

# Dalgarno Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	105686
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 October 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Committee of Dalgarno Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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*

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?

Dalgarno Pre-school has been operating for many years and registered under the Children Act in September 2002. It operates from two ground floor rooms in a community centre in North Kensington in the London borough of Kensington and Chelsea. The children make use of the communal area for lunch time and there is a secure outside area for physical play.

The provision is registered for a maximum of 19 children aged two to five years at any one time. There are currently 20 children on roll, of these; 12 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and many children attend who have English as an additional language.

The group opens Monday to Friday 09:30 until 14:30 and children attend for a variety of sessions. Three permanent staff members are employed to work with the children, all of whom have appropriate qualifications in childcare. They have an additional staff member to cover when needed. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted well as practitioners implement effective hygiene procedures to minimise the risk of cross infection within the provision. There are practitioners trained in first aid, children's accidents are recorded appropriately and they have good procedures for the administration of medication. Children recognise the need to follow good hygiene procedures, for example, they wash their hands after independently using the toilet and prior to lunch. Practitioners are good role models and commentate when they are going to wash their hands.

The children learn about healthy eating as they make choices from a selection of fruit. Parents work in partnership with the nursery practitioners to provide healthy and nutritious lunches for the children. Conversations about salad vegetables and fruit help children identify what foods are good for them. Water is always available in children's individual bottles to enable them to independently take a drink when they identify that they are thirsty. Practitioners remind children to quench their thirst when they have been physically active.

Children are developing a positive attitude to physical exercise as they enjoy it on a daily basis both indoors and outside. They are able to use the garden at set times during the day to develop their skills in riding wheeled toys and climbing. The children relish the regular PE sessions, which are conducted by a visiting practitioner, in small groups. Children run around fast and slow negotiating space. They are encouraged to imitate the movements of various animals, and enjoy jumping like kangaroos and moving sideways like crabs. They are encouraged to balance on one leg and stretch on their tiptoes. Children who indicate they are tired are advised to rest a while. Children concentrate on cutting with scissors and use needles to sew pictures.

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

The provision is good.

Children move safely and freely around the welcoming environment. Practitioners have organised resources well to enable children to make good use of the safe and suitable equipment, they make their own choices from the wide selection of accessible toys and play materials. Children are able to use the toilets independently as they are adjacent to the playroom thus supporting their independence.

There are risk assessments carried out by practitioners to minimise risk to children within the nursery. Children are made aware of fire safety from regular fire drills and practitioners are able to evacuate the building promptly. Children develop an awareness of keeping themselves safe as practitioners offer age appropriate explanations, for example, 'please sit on the chair or you will fall and bang your mouth which will hurt'. Practitioners clean up spills promptly to prevent accidents.

Children are well protected because practitioners have a clear understanding of their role with regard to child protection issues and know how to implement local procedures. Practitioners attend ongoing training to ensure their knowledge is updated.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school, they arrive happy and confident and quickly settle into the routine, making their own choices about their play choosing from a wide range of accessible resources. They enjoy their activities and interact well with practitioners and their peers, building positive relationships with them. The practitioners place high importance on supporting children's emotional development, and are creative when settling children to ensure that the children feel secure. For example, practitioners enable children to sit in their buggy to observe the group until they feel safe enough to engage in play in their own time.

Children's independence is well promoted, for example, children move around freely accessing toys and play equipment, they choose books and stories throughout the day, and they decide when to have a drink and can use the toilet when they choose. They are aware of the resources available and request that the doctor's set is put out after lunch. Children enthusiastically access the resources engaging peers and adults in their role play.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching is good and children have a positive attitude to learning. Practitioners have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and as a team competently put this into practice. Planning is flexible, clear and covers all areas of learning in the curriculum. There are suitable assessment records for each child, which clearly show children's achievements, these assessments include some planning for the next steps in children's learning, although this is not consistent. Practitioners are actively involved in children's activities, they ask questions and are interested in the children's play. As there are many new young children at the setting the questioning is basic, however staff report that they have discussed ways to promote problem solving and challenge thinking for more able children. Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn, persisting at chosen activities. They are confident to ask for specific resources and develop strong relationships with the practitioners. Staff are proactive in encouraging children to engage with each other, share and take turns.

Children enjoy opportunities to enjoy books in a cosy quiet area, where practitioners make themselves available to read and share books with them. There are a number of opportunities for mark making, although they are not always encouraged to mark make for a purpose, for example to label their creative work. Children have opportunities to see labels around the nursery and are encouraged to chat at snack time. Despite the animation of practitioners and the use of props, some children found it difficult to remain focused at circle time; as a result practitioners are reviewing the organisation of this to engage children in smaller groups.

Children make good progress in maths; there are opportunities for children to recognise numbers, count, weigh and measure. They play dice games and are introduced to calculating through songs such as 'five green bottles'. Children are encouraged to gain knowledge of their environment through outings and focused activities such as 'where we live'. Children use cameras to take photos, but there are currently limited opportunities to use computer programs or programmable toys. They have some opportunities to explore the natural world when African snails are brought into the nursery. Organised activities and photos ensure that children are aware of the community they live in and respect each other's backgrounds and beliefs.

Children's creativity is well supported, they have opportunities to enjoy music and dance on a regular basis. They have access to a wide range of media and materials that enable them to

make constructions, collages, paintings and drawings. Children engage in imaginative role-play based on their first hand experiences, children involve adults and other children in their play, for example, children administer 'injections' and use toy stethoscopes to check heartbeats as they pretend to be doctors and patients.

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

The provision is good.

Children show high levels of confidence and self-esteem. They become aware of their own and other's needs though discussion with practitioners and activities about their own cultures and the wider society. They explore different religions and traditions and practitioners deepen children's knowledge by looking at books, listening to stories, observing and hearing different languages. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children with special needs are fully supported by practitioners; the manager deploys the staff team effectively, has effective policies and procedures in place and makes good links with other professionals to ensure that all children make good progress.

Children behave very well; they know what is expected of them and are clear about what is right and wrong. Children understand responsible behaviour and confidently take on responsibilities such as tidying up. Practitioners are good role models, they work together as a team and are consistent in their approach to behaviour management, and they treat each other and the children with respect.

Children benefit from a very friendly professional relationship between practitioners and parents, which is enhanced by an effective key worker system. Practitioners display a wealth of information for parents on notice boards, in information booklets and photographs. Parents' input is welcomed and they are invited to play an active role in the nursery, for example, being part of the management committee, helping at sessions or sharing their expertise.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. They receive useful information about the nursery and the Foundation Stage and are regularly updated on their child's progress. There are large display books for each area of the Foundation Stage curriculum showing photos of activities the children undertake. This is an especially good resource for parents who have English as an additional language. Regular newsletters are sent out although they do not always link the topics and activities to the learning outcomes to enable parents to continue supporting their children's learning at home.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Practitioners have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the nursery and the deployment of staff is good ensuring that all children are secure and happily engaged in activities. The appointment of a qualified deputy has enabled the manager to attend training sessions and meetings to ensure that the team are well informed. A good range of policies and procedures are in place to promote the well-being of the children. Records are maintained effectively, however there are two systems for recording children's attendance, a tick register and a signing in and out sheet for parents. In addition, there is a whiteboard that records an accurate total of children present throughout the day to assist in evacuation procedures. However, as the registers do not always tally, the historical record may not be exact.

Children develop a secure sense of belonging because the nursery is well organised and practitioners work with parents to ensure they have a good knowledge of children's individual circumstances. Practitioners are supported by management through regular meetings and appraisal. They plan the curriculum together and discuss how activities went. There are appropriate recruitment procedures in place; however evidence is not always kept of documents viewed during vetting procedures.

Children's learning is promoted through good leadership and management of nursery education. The management is committed to the improvement and development of practitioners and they are encouraged to update and extend their knowledge through training thus benefiting the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last Children Act inspection the provider was asked to ensure that a named deputy was available to take charge in the absence of the manager. Also they needed to make arrangements to cover unexpected staff absences. There is now a named deputy in place and the provider now employs an assistant to work when needed. This ensures that the staff to child ratio is maintained to ensure the welfare of the children.

At the last Nursery Education inspection the provider was asked to improve the leadership of the setting to support the manager in her role. Practitioners were asked to provide sufficient challenges for the more able children and strengthen the programme for knowledge and understanding of the world. In addition they were asked to improve the use of resources to promote children's access to a range of musical instruments.

Since employing a deputy the provider has enabled the manager to undertake training and develop practice to meet the needs of the children. The staff have discussed and planned how to extend the activities they provide for more able children. Since the last inspection they have organised activities for example, to encourage children to explore the growth of plants and observe African snails. Musical instruments are rotated and the children explore sounds and movement at weekly focused activities.

### **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**

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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):

- ensure that evidence is available of the vetting procedures that are in place for specialists who work in the provision and make sure that evidence is available of the vetting procedures that are in place for specialists who work in the provision

### **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):

- continue to develop the assessments of the children to ensure that their next steps through the stepping stones are identified
- continue to develop play opportunities that support children's knowledge and understanding of the world and communication language and literacy.

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)