



Marlborough Playcentre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	159478
Inspection date	05 June 2006
Inspector	Linda Close
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Registered person	Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Out of School 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Marlborough Playcentre is located in a busy road in the Chelsea area of London. It is funded and managed by Kensington and Chelsea Community Education Department and funding is also gained from fees. The centre offers after school and holiday care. This inspection took place in the after school period. The setting serves the local community and is not limited to children who attend the school.

The playcentre operates from 15:30 to 18:00 every weekday during school term times and from 09:00 to 17:30 on weekdays during the school holidays. The centre provides care for 40 children in total aged between 5 and 11 years and 24 of these

places are for children under 8 years of age. The scheme operates from within the primary school and children have access to an outdoor play area and to 3 halls indoors. Four experienced members of staff work with the children. Three are unqualified at present but they are actively working towards relevant qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children receive appropriate care if they have an accident at the after school club because there are staff at every session who have relevant first aid qualifications. Suitable first aid kits are kept to hand in the school and taken on outings. Children are protected from the unnecessary spread of infection because parents know that their children should not attend if they are unwell. Children taken ill at the setting are kept apart from the others and parents are contacted to arrange early collection.

Staff are made aware of children's individual dietary requirements and a list is on display to serve as a reminder. Children are permitted to bring food from home if parents prefer. Children are given healthy nutritious snacks at the after school club and they have free access to fresh drinking water at all times. Staff encourage the children to eat fresh fruit every day and 'Fruit Friday' is a fixed weekly event. The children take turns to make fruit kebabs or fruit drinks for the group which involves them learning about healthy eating. However, hand washing before meals is not reliably encouraged which does not teach the children about good standards of hygiene.

Children have very good opportunities for healthy exercise in the school halls and in the outdoor play space. Staff are sometimes hampered by numerous after school activities held in the school building but they arrange for children to enjoy games daily nevertheless. The children are divided into older and younger groups for safety and they enjoy the energetic games with enthusiastic support from the staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into suitably spacious rooms each day. Displays of children's art work, posters and notices make the setting colourful and attractive. Toilet and handwashing facilities adjacent to the after school club rooms are clean but only adequate although there are additional toilets in the main building. Furniture is the correct size for children of different ages to sit and play in comfort. A quiet reading area gives children opportunities to relax and chat with their friends. Children have access to suitable hall space and a large, level outdoor play space for energetic games. Children can choose from a wide range of toys, resources and equipment.

Staff greet the children in the main school building and they carefully record their attendance before escorting the children to the after school club main rooms. Children are safe in the setting in most respects because the staff conduct safety

checks of the setting and the equipment. Children are only permitted to leave the setting with adults identified by parents. Staff conscientiously escort the children to and from the hall and the after school club throughout the sessions which contributes to their safety. However, a recently repaired electronic lock on the playground gate is not in working order and consequently there is no secure barrier between the play area and the exit to the road outside. There is nothing to prevent strangers accessing the setting at present which is unsafe for the setting staff as well as being unsafe for the children.

Children are safe in relation to child protection issues because the manager and staff are well informed. They know what steps to take if they are concerned for the welfare of the children in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are offered a good range of activities at the after school club. Staff divide the children into groups for activities according to their ages although they allow more confident children to join older groups if they wish. This is particularly useful for the seven year olds who feel they are ready for this challenge. Children give their points of view about the planned activities through a 'Children's Committee' and via feedback forms. They gain confidence and a sense of ownership through these channels of communication.

Children were observed identifying, drawing and painting their national flags in preparation for the Football World Cup competition. They proudly told staff and other children their countries of origin and discussed the patterns and colours for their flags. Children can choose from a good range of toys and resources. They enjoy playing card games in groups and some children are content to sit and look at a book in the reading area. Children also enjoy making intricate patterns with beads on mats that are later ironed into a permanent design. They say they find this activity relaxing and therapeutic after a busy day in school. The children have ample space and resources for more active games in the school halls and outdoor areas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children gain a good understanding of diverse people, cultures and languages through discussions and activities provided at the after school club. Boys and girls are not permitted to dominate other members of the group. Staff devise activities that meet the needs of older and younger children. They also adjust activities so that all children can take part and enjoy them. Children of all abilities are welcomed into the group and staff liaise with parents and school staff to ensure that the needs of all children are met.

Children's behaviour is managed well by the staff. Staff adopt a positive approach that is based on discussion to resolve differences rather than on placing blame on

individuals. Children are rewarded for good behaviour by being praised and through being given special tasks to perform for others. Staff are good role models. They are firm but fair and the children benefit from having a clear understanding of what is expected of them. The children are polite, confident and comfortable telling visitors about their activities in the after school club. They gain self-esteem from being consulted about their likes and dislikes.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff provide a wealth of printed information for parents. Policies and procedures are displayed in the setting and a file of documents is made available for parents to read at their leisure. Menus are displayed so that parents can see what their children are eating after school. They work well with staff to promote healthy eating in the setting. A complaints procedure is displayed which correctly includes Ofsted contact details although the telephone numbers are not up to date. Parents are consulted if children have any behaviour difficulties which ensures that the children benefit from the adults working together to help them to make progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All members of staff are checked for suitability at the time of their employment. Any person helping in a voluntary capacity is supervised by staff at all times which contributes to the safety of the children. The manager takes prompt steps to find additional staff if there are any staff absences. Less than 50% of the staff are appropriately qualified. However, an action plan is being actively pursued by the staff to remedy this situation. The acting manager is following a course leading towards a foundation degree and another member of staff is working towards an appropriate qualification.

The manager works beside the staff to ensure that children are well cared for and good standards are maintained. However, an aspect of good hygiene has been overlooked and there is an issue of security at the setting. The setting is involved in a quality assurance scheme that is effectively helping to raise the standards of documentation and care at the after school club. All policies and procedures are in place to underpin the smooth running of the club for the children although the Ofsted contact details are out of date. Records of attendance, accidents and medication are in place and correctly maintained according to regulation. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Four actions for improvement were agreed at the last inspection. Staff agreed to ensure that all accident records are signed and dated correctly by staff. These documents are now kept correctly according to regulation. Staff agreed to notify Ofsted if there are any significant changes at the play centre. Ofsted is now kept fully informed about any important changes. Staff agreed to develop a procedure for challenging unknown adults. Staff are now prepared to ask any unknown adults why they are on the site. Staff also agreed to carry out a risk assessment of outdoor areas

and to minimise the risk of children leaving the school premises unsupervised. Children are always accompanied by staff when moving around the building or from site to site which keeps them safe.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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

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.

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 wash their hands before eating
- review policies and procedure documents to ensure that contact details for Ofsted are up to date
- review security measures to ensure that staff and children are safe from unwelcome intruders.

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