



Robert Owen Early Years Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Judith Harris

Setting Address Robert Owen Early Years Centre, 43 Commerell Street,
London, SE10 0EA

Telephone number

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Registered person Robert Owen Early Years Centre

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

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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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Robert Owen Children's Centre is managed by the governing body. It was registered in 2005 and operates from a purpose-built building in Greenwich in South East London. A maximum of 151 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children over two years share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area; children under two years have a separate outdoor play area.

There are currently 219 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these, 132 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area, and attend a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 60 members of staff. Of these, nine including the head are qualified teachers 43 hold appropriate early years qualifications and eight are working towards qualifications.

The Children's Centre provides a of additional services which include; a range of adult classes and a family learning programme; use by Job Centre Plus, children's information service, a debt counselling service, and health visitor service. There is a community internet café and a baby and toddler drop in group and a toy library. The Early Years Day Care Partnership use the centre as a meeting and training base.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Across the provision the children have good basic hygiene routines that are supporting them to develop an understanding of health and hygiene. There are toilets, wash hand basins and nappy changing areas adjacent to the group rooms. Pre-school children and toddlers use these alone where they can but with supervision where needed. Adults talk to the children about washing hands after playing and before eating. At lunch and snack time, tables are wiped and laid with cloths for children to eat at. Toddlers have good toileting and hand-washing routines which clearly support good hygiene practise. Hygiene routines for babies ensure that hands are cleaned before eating and hands and faces are wiped with flannels after eating. While hand-washing routines are generally well used they are not always put into practise with pre-school children. The general good hygiene routines are ensuring that the spread of infection is limited. Adults use good nappy changing routines and babies and toddler's nappies are changed as required.

Children have fruit for snack which the pre-school children cut for themselves; children have chopping boards and sit at the table with an adult. They talk about what fruit they have and what is their favourite; they count how many pieces they will have. Lunch is cooked on the premises; the head reports that she has worked with the cook to ensure children are provided with balanced and healthy meals and snacks. Menus are provided for parents and information of children's individual dietary restrictions are kept in the kitchen and in each child's group room. Babies sit securely and comfortably to eat lunch; being feed and feeding themselves using fingers or spoons. Adults sit with children talking to them about the taste of the food and what it feels like. The children all eat really well and are happy to sit at the table enjoying the social experience.

Children are able to play inside or outside at all times during the day. The outdoor area is set up as part of the planning; the garden really is an extension of the group

rooms. Children are animated and excited in the garden; they talk about climbing, how hard it is to climb and how they have to think about balancing on the beams. Children move in a range of ways; walking, running, jumping, skipping and sliding; they move freely with pleasure and confidence. They have awareness of space, of themselves and others. Children have an excellent range of outdoor play equipment and take part in an extensive range of outdoor activities that support them to practice and develop physical skills and exercise. Babies have their own garden that they can access directly from the room allowing them continuous outdoor activities. Babies are crawling and pulling themselves up on the stable furniture both in the room and in the garden. All children are clearly developing a very good range of physical skills.

Children's emotional health and well-being is clearly being nurtured. Babies and toddlers enjoy being with the adults and other children who they know well; they are gaining good levels of self assurance through these relationships and becoming confident in their abilities. Children's individual sleep and rest routines are effectively met within the daily routine. Babies can sleep at any time and toddlers mostly sleep after lunch. There is a sleep room for toddlers with cots and beds for any child that needs to sleep at any time and staff remain flexible to ensure they are meeting individual needs.

A number of staff hold current first aid certificates. This means they can give appropriate care if there is an accident

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery is part of a purpose built centre with four pre-school rooms; two toddler rooms and a baby room. The main garden is directly accessible from all the pre-school rooms. The baby room has its own garden; and toddlers have direct access to a fenced off area in the main garden. Each room has access to their own toilets; toddler rooms have a nappy changing area and sleep room; the baby room has a milk kitchen, sleep area and nappy changing area. The rooms provide a suitable amount of space for the children and are set up to allow children access to areas for different types of play. Access to the nursery is through the main centre entrance, there is a buzzer entry to the nursery and staff check who is arriving. Access to the centre and nursery is carefully monitored and visitors must sign in at the reception desk. Other areas of the building are used separately and users do not have access to the nursery rooms or garden.

The nursery has an abundance of toys, equipment and resources which children have safe and effective access to. There are systems to ensure that all toys and equipment are clean and safe. Staff check toys as they set them out and children are encouraged to tell staff if something is broken. Toys are washed regularly and adults carefully monitor the children's choices and the way in which toys and equipment are used. Toddlers and pre-school children have toys and resources stored at their level allowing them to make choices about what they will play with. In the baby room adults set out toys and they are highly vigilant about how babies are using the equipment. The nursery's equipment includes items of furniture and play equipment which can

support children with special learning needs and disabilities who attend.

The nursery have a comprehensive range of policies and procedures for safety both in the setting and on outings. In all rooms there are very good levels of supervision. There is a high child/adult ratio which effectively supports children to be able to explore and experiment and take risks appropriate to their age and ability. The areas used by the children are safe and suitable and the children move safely around with suitable levels of independence that do not restrict them. Children are learning to keep themselves safe; adults talk to children about being careful of each other and with equipment and toys. There are simple rules for moving indoors and in the garden and children are supported to develop an understanding of the rules. Adults are aware of ensuring that there is an effective balance between children's safety and their ability to practise and acquire new skills. Regular risk assessments are carried out and any new equipment or changes to environment are risk assessed. Cleaning is carried out when the children are not present and all cleaning materials are stored in a specified cupboard. The nursery has the necessary fire safety equipment and regular emergency evacuation is practised. First aid kits are all regularly re-stocked; accident records are present and accidents are recorded promptly; however some previous records have not been signed by parents.

The nursery have a comprehensive policy and clear procedures for dealing with any child protection concerns. Children are effectively protected from harm because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

For under threes activities are planned using the Birth to three matters framework and the planning clearly links to the framework. The planning used matches that used across the provision; although there is a high level of flexibility to ensure the children's needs are met and that activities are mostly child led. The planning shows a versatile range and resourceful balance of activities. In the two toddler rooms children have areas for different types of activities and direct access to the garden where further activities are available. The toddler rooms are linked and children can move freely between rooms having access to all the activities. The children are unquestionably being supported to become competent learners and to explore and experiment through their play. Children pretend play; they play in the role play area where they are supported by an adult who helps them develop the game. Children are beginning to use one thing to represent another; a child uses a Lego brick as a telephone. Children experiment with marks; they have a graphics area where they are practising making marks and forming letters. At creative activities the children play imaginatively with materials using all their senses. Children have a free creative activity that they can access at any time and they use this enthusiastically to create and experiment with a range of materials. In the garden children are digging in the earth to find worms and creatures; they are inquisitive as they dig, searching and talking about what they might find and elated when they find a worm. Children are really animated at all the activities and they play with purpose and delight in their

play. Children are sociable and confident; they have highly appropriate levels of independence that allow them to practise and develop new skills. Children are enthusiastically engaged by adults, who use excellent levels of interaction to challenge and extend the children supporting them to become skill full communicators. Adults talk to children describing what they are doing and encouraging them to talk as they play. Children are supported to listen and pay attention to what others say and they are eager to share stories and join in songs. In the book corner children sit with an adult reading, they join in with the story and share together, when children are talking in a group the adults encourage the children to talk in turn and listen to each other. At the water the children play with an adult, they swirl the water and the adult talks to them using descriptive words to talk about how the water moves and feels. Babies move freely around their room with clear floor space and an extensive range of building and sorting toys, cause and effect toys, books, musical instruments and posting toys. Planning shows that babies have an imaginative range of creative activities and their work is displayed in the room. Adults sit on the floor to play with babies; the babies delight in the games and their play is enthusiastic. Babies are excited to communicate and are beginning to communicate meaning to adults to make their needs understood. The babies are supported to develop and practise new skills becoming competent learners. They are exploring, experimenting and discovering, they mirror others and move freely. Babies are finding out about their environment and other people and becoming playfully engaged and involved in activities. Babies are passionately supported by the adults that work with them.

Nursery Education

Children use an extensive range of language to organise games and develop role play. They are negotiating, expressing ideas, asking questions and carrying on conversations with each other. Children play at the creative activity; they talk about the collage materials they use describing the colours and feel of the materials using vivid language. Spoken language is actively extended by the excellent levels of interaction with adults and the consistent use of open questions. Children access the book corner often and clearly delight in joining in telling the story. Children have extensive opportunities to practise writing skills at a range of activities and at the graphics table. Children are beginning to form letters clearly and some can write their own names. Children are learning a comprehensive range of maths skills; there are math activities in all rooms and children actively use a wide range of maths language. Children talk about the size and shape of the collage materials, children count at a game in the garden and talk about more and less and taller or shorter. Children play maths games on the computer and they are counting and sorting ladybirds at a table game. Children have an extensive range of imaginative and creative activities and a broad range of opportunities to use and develop their imaginative skills. Creative areas are available at all times with a vibrant range of collage materials for children to use. Children have a versatile range of role play areas in each room; they are highly involved with their games and have plenty of time and space to develop the role play. Children freely access the music area where they play instruments together and sing. In the garden children have a guitar to play and a child is walking around playing and singing. Children make play-dough with an adult they are animated and enthusiastic at this activity and they talk about how they make the dough while they play with it.

There are creative activities planned which link to the themes and children's work is displayed in all rooms.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding; children are effectively supported by a highly committed and motivated team of teachers and early years' practitioners. Adults have an excellent knowledge and clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and make extensive use of all planned and naturally occurring situations to extend children's learning. Adults eagerly engage with the children; they plan and provide an exciting and imaginative range of activities and experiences that support the children's learning and development ensuring they make significant progress through the early learning goals. There is a comprehensive structure within which children are given time and space to explore and investigate. Adults clearly know the children well and effectively plan to meet individual needs. They ensure that the activities are provided in a way that allows the children to lead the play at all times. Planning is clear and resourceful using long, medium and short term plans. Long term plans show overall themes; medium term plans show what will be done each week and short term plans plan for each day. There is a comprehensive range of daily evaluations for each activity and these and the individual observations are used to inform the future planning. Key-workers observations are done weekly and this information is transferred to children's records where narrative comments are added. There is a formal system for sharing information about children's progress with parents.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are gaining an excellent knowledge and understanding of the wider and natural world they play at the pond with an adult, taking turns to dip into the pond with the net and see what they find, they put their finds in a bucket of water and talk about them with the adult. One room has a stick insect net; the children sit with an adult talking about the insect and how it grows. In the garden children have a tray with water from the pond and magnifying glasses, they are looking at the tadpoles and pond skaters and talk about them. Children are digging in the earth and looking for worms and they talk about the different creatures and look at books about life cycles. Children play at the computer, they use the mouse independently and confidently and are able to decide which programme they want. There are labels in a wide variety of languages in all of the rooms and children have a very broad range of resources including books, puzzles and role play resources that present positive images of people from different cultures and religions and people with special needs. Planning shows how children take part in an extensive range of activities that support them to gain an understanding of the wider world.

Children are very well behaved and successfully supported by staff to develop valuable skills for self control and effective problem solving skills. The adults know each individual child well and have a clear understanding of what may cause behavioural problems at different ages. Children's behaviour is managed with the highly effective use of positive strategies that are set out in the policy. The strategies are suitable for the children's ages and levels of understanding and clearly meet

children's individual needs. Adults ensure that strategies are consistently applied and effectively value good behaviour. With pre-school children if any problems arise an adult steps in immediately and calms children. Adults talk to children about sharing and taking turns, and encourage children to make choices about how to solve the problem. Younger children's behaviour is managed using distraction and adults step into diffuse situations and then involve children in other activities.

Children with special needs are comprehensively and enthusiastically supported and included by the whole staff team. The special needs co-ordinator ensures that children attending have their needs effectively met and that activities are planned and adapted to ensure full inclusion. Children's support workers are welcomed in the nursery to work with staff and support the children. The children are motivated and have excellent levels of independence that are suitable for their abilities. The nursery work effectively with outside agencies and parents to ensure that children are able to attend the nursery and make significant progress.

Partnership with parents is outstanding; there are highly effective systems that provide for an extensive amount of information to be taken from parents when children enter the nursery. There are imaginative formal and informal systems to ensure that all parents know what their children are doing and how they are progressing and developing. Parents have a wide range of information about the nursery and excellent access to the full range of policies and procedures. Home visits are made for new children and are available to parents of children who are moving up from the younger rooms. There is a settling in period for new children and parents are encouraged to stay with their children when they move rooms. The parents can ask any questions and are free to approach staff or managers at any time. There is a comprehensive parents' handbook and regular news letters. The nursery provide parents with a variety of ways to make comments on the service including questionnaires and a parent's forum. The centre also provide family learning courses.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The space is very well organised and children have good levels of adult support. Staff deployment is effective and ensures that the correct child/adult ratios are met at all times throughout the day. On many occasions the ratio is above the required level providing children with the support they need to develop very good levels of self confidence with appropriate levels of safety. Effective daily routines are in place and for younger children daily routines are very flexible which ensures changing needs are met.

The nursery have an excellent range of policies and procedures which are effectively put into practise and unquestionably support the care and education of children across the provision. All policies and procedures are updated in line with the changing needs of the provision and the changes in legislation or early years practice. Staff are all effectively vetted through Greenwich education systems and staff have appropriate teaching and early years qualifications and take part in a range

of training. All required records are present, up-to-date and shared with parents.

Leadership and management are outstanding; the head manages a team of highly committed and motivated staff with a wide range of qualifications and expertise. The head and staff team are actively supported by the governing body who have an overall vision for the provision. All staff are fully involved in planning, development and delivery of the curriculum for their group. There are curriculum leaders who are responsible for action plans across all age groups to continuously improve the quality of the provision as a whole. The staff team includes an early years co-ordinator who is responsible for overseeing delivery of the Birth to three matters framework; qualified teaching staff for each pre-school room and qualified early years practitioners. Teaching staff have annual performance management reviews and there is an appraisal and supervision system for all staff. Staff have a comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the early years curriculum and are able to answer questions about policies and procedures, daily routines, planning and key-worker responsibilities. There are regular team meetings, and an effective system for the induction of new staff. The nursery provides a very wide range of training opportunities which ensures staff are supported to continuously improve and develop the quality of care and education for the children. There are extensive systems for evaluating the effectiveness of the provision which range from the daily evaluation of activities in each group to a comprehensive self assessment of the whole provision.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care and education.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints records 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 outstanding.

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 all children use suitable hygiene routines at all times to include hand-washing routines
- ensure all accident records are signed by parents or carers

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk