



Radnor Avenue Pre - School (Part of Quainton Hall School)

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY313037 |
| Inspection date | 23 March 2006 |
| Inspector | Caren Carpenter |
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| Registered person | Quainton Hall School |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | 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.

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 outstanding. 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?

Radnor Avenue Pre-School is part of Quainton Hall School and was registered in 2005. However, the provision was established over thirty years, despite a change of ownership the senior staffing and ethos of the group has remained unchanged. The group operates from four rooms in a converted house. The group has sole use of an enclosed outdoor play area. The premises are situated within the London Borough of Harrow. A maximum of twenty children may attend the group at any one time and is

currently caring for 21 children, 17 receives funding. The group supports children with special education needs and English as an additional language. The pre-school is open each week day from 9:10 to 12:10 for 38 weeks of the year. There are seven staff including the manager and deputy employed to work with the children. The manager and the deputy hold early years qualifications, one staff member is a qualified teacher, one staff member is working towards NVQ (National Vocational Qualification) level 3 in child care and two are working towards NVQ level 2 in child care.

The pre-school receives support from the Early Years Childcare Development Partnership and are members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is well maintained. They have an excellent awareness and understanding of their own personal hygiene through personal routines, including, hand washing before snack and after toileting. They confidently recognise the need to wash their hands after playing outdoors. Children's health and wellbeing is extremely well supported by the extensive knowledge gained by the setting about individual children's needs. Procedures are in place consistently, to ensure any specific medical need is responded to immediately. Parents are immediately informed of any illness within the setting to ensure they are able to fully protect their children.

Small bottles of milk are provided during the session and nutritionally balanced snacks, such as a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables, are brought in from home in accordance with the setting's healthy eating practice. Children recognise when they are thirsty and have excellent opportunity to help themselves to drinks of water from the water fountain. An exciting range of tasting activities inspire children to learn about healthy eating, for example, they taste a variety of fruits and vegetables weekly. Children's good health is further enhanced because the group is currently involved in the "Healthy children are better learners" initiative. As a result, children have superb opportunities to learn about the importance of eating healthy food, regular exercise and how their bodies work. As part of the initiative, all children are provided with an exceptional range of exciting and stimulating resources from their local health resource library to support and promote their awareness and understanding of being healthy. Children are learning about the functions of their organs, such as, their heart and lungs. Children are involved in extraordinary activities as they experiment and investigate the effect of water, orange, ribena and cola drinks have on their teeth.

Children have exceptional opportunities to engage in daily physical activities, recognise the benefits of participating in regular exercise and know that it contributes to ensuring a healthy lifestyle. All children are provided with an exceptional range of exciting and stimulating daily activities with opportunities to develop physical skills. Children use large equipment for climbing, balancing, jumping and pulling. Children

develop co-ordination and spatial awareness as they pedal and steer bikes and develop ball skills and enjoy running around. Small hand skills are excellently developed throughout the pre-school as children use a variety of tools and natural materials. They join in with delight and have fantastic time during movement sessions as they use their imagination to pretend to move like bears, kangaroos, aeroplanes and sway like gum trees. Children have responsibilities for the planting and maintenance of the sensory area of flowers and herbs. Learning is extended extremely well as the outdoor is seen as an extended classroom.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children learn to keep themselves safe in a welcoming highly stimulating and exciting environment, where they are able to freely move around the inside and outside of the learning environment. Staff are vigilant about children's safety and ensure this by the highly effective implementation of thorough daily risk assessments and exceptionally detailed health and safety policies and procedures across the setting. They develop a strong sense of belonging as their individuality is reflected throughout the setting in displays and photographs. Rooms have been extensively planned to facilitate their independent learning, as resources suitable for the ages of children attending, which are of an excellent quality, are stored easily within their reach. The space is extremely well organised to promote children's natural curiosity as learners, as they access areas that are dedicated to certain aspects of learning.

Children have excellent opportunities to learn about personal safety, for example, staff promote their understanding through discussions and stories about "stranger danger". They learn about the importance of wearing a helmet when riding their bikes, for example, they investigate the effect of not wearing an helmet when riding their bikes during practical activities. Children are developing extremely good awareness and understanding of travelling safely in cars, for example, wearing seat belts and road safety through songs and imaginative play. Excellent procedures are in place to ensure equipment is safe and well maintained.

Children's welfare is extremely well promoted by a team who have an excellent understanding of the issues surrounding child protection. Staff recognise their role and responsibilities and know how to implement pre-school child protection procedures. They are fully aware of the Area Child protection Committee procedures and have attended training in this area. The recording of all staff, children and visitors to and from the pre-school, detailed policies for recording pre-existing injuries contribute to ensuring children are safeguarded from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

The children relish their time in the setting. They have excellent attitude to learning and are happy settled and purposely engaged in a wide range of extensive and challenging activities throughout the sessions. Children are enabled to become

familiar with their surroundings, to explore and develop solid relationships with staff and each other. They seek out their friends and engage in stimulating conversations with their peers and adults caring for them. They show excellent imagination as they represent their ideas through role-play for example, discussing, planning and packing for their trip to Australia.

Time is used extremely well to enable children to make choices and to develop their chosen task, to lead their own learning and experiences. Staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development and make exceptional use of the Birth to three matters framework to guide their planning and observations of children's progress. The excellent range of activities and resources enable children to explore and create using all of their senses, as a result, children gain knowledge of the world around them and start to build their own identities within it.

Children move freely to all rooms and self-select activities and resources and approach adults with confidence to seek help with tasks. Children's self-esteem is exceptionally well promoted by staff for example, each child take turns to take home the pre-school special toy "Liam the Lion" which is used to praise effort and recognise their achievement. This may be for many reasons such as a child managing to do something by themselves for the first time or been kind or helpful to others. A letter is sent home with the lion so that everyone at home knows about the achievement. The child is able to draw a picture which is returned the next day with "Liam the lion" and is displayed at the setting for all to see. Staff fully appreciate that providing excellent learning opportunities and resources facilitates true independent learning.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making excellent progress towards the early learning goals. Staff's excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones enables them to plan effective activities and experiences that are well matched to children's needs and interests. They are highly engrossed in an exciting range of interesting and stimulating activities both indoors and out doors which provide them with optimal challenges. They make rapid strides in their development because staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn most effectively. The pre-school is organised into workshop areas linked to the curriculum making exceptional use of space, both inside and out. The activities provided are stimulating and allow children to initiate many aspects of their learning, make independent choices and promote their self-esteem and confidence as firm foundations for developing to their full potential. Assessment is rigorous and the information gained is used very effectively to guide planning, especially during the key worker groups.

Children offer their ideas to challenges with enthusiasm and they show high levels of independence, concentration and imagination. Children access and enjoy a full range of mark making resources. For example, in the role-play area they have constant access to writing materials for making shopping lists and taking messages. Children are highly skilled communicators who are able to listen to others and are confident in contributing their own ideas. Children can describe what they are thinking as they play and can suggest alternative ways of doing things. They know the names and

sounds of many letters of the alphabet and are beginning to write recognisable letters and their names.

Children enjoy story books and turning pages appropriately from left to right, for example, some older and able children are able to read simple books, only when ready with good support from staff and parents. They display an excellent level of interest when listening to stories and poems, for example, a 4 year old takes great pleasure in explaining that an illustrator is someone who draws the pictures in books.

Children have excellent mathematical knowledge. They use mathematical language very well, for example, they discuss weight, capacity, measure and positional language during a range of interesting activities. Children are learning extremely well about simple calculations and are developing incredible and increasing skills in solving simple problems as they describe, sort, match, measure, weigh and record various findings. For example, they find out about how many children like banana milk shake and record their findings on a chart with 3 children indicating no, 11 said yes and 6 children did not taste it, but helped to make it. They make cylinders with tubes and measure their heights and record how tall they are in centimetres. Children's counting and recognition of written numbers is very secure. Many children recognise numbers up to 10 and above.

Children are developing excellent fine motor skills as they use a wide range of tools and malleable materials with increasing confidence, for example, rolling pins, scissors and paint brushes. Children use large blunt sewing needles with increasing control and create fantastic design during sewing and threading activities. As a result, they are developing very good concentration and fine muscle skills. Children are highly involved in a wide range of exploring and investigating activities, for example, they are finding out about air, reflections, gravity, dissolving substances, forces and observe ice melting. Children have excellent opportunities to learn about the life cycle of frogs as they observe and watch tadpoles. Children's curiosity and investigative skills are greatly enhanced, as they learn about the world in which they live. For example, the changes in the weather, they show real enthusiasm as they check the thermometer daily to measure the outside temperature, before going out to play. They use technology, such as, tape recorders, calculators, torches, metal detector and are gaining many skills while using the computer.

Children's imagination is exceptionally well explored. They independently select an extensive range of media and materials, including clay, lentil, paint and an extensive range of creative materials to freely explore creativity and express their own ideas. Children respond using their senses as they smell and feel sensory plants and herbs in the garden and explore sound and rhythm as they examine an extensive range of musical instruments.

Children are provided with excellent opportunities to express a range of emotions in a supportive and caring environment as part of the "Healthy children are better learners" initiative. For example, they talk about feeling frightened when the fire works are very loud, sad when they are hurt and happy when they use a curly whirly slide. Children are extremely well behaved; staff have an excellent understanding of behaviour management using a quiet, calm and sensitive approach in which they use reasoning and explanation.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children show an excellent attitude towards one another and are extremely confident and self-assured. They flourish in the pre-school because they are exceptionally well supported by staff who encourage them to become competent learners. All children have equal access to the extensive range of resources and activities. They are treated as individuals by all staff, who ensure activities are suited to children's specific level of understanding and that they are appropriately challenged.

Children are exceptionally well behaved, listen to others with interest and welcome visitors into the setting in a confident and polite manner. Positive strategies are effectively used as children learn to respect others through social skills, role-modelled by staff and routines such as tidying away toys. Relationships are excellent on all levels and children gain a high level of self-control. Staff do not intervene too quickly, giving children time to work out if they can do things for themselves. Children, their ideas and views are very well respected by the staff. This raises their self-esteem enabling them to confidently take part in activities and take pleasure in their achievements.

Staff's extensive knowledge of child development and their commitment to inclusion of all children has ensured that children with special needs, benefit from their attendance in the setting. For example, the manager and deputy have gained wider knowledge and skills which enables them to recognise and identify early signs of children with special needs. As a result, they are able to work effectively with parents and make appropriate referrals directly to the local children's unit for an early assessment. Staff work very closely with a range of professional agencies and parents by, attending regular meetings to review children's progress and to plan the educational programme to fully benefit the children's specific needs. The group has been praised and recognised by the local Early Years Childcare and Parenting Service, because, the setting demonstrates excellent inclusive practice. Staff's knowledge and skills in meeting individual children's needs has made it possible for all children to make progress and is a model they aim for all settings to follow.

Through the well planned topics, children have many opportunities to engage in activities which enhance their learning and understanding of the wider community and the world around them. Children have excellent opportunities to find out about their own culture and beliefs of other people as they celebrate different festivals with parents help, for example, Chinese New Year and Diwali. They have access to an excellent range of toys and resources which promote equal opportunities, such as, dressing-up clothes, puzzles and books. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development very effectively.

The children's sense of belonging is extremely well promoted as they make their own decisions regarding activities, lead their own pace of learning. They access an excellent range of activities and learning opportunities and their work and photographs are attractively displayed around the room.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. They are fully informed within the life of the

setting and their children's care at all times. The superb relationship between parents and staff further enhance children's experience at the nursery. Parents are involved at every level, helping in the group bringing in items for themes and topics. Parents receive extremely detailed information and discuss the curriculum of the school, which helps them to understand how their children learn and develop through play. A notice board is used extremely well to keep parents well informed of events, themes, recycling items for the pre-school, the educational curriculum and useful leaflets. A parents suggestion folder provides excellent opportunities for parents to make comments and suggestion for improvements. Parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress and development through daily exchange of information. They are invited to attend regular meetings to discuss their children's written achievements reports and are a crucial part of setting targets for children's future learning. Parents are provided with regular newsletters and given detailed information about forthcoming events and themes. Staff provide parents with suggestions for activities to do at home to enhance and extend their children's understanding and learning. For example, they borrow simple reading books to develop and extend their children's early reading skills at home. All parents are encouraged and take turns to come into the setting and spend a session with their children. This provides excellent opportunities for parents to be fully involved in the care and learning of their children and develop exceptional relationships with staff.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The leadership and management of the setting is outstanding. Children are very relaxed and self-motivated in a well organised and inspiring environment. Children's care and learning is greatly enhanced by the outstanding leadership, management and excellent organisation at the pre-school. Children are confident and have enthusiasm to learn due to the high quality of teaching. Staff really enjoy what they do and children flourish in their care.

The staff team, led by the manager, have high standards and are very secure in their knowledge and understanding of the curriculum provided. Children's care and learning is further enhanced by the effective deployment of staff and good leadership and management of nursery education. Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage curriculum, Birth to three matters and are experienced in working with pre-school aged children, which impacts on the organisation of the group and the achievements children make.

All Staff have a very clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the provision and the implementation of the operational plan is highly effective ensuring all children are provided with high levels of support and thrive in the vibrant and well organised setting. Time and resources are exceptionally well used and the learning environment enables children to reach their maximum potential and play an active role in their own learning. The manager is very pro-active in her approach, she works alongside the established staff team which are deployed effectively to ensure children are well supported. Comprehensive and flexible planning systems allow children to make extensive choices. Staff are highly skilled at adapting activities to

effectively support and guide children and, extend their play and learning.

The environment and resources both indoors and in the garden are extremely well organised and set out in ways that maximise children's learning. Clear, comprehensive documentation and sound monitoring and evaluation systems are in place to ensure that children's health, safety and wellbeing is safeguarded. Superb links are made with other agencies, such as, the local authority to further enhance the provision.

Monitoring and the evaluation of the education programme and care takes place in the form of weekly planning meetings for staff. Rigorous monitoring of children's achievements helps ensure that they are continually making excellent progress in all areas of their learning and development.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

This is 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 their 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 outstanding. 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

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

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