

# Robin's Den Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	137338
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 March 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Claire, Alexandra Parnell
<b>Setting Address</b>	c/o Hillside Primary School, Dyke Drive, Orpington, Kent, BR5 4LZ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Valerie Robbins
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Robin's Den Pre-School opened in 1982. It operates from one main room, which is a classroom of a primary school in Orpington. The group also share some of the school's facilities, such as the outdoor areas, library and school hall. Robin's Den serves the local community.

There are currently 35 children from three to five years on roll. This includes 30 funded three and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five mornings a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 12:00 noon.

There are six staff who work with the children. Of these, two have early years qualifications to NVQ level two or three. A further two staff are currently training to level two qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. They are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's personal hygiene is promoted well due to the good hygiene practices used by all staff. Children understand about germs and the importance to cover their mouths when they cough and to wash their hands after toileting, before eating and after messy play. The staff talk to children about germs and why they need to wash their hands. Most children take themselves independently to the toilet, using the accessible facilities confidently. Those children who need support are given subtle guidance to promote their confident and independent toileting skills. Children play in a clean and well-maintained environment where some measures are taken to prevent cross-contamination and infection, such as using appropriate cloths to mop up spillages and clean tables. However, children use a communal towel to dry their hands after washing them, therefore protection from cross-infection is not always positively promoted.

Children's ongoing health is promoted well through the use of clear procedures and effective documentation. All details of children's accidents whilst in the pre-school's care are recorded and shared openly with parents. Consent is sought for staff to administer medication to children and procedures are in place to ensure that this is effectively recorded.

Children have access to healthy options of food and drinks at snack time. They learn about the importance of healthy foods and drinks, singing and signing songs about their snacks and drinks. Children have access to a drinking fountain to ensure that they can drink whenever they are thirsty. Children's allergies and restrictions are recorded and information is used well to ensure their dietary needs are met at all times.

Children have regular access to fresh air and large open spaces to move and use appropriate equipment to enhance their physical skills and wellbeing. Although children do not have free access to an outdoor area, staff use their allotted time well to provide activities to encourage new skills and movements. Children learn about using different parts of their bodies for movement and balance, discovering different tactics and skills to use equipment for different effects.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment. This is due to the opportunities for children to choose where to play, good security measures to ensure children cannot leave the setting or the surrounding areas unsupervised and vigilant staff to ensure children are playing safely without diminishing their independence and choice.

Children have access to appropriately sized equipment such as tables and chairs to promote safe, independent play. They learn about using resources safely due to clear explanations from staff about respecting equipment and the impact this has on their play if the toys are broken. They have clear explanations about appropriate behaviour and how this helps to keep themselves and their friends safe. Staff consistently check equipment at the beginning and end of the day to ensure that it is appropriate for children to play with and promotes their safety.

Children are safely evacuated from the building in an emergency. This takes place regularly in line with school's fire drills and independently to ensure children know the routine to promote their safety. Fire drills are well documented and used to evaluate their effectiveness. Outings

are planned well to ensure children are cared for by high numbers of staff and risk assessments are carried out to promote their safety.

Robust procedures are in place to safeguard children from harm. All staff have a clear understanding of child protection procedures and are aware of who to contact within the local authority to gain support and promote children's welfare. Full written procedures are available for all staff and students including what to do if allegations are made against staff.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children confidently enter the setting, settle quickly and interact well with the staff. This is due to the staff's awareness of each child's needs and how to encourage their participation in all activities. Children have access to a good range of resources which promotes all areas of learning and development. Staff use the environment and resources imaginatively to give children rich and stimulating experiences, such as the entrance hall for children's role play.

Children's activities are planned according to the Foundation Stage. Staff have very little knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework which is not used within the planning. Therefore younger children's ongoing development is not always actively promoted.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff are actively involved in children's play, creating learning opportunities within planned and spontaneous situations, such as dinosaurs in the sand and comparing them to the dinosaurs on the poster. Children's interest and sustained engagement in activities is promoted well by staff. They use effective strategies to encourage participation from all children and to encourage them to persevere in the activity. This results in children gaining a sense of achievement and satisfaction. Staff make good use of the resources, extending popular interest to all equipment, such as making dinosaur prints in the dough.

Children who speak English as an additional language gain good levels of support from staff who use pictorial guides and dual languages well to reflect their home language. All children learn to sign to enhance the communication of their needs.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well by experienced and knowledgeable staff, who use effective procedures to gain relevant support and information for children's ongoing development.

Children's achievements are documented well. Observations are made by all staff to ensure that all children's progress is monitored and planned for. However, children's stages of development are not linked to the Stepping Stones within the Foundation Stage, therefore these observations are not used effectively to inform the future planning of children's development.

Children enjoy free play and group activities. The large group activities involve all the children's participation. Most children concentrate for the duration of the activity but some less able children lose interest and disrupt the other children's concentration. Therefore the learning intention of the activity is not always met.

Children are confident communicators by using spoken word, signing and gestures. They are introduced to and use complex words to describe aspects of their play such as the names of dinosaurs. They make some attempts to mark make for a purpose and are developing an understanding that print has a meaning. Some children understand sounds and letters associating these with every day words such as the days of the week. Children use books effectively to gain further information on items of interest such as the dinosaurs.

Children understand and associate with values, number and numerals during daily routine events such as counting how many children there are attending each day. They make simple calculations to work out how many children are still washing their hands by looking for the number of empty chairs.

Children have a good sense of time, remembering past events and celebrations of festivals. They are aware of changes in today's society in comparison to the past by understanding that some animals such as dinosaurs are extinct. They are aware of their environment, recognising and describing the weather. They recognise change in themselves by learning about growing up through effective projects and use of photographs. Some children confidently use the computer keys to type their names and understand that different keys, such as the space bar, have different results.

There are excellent opportunities for children to act out roles, either known or fantasy. Children benefit from a good range of malleable experiences such as sand, water, paint and dough to learn about texture and senses. Children introduce different resources to these materials to enhance their imaginations such as dinosaurs in the sand. Children mainly create using pre-selected materials and media with detailed instructions from staff, but some confident children show a creative flair to use these materials their own way, making their art work individual. Most children use musical instruments well. More able children listen to music and use instruments to follow beat and volume, where as some less able children lose interest and disrupt the activity.

Children use tools to good effect. They learn to develop from snipping with scissors to precise cutting, rolling dough, using both palmer and pincer grips to paint and draw and spread their toast themselves using developing skills.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's individuality is promoted well, resulting in children's high levels of self-esteem and pride in themselves. Staff use information in children's records well, relating activities and discussions to children's language spoken at home, their ethnicity, culture and religion. Staff provide children with plentiful resources portraying positive images of today's society, encouraging children to understand and celebrate people's differences.

Good, effective systems are in place to support and promote children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff have experiences of supporting families and children through ongoing assessments and monitoring to provide high levels of support throughout the pre-school and into school.

Children effectively learn about right and wrong. They use examples to help others to learn about social play, sharing and taking turns. Children use staff's positive role models to explain other children's behaviour and to show them acceptable ways of playing with others. Children

receive plentiful amounts of praise for positive behaviour, gaining claps, cheers and cuddles to emphasise the importance of their actions. Therefore children's behaviour is very good. Effective and sensitive strategies are in place to calmly deal with unwanted behaviour. Children are taken aside and their behaviour discussed, they are re-introduced to the group and given praise when acceptable behaviour is seen.

Children are confident and active learners, eager to participate in and choose from all pre-selected activities. They are developing good self-help skills, learning to be independent in toileting, putting coats on, pouring drinks, making choices, tidying up and taking responsibility for their toys and activities. They listen to other people's explanations and confidently voice their opinions. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents receive plentiful information, either verbally, displayed or written, regarding the care and education of the children. Parents have access to activity plans and information about topics and themes that the children will be learning about. However, parents do not receive information about effective learning strategies to enhance children's learning at home. Parents are aware that children's learning is assessed and recorded and that this information is available on request. Parents have access to policies and procedures when they first start and continuously have access to a comprehensive complaints procedure including Ofsted contact details. Parents are actively involved in children's learning within the setting by participating in activities such as interviews about their favourite foods.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff who hold relevant qualifications, have good levels of childcare experiences and have cleared checks to enable them to have unsupervised access to children. Robust recruitment procedures are in place to ensure suitable staff are employed to work with children. Effective student placement procedures are in place to ensure children's welfare is promoted.

High ratios of staff care for and work directly with the children resulting in good levels of positive interaction and supervision and confident and settled children. A full operational plan with policies and procedures is available. All parents are encouraged to read these to ensure that they have a clear understanding of how the provision operates to benefit children's care and education. Children's attendance is recorded accurately, showing exactly how many children are attending the group at any given time.

All documentation is kept up-to-date, secure, safe and confidential. Therefore further promoting children's welfare.

Leadership and management is good. All staff are actively involved in decision making within the Nursery Education systems and link their key child's learning into spontaneous and planned activities. Staff are positively encouraged to continuously develop their knowledge of children's learning strategies and techniques to improve the education for children. They are encouraged to recognise their own strengths and weaknesses as well as those of the educational systems as a whole. Staff work closely together to evaluate children's learning and strive to improve these opportunities throughout all areas of learning and teaching.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the group was given four recommendations to improve the quality of care and one point to consider regarding the Nursery Education.

There was limited information about children's dietary needs. Children's individual information is now recorded clearly on their record forms and shared openly with staff to ensure snacks and drinks promote children's dietary needs.

Ofsted contact details were not accessible to parents within the complaints procedure. These details are now clearly accessible to parents in the complaints procedure displayed in the entrance hall to ensure that they know who to contact if they have concerns about their child's care.

Numbers of staff and children were not recorded for fire drills. These are now comprehensively recorded to show how many children and adults are present during a fire drill and this is evaluated to show the effectiveness of the drill to promote children's safety.

Child protection procedures did not contain information about dealing with allegations made against staff members. The procedure now contains full details of what to do if allegations are made, including the registered providers responsibility and actions to be taken to promote the welfare of the child.

The setting lacked opportunities for children to play musical instruments within their Nursery Education provision. Children now have planned and spontaneous opportunities to regularly play music within structured or free play situations. They either play instruments whilst singing or listening to taped music to promote their understanding of volume and rhythm.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that requires 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):

- protect children from cross infection when drying hands

- ensure younger children's development is promoted and recognised using appropriate systems such as the Birth to three matters framework

### **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):

- ensure children's different levels of ability are provided for, particularly in group activities and use observations effectively to inform future planning
- provide parents with relevant information about appropriate learning strategies

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)