setting as staff use effective strategies to ensure that they have consistent boundaries. For example, staff help children to think about the impact their behaviour has on others when their actions upset other children. Children are learning to negotiate their play together. As they use special interest boxes they talk about the need to swap boxes and the need to share.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents speak well of the setting and have conveyed these thoughts through the letters, cards and feedback from questionnaires that the setting receives. Parents are provided with information about activities and the Early Learning Goals through newsletters, notice boards, information in assessment files and a parents' open evening at the beginning of the school term. Each term children's assessment records are sent home for parents to see. Parents have some opportunities to make comments about their child's progress, however, this information is not always added to their profile. Children benefit from the close relationships established between staff and parents, this ensures consistency in care is always maintained.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by committed, experienced staff who work well as a team. Staff are enthusiastic about their jobs and continually evaluate the provision and adapt their practices so that all children's needs are met. Effective procedures are in place for the recruitment and induction of new staff to ensure all staff are suitable to work with children. The good organisation of the premises, time and resources means that children are cared for in a generally safe environment, where they enjoy activities both inside and outside. All of the required documentation and records are in place and stored confidentially. Important documents, such as the setting's registration certificate and insurance details, are displayed prominently for parents and visitors to see.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Regular staff and committee meetings ensure that everyone works together as a team and understands the aims of the setting. Staff are encouraged to attend additional training and then to share the information that they have gained with the other staff. For example, after a recent training course the staff are looking at ways in which they can promote children's independent learning. This enhances the provision for the children who attend. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Care

At the last inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure that their special educational needs policy was revised and updated and that the operational plan was updated with particular reference to the child protection policy and the recording of accidents. The staff have reviewed their special educational needs policy and updated it to reflect current legislation and good practice. The operational plan has also been updated, ensuring that all accidents are recorded and that the child protection policy contains the required information. These changes have ensured that the children receive a good level of care and support their well-being.

Nursery education

At the last inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure that long and short term plans sufficiently covered all areas of learning and that plans identified what children learn from activities. The staff have reviewed their planning and planning is now comprehensive and contains all of the required information. As a result, staff are confident in their role and children's learning is supported well.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure that children's dignity and privacy is respected when they are using the toilet

- ensure the premises are secure.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop the assessments, ensuring that they show children's next steps in learning and include parents' knowledge of what they know about their child's progress
- further develop the book area to create a more welcoming area, which encourages the children to look at books for pleasure.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk