

Rochester Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	103836
Inspection date	07 June 2007
Inspector	Janette Mary White
Setting Address	St John Fisher Church Hall, Maidstone Road, Rochester, Kent, ME1 3EN
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Registered person	Lindsay Ann McLaughlan
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 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?

Rochester Kindergarten opened in 1987 and operates from one room in a church hall. It is situated in the town of Rochester, Kent. A maximum of thirty children may attend the kindergarten at any one time. The kindergarten is open each weekday from 09.00 to 11.45 for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 39 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these 32 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The kindergarten currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The kindergarten employs seven staff. Five of the staff, including the registered person and manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing an awareness of hygiene through the daily routine. For example, they know why they wipe their nose and dispose of the used tissues in the bin. In addition, they are aware of why it's important to wash germs off their hands after using the toilet. They use soap from a dispenser and paper towels to dry their hands. However, there is a risk of cross infection as children use a bowl of water and share the same towel after taking part in art and craft activities. Most of the staff hold a current first aid certificate. The provider has not ensured that parents have given written permission to seek emergency treatment, but there is permission to seek advice. Children are generally protected through the use of records. There are systems in place to record medication and accidents. However, on a few occasions the details are not always fully completed. Children are developing an understanding of the importance of physical activity. They have regular opportunities to experience fine manipulative skills as well as lively outdoor play. Children use water with different sizes paint brushes to paint on the wall in the garden. They know that physical exercise helps to make them 'strong' and they know when to rest. For example, after jumping ten times on the trampoline. Drinking water is readily available and children benefit from healthy options to promote good health. They learn about healthy eating through discussion, although independence is not fostered as children are not able to pour their own drinks and sometimes adults place the fruit in their bowl. Children understand that they need to put on aprons before painting and messy play. The appropriate daily routine promotes some independence in their personal care.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff are deployed and support the safety of children. The emergency evacuation procedure has not been recently discussed with the children. Most children are not familiar with what they should do in an emergency. Children have easy access to an acceptable range of toys and resources appropriate for their age. Some of the furniture is child sized and supports children independence, although adult sized tables and chairs at the art and craft activity does not foster their self help skills. Toys and resources provide sufficient choices. There are opportunities for children to relax or to be active. Staff use the resources to meet the individual needs of the children. Children arrive happily and settle well. They benefit from playing in an organised environment allowing them to move around and play safely. There are procedures for the safe arrival and departure of children. Staff have an appropriate understanding of child protection issues and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This ensures staff can act in the child's best interest. Staff complete written risk assessments to monitor children's safety and they closely supervise them when playing outside. Displays of children's work shows that staff value children's contributions.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy the positive range of activities. The balance between the indoor and outside play offers them differing challenges and helps to support their stages of development. Children investigate using resources including, sand and drawing, and this helps them to make connections as they play. However, the staff do not use the Birth to three matters framework to adapt activities to promote younger children's learning. Children are interested, cooperate and

negotiate as they play. For example, children are helping each other when placing a doll in a baby sling. Staff support children's interest by asking them questions and helping them to participate in activities which appeal to them. The staff have a reasonable understanding of the range of experiences required to enable children to make progress using their senses and creative abilities. Children have positive relationships with staff and are not afraid to ask for support and help. They participate in activities that include quiet and active play, such as listening to and predicting what comes next in familiar stories. They have opportunities to bounce on a trampoline and to balance by using the climbing equipment with a tunnel. In addition, children are happy as they play with a home made cardboard fort, which they painted 'grey'. For example, children are lowering the drawbridge to allow other children join them. Easily accessible books and resources helps to develop children's imaginations and communication skills. Some activities are adult initiated, such as making French flags for their project, and some offer free choice, such as using imaginative play in the role play area and cars on the motor track. This balance helps children to make progress in all areas of learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making acceptable progress towards the stepping stones and early learning goals. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. However, there are limited opportunities for children to express themselves using mark marking through free play activities. Children's progress is monitored using the stepping stones. Staff record as children participate in free play or planned activities. They take note to build a picture of each child's progress, although sometimes differentiation for less or more able children is not clear and this is not evaluated within the planning. Staff assess the activities to help focus on what needs to be changed or their success. Children show a sense of belonging as they learn and play together. They respond well and are engaged in a sound range of challenging and meaningful activities. The opportunities for children to use information communication technology through daily free play activities is insufficient. Some more able children are counting, although there are limited opportunities for children to count and calculate in everyday situations. Children are beginning to understand the difference in time and talk about past and present experiences, such as painting the fort grey last week or playing at home yesterday. They are developing hand eye co-ordination. Use of the outdoor area helps children to develop physical skills and see the changes in the garden. For example, how much the strawberries have grown. Overall the provision plans and provides activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

There is a policy on equality. Staff gather information regarding children's background needs, such as, language and their religion. There are some opportunities for the inclusion of children for whom English is an additional language. There are moderate resources reflecting positive images, but this does not offer all children daily opportunities to develop a balanced view of society. All children are welcomed and play a full part in the group because staff value and respect their individuality. Children have access to varied resources, toys and equipment to stimulate their individual development. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are recognised and supported in the setting and staff enable their individual progress. Children receive individual attention and all staff are aware of their needs. The observations made are used to encourage children to become involved in play and learning, and to develop relationships with other children. Most children understand right from wrong and respond to gentle reminders to care for the resources and each other. Children's behaviour is good. The group rules are

promoted and reinforced by staff. Staff use a 'helicopter symbol' system to encourage children's positive behaviour. This system does not fully promote children's independence or self help skills. Children are developing self assurance and confidence when seeking comfort or help. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parent is good. Parents do not identify children's starting points, although they do contribute by giving some basic information on the 'all about me form'. Parents are offered a range of information on the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, they are given limited information on the Birth to three matters framework. Examples of the children's work can be taken home or is on display. Effective information is shared and parents feel their children are included. Parents are able to work together with their child's key worker and they are pleased with the service they receive. Staff produce a regular report to help parents know how their child is developing and progressing. Children benefit greatly from the involvement of their parents in projects which contribute to their good health, safety, development and learning. The provider has a positive understanding of the policy for parents to make a complaint. There is a system in place to log complaints and they now have a system to provide parents with a summary.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

All staff, including the registered person and manager, are appropriately qualified and vetted, and children are never left alone with unvetted persons. Some of the necessary records are not retained for the required period. This is a breach of regulation. However, the provider will take appropriate action to address this point. Children may be at risk as a result of Ofsted's inability to check records necessary are in place. There are clear routines which are consistently used by all staff supporting a sense of familiarity amongst the children. The premises are comfortable and children feel secure. Staff have an understanding of their role and work principally as part of a team. Children are attracted and encouraged to take part in activities and the organisation of routines helps them to make sound progress in their learning. Records are used by staff to enable appropriate care to be delivered to suit individual needs and information is shared with parents. Documentation is kept securely. Most of the policies and procedures are understood by staff. The provider and most staff have a sound understanding of child protection issues. However, some staff are not aware of the procedure for allegations of abuse made against them. In addition, some staff are not familiar with the procedures to be followed in the event of a child being lost.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Satisfactory progress has been made in developing the kindergarten so that all children benefit from the educational provision and make satisfactory progress. Staff have an acceptable understanding of the children's needs and present positive role models for them to learn from. The registration certificate and insurance are displayed. A registration system now shows the hours of attendance for children and staff. Visitors to the group are challenged and their details recorded. Staff continually review and develop the provision this is mostly through discussion at staff meetings and observations of what is working well. The provider is continuing to improve the recruitment and vetting procedures in line with changes in regulations. The system of retaining Criminal Records Bureau information now meets the data protection procedure. All recommendations from previous inspections have been met. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous inspection highlighted two recommendations to; record hours of attendance daily and monitor the staff's understanding of individual learning needs.

Since the last inspection; they record the time of any child arriving later or leaving earlier than the core times and the staff's understanding of children's individual learning needs is monitored through staff training and appraisals.

As a result, children's daily hours of attendance are recorded. In addition, children's learning needs are considered in order to meet their individual development.

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.

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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 good hygiene practices are in place in order to prevent the risk of cross infection.
- ensure all records are retained for the required period.
- develop staff's understanding of child protection procedure including allegations of abuse made against a member of staff and the procedure to be followed in the event of a child being lost.

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):

- develop further opportunities for children to express themselves using mark marking through free play activities.
- develop more opportunities for children to use information communication technology through free play activities.
- provide more opportunities for children to count and calculate in everyday situations.

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