

Rainbow Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 134828
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Inspector Cordalee Harrison

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Registered person Rainbow Playgroup

Type of inspection Integrated

Type of care Sessional 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Rainbow Playgroup operates from a purpose built, single storey building at the rear of the Glory Farm School complex. The playgroup has been registered for over 25 years. A committee of volunteers manages the playgroup. The premises are comprised of a hall, kitchen, toilet and washing facilities. A securely fenced outdoor play area is available for children's play. Children from Bicester and the surrounding villages attend the playgroup.

There are currently 66 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 48 children are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The setting's opening times are from 09.00 until 11.30 and 12.15 until 14.45 Monday to Friday term time only. Children attend a variety of sessions.

The setting employs nine members of staff, of whom six are qualified in childcare and education, and two are currently on training courses.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

All of the children are progressing their physical development well through the regular physical activities they experience each day. Children regularly use tools, such as scissors, glue sticks, screwdrivers and spanners, as they carry out various activities. For example, many children use scissors competently as they cut wool and paper to complete their collages. Others fix and mend with tools, such as screwdrivers, spanners and pliers, as they use the range of tools on the well equipped workbench. Children are excited when it is time to play outside. They learn about self-care as they dress warmly and put on suitable footwear to play out in the garden on a frosty morning. Children are beginning to set their own physical challenges as they play freely outdoors. For example, some children test their balance and coordination as they walk across the raised stepping-stone; others ride the scooters to the top of the gradient and ride down on the scooters using the momentum they have created. They show their enjoyment as they laugh aloud and enjoy the thrill of the speed they achieve.

The premises are clean and areas, such as the washing and toilet facilities, are appropriately equipped. For example, the easy accessibility of warm and cold running water, hand washing liquid and paper towels, encourages children to wash their hands regularly and some children use the facilities independently. The regular routine for children to wash their hands before snack times reinforces the importance of hand washing before eating. Cross infection for children is further reduced, because staff notice when they put inappropriate items in their mouths and reminds them not to do so. Children are learning to make healthy choices about their snacks; they eat a variety of fresh fruits and salad vegetables and drink water and milk at snack time. Drinking water is available to children throughout the session, however, they are not able to help themselves at will and this limits their independence. Children's allergies are clearly identified and suitable procedures are in place to ensure that children's health is not compromised.

Sufficient staff, who are qualified in first aid, work in the setting; they use up to date first aid knowledge to deal with children's minor accidents. First aid and accidents records are completed with all of the required information and acknowledged with a parent's signature. However, parents written consent is not in place to seek emergency medical treatment or advice for all children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into a warm and bright preschool environment, which is generally safe and appropriately equipped, they have sufficient space to carry out a variety of activities in and outdoors. Sufficient chairs and tables are available for children to participate in large group activities, such as sitting together at snack time. Bright posters and displays of children's work help to create a child centred environment. Children's resources are readily available to them during most of the session and this enables them to make choices and select activities and resources independently.

An ample amount of good quality, and attractive age and stage appropriate resources, which have the potential to promote all areas of children's learning and development, are available for children to use each day.

Safe arrangements are in place for children's arrival and departure. In addition, the preschool is secure, children are not able to leave unattended and only people permitted are able to enter. Children move around the preschool confidently, because most areas are safe for them to use independently. Staff supervise the children well and carry out regular checks to assess the safety and security of the premises. For example, they check the outside area thoroughly before children use it, the setting is free from slipping and tripping hazards and children do not have access to any harmful substances. However, the checks are not comprehensive; for example, a broken toilet seat in one of the children's toilet poses a hazard to children. Children are developing their understanding of personal safety. They regularly practise the fire drill, they are learning to evacuate the premises quickly and safely.

All staff in the setting are clear about their responsibility to safeguard children's welfare. They are clear that if concerns arise about a child's welfare or well-being they would bring it to the attention of the manager. Although all staff do not have secure knowledge of child protection issues, they are all clear about lines of communication for dealing with concerns within the setting and some staff know that the local and registering authority must be informed of serious concerns. The setting's child protection policy contains some good quality information, however, it does not include the necessary contact numbers for the local Children's Services department, to ensure that staff and parents are able to act without delay to safeguard children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children are familiar with the daily routine; they separate easily from their parents and enter the preschool calmly. Some children find their names independently and others with the support of their parents. Younger children who are at the start of the separation process are given individual personal attention to ease the separation process. However, staff do not use the available resources effectively to distract and engage these children with purposeful activities at the start of sessions, which makes it difficult for these children to focus on anything other than being separated from their parents; this prolongs the settling in period. Older children are curious and communicative; they introduce themselves, ask for information, and give explanations. They show confidence and involve others in their play. For example, some children give information about themselves and explain that they are a postal worker delivering the mail.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress in their learning towards the early learning goals. Staff have a reasonable knowledge of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage; they link their plans and some activities to the stepping stones. To progress children's learning staff plan activities, which cover all areas of learning, in addition they identify learning intentions for planned activities. However, the effectiveness of these activities is not consistently evaluated to ensure that learning intentions are achieved for children in the preschool. Children enjoy many first hand experiences, which enable them to practise their communication and social skills as they play with their peers. They use their imagination well and some children are beginning to set their own intellectual challenges. For example, a child sorts items by colour, and some children spend considerable time playing with the small world figures. However, staff do not always structure the sessions well to help children to learn how to carry out their activities calmly, this results in high levels of noise, which reduces the opportunities for children to develop concentration and explore

quiet activities, such as exploring books independently; for example, children make very little independent use of the attractive books in the comfortable book corner.

Children use mark-making implements in their daily activities, for example pencils, crayons and paintbrushes are some of the implements that they use each day. They listen intently to group stories; they follow the story and join in when appropriate; some children are able to predict what will happen next. Familiar stories test children's recall. For example, some children remember that Mary is baby Jesus' mother. There are many letters and numerals for children to see and replicate. For example, labels on resource boxes and drawers and many of the play resources, that children use each day, such as, tills, telephones and a computer key board, reflect letters and numbers and introduces them to modern technology. Children use mathematical and positional language, such as big and small, and up and down, in their everyday conversation. They count forwards and backwards and sequence numbers as they sing familiar nursery, number and action rhymes. However, there are few opportunities for children to solve simple number problems in practical ways.

Children promote their creative development well through the range of creative activities and the resources that are available to them each day. They dress up freely and carry out their activities whilst wearing their dressing-up clothes. The atmosphere in the setting conveys a sense of freedom for children to explore their creativity. They practise many life skills as they play imaginatively with their peers and use the good quality resources that are easily accessible to them. For example, some children play together at the workbench, they use the tools for the purpose they are intended. Children also enjoy playing the different musical instruments and join in enthusiastically to sing the Christmas carols.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff treat children as individuals; this helps children to build their self-esteem and confidence. For example, some children are confident to ask for assistance when they need it. Children's record forms contain all of the required information to safeguard their welfare and enable staff to meet their individual care needs. Staff carry out observations of children and development records provide information about what children have achieved. However, the records are not sufficiently developed to identify the next step in individual children's achievements, to enable staff to plan consistently to progress individual children's learning and development at a pace that is specific to them. Children use resources that positively reflect people in the wider society. In addition, they acknowledge different cultural celebrations and deepen their understanding as they express themselves in their artwork. For example, children's artworks that depict winter festivals, such as Bonfire, Diwali and Christmas, are proudly displayed in the preschool; children are learning to value their own culture and that of others.

Children are learning the boundaries for good behaviour and manners. For example, staff let children know when their behaviour is unacceptable, this helps children to consider how their behaviour affects others and encourages them to apologise if they hurt others. Children are clear about the expectation that they will be polite, kind to others and take care of their resources; they cooperate with staff and their peers and quickly tidy up the room. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. There are currently no children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities on roll. However, the setting is experienced at caring for children with learning difficulties. The inclusion officer is properly trained and the setting is experienced at using the systematic procedure, which is in place to ensure that the needs of children are met as identified.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. The setting takes some effective steps to communicate with parents and involve them in their children's learning. They share regular verbal and written communication with parents. For example, parents are provided with information about the topics and themes that their children are studying. In addition, they are encouraged to provide items for their children to discuss at group time and resources to support the topic or theme. Parents speak highly of the staff and state that they are friendly and approachable. However, not all parents are informed of the name of their child's key worker. Parents are provided with information about their children's achievement, when the children are leaving the setting, but there is no system to enable them to contribute to developing this record.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into a suitably organised pre-school, where they are generally safe.

Sufficient staff who are appropriately qualified work directly with the children, however, staff do not always ensure that there is sufficient activities to engage the youngest children at the start of sessions. In addition, preschool sessions are loosely structured and this does not help children to learn how to carry out their activities in a calm manner and create an environment where children are able to consolidate their learning. Ample good quality resources that are stimulating and attractive are available for children to use in the preschool. Children are making satisfactory progress in their learning and development. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

To safeguard children's welfare there is a sound recruitment process, it includes an induction procedure, which covers all essential elements. This ensures that all staff are cleared through the vetting procedure and that they know their responsibilities to meet the health, care and welfare needs of children in the preschool. In addition, staff know that anyone who is not vetted is not to be alone with the children. All documentation required to safeguard children's welfare and health are in place and most contain all of the necessary detail. The setting has put some informative policies and procedures in place and most contain sufficient information to provide appropriate guidance for staff and parents. For example, the lost child policy provides guidance for staff if a child becomes missing whilst they are on site, however, the child protection and complaints procedure does not include all of the relevant information; for example, the complaints procedure does not include the timescales within which complaints will be investigated.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. It ensures that sufficient staff, who are familiar with guidance, such as guidance for the Foundation Stage curriculum and the stepping stones, deliver the nursery education. In addition, it also ensures ample good quality resources for children to use in their daily activities. However, the management team does not ensure that children's achievement records are properly developed and that preschool activities are evaluated to ensure that learning intentions are met consistently for all children. In addition, parents are not involved in developing their children's achievement records. There is no procedure in place for the leadership and management team to evaluate the setting's overall performance to ensure that weaknesses are identified and addressed in a timely manner.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection, the provider was asked to develop knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and ensure the procedure can be put into practice in

the setting, to ensure that the recruitment procedure includes all of the necessary elements and to ensure that accidents are recorded confidentially. The provider was also asked to provide parents with a contact number for the registering authority and to develop the lost child procedure to provide clear guidance to staff. In addition, the provider was asked to ensure that the management committee is fully aware of their roles and responsibility in the setting.

Since the last Children Act inspection, the provider has put in place an informative child protection policy and procedure and some staff currently demonstrate sound knowledge of child protection issues. In regards to child protection, all staff are clear about lines of communication in the setting, they know that they are to act if they are concerned about a child's welfare. However, currently all staff do not have secure knowledge of child protection issues and there remains some weaknesses in the procedural document. Children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded because there is currently a sound recruitment procedure in place, which include all of the necessary elements. For example, there is evidence that staff are properly vetted and qualified for their positions in the preschool. The procedure for recording children's accidents is now confidential and the lost child policy provides sufficient guidance for staff and parents. A contact number for the registering authority is displayed for parents information in the setting. Currently, the preschool committee is not fully effective in managing the preschool; for example, there is no system in place to monitor and evaluate the setting's overall performance to ensure that weaknesses are identified and addressed, to gain continual improvement in care and education of the children.

At the last nursery education inspection, the provider was asked to provide more opportunities for children to use information and communication technology, and programmable toys. The provider was also asked to provide opportunities for parents and carers to contribute towards their children's progress records. Children are developing their skills and confidence in using modern technology well; they use many interactive technological resources, such as the computer, various types of telephones and programmable resources in their everyday play. However, there has been no improvement to enable parents to contribute to their children's development records. They are provided with information at the end of the process, but their input in developing the record is not gained to ensure that they are fully involved in all areas of their children's learning.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- make sure that all of the equipment that children use are safe and ensure that all staff have secure knowledge of child protection issues
- continue to develop children's achievement records to include the next step in their learning (also applies to nursery education)
- make sure that there are sufficient activities to engage children at the start of the session
- make sure that all of the setting's policies include all of the relevant information and ensure that parents written permission is in place to seek emergency treatment for all children.

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):

- make sure that activities are evaluated consistently and ensure the sessions are properly structured to create an environment where children are able to consolidate their learning (also applies to care)
- make sure that parents are able to contribute to their children's achievement records and put in place a system to evaluate the effectiveness of the setting's overall performance.

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