

Robert Blair Children's Centre and Extended School Services

Robert Blair Primary School, Brewery Road, LONDON, N7 9QJ

Inspection date

08/10/2014

Previous inspection date

Not Applicable

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This inspection:

2

Previous inspection:

Not Applicable

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

2

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

2

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

2

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- Staff build close relationships with children and this helps children to develop a sense of belonging. Children gain self-confidence as they take part in free play activities.
- Staff support children well in the development of good communication and language skills. Children especially enjoy the many opportunities to share books and sing songs.
- There are good opportunities for children to adopt healthy lifestyles. They benefit from the provision of healthy snacks and lunches as well as access to a range of outdoor equipment.
- The manager maintains a detailed action plan, which contributes to the ongoing improvement of the provision for children.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always use low level displays effectively to enable children to make connections in their play and further extend their learning.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed children taking part in a variety of indoor and outdoor activities.
- The inspector talked with staff, observed their teaching and interviewed the manager.
- The inspector took part in a joint observation of a group activity with the manager.
- The inspector sampled documentation, in particular documents relating to children's progress and safeguarding.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents.

Inspector

Jill Nugent

Full report

Information about the setting

Robert Blair Children's Centre and Extended School Services registered in 2006. The extended services unit operates from two rooms in the children's centre, which is situated in the school building. Of these, one room is designated for the care of babies and the other for the care of two- and three-year-old children. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area. The extended services unit also provides out of school care for children in the main school. The daycare provision is open from 8am until 6pm every weekday for 49 weeks of the year. There are currently 26 children on roll in the early years age group. A team of 11 staff work with the children. This includes the manager, who is a qualified teacher and manages the whole school's early years provision. The school and children's centre are in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education to children aged two, three and four years old. The extended services unit supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who are learning English as an additional language.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- make better use of display boards indoors to enable children to make connections as they play and thereby further extend their learning.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

The provision is effective in meeting the learning needs of children. Staff plan and organise the play environments in each room to enable children to access resources in different learning areas and to engage in child-centred play. As a result children are attracted to different types of play, for example, arranging toy animals on a mat, playing in a water tray or investigating shaving foam. The outdoor play area is especially well resourced and stimulating for children. For example, there are places for children to be active or quiet, such as equipment for climbing and jumping or comfortable 'dens'. Children's curiosity is captured as they move from one interesting resource to another, for instance, from sand pits, musical instruments and 'bridges' to ride-on toys. However staff do not provide a wide range of similarly stimulating resources indoors, for example, interesting low-level displays, to offer children the opportunity to extend their learning in the same way.

Staff support children well during their freely chosen play activities. They make sure to interact with children at their level, for example, sitting or kneeling with children when they take part in floor play activities or standing alongside children when they explore

large outdoor apparatus. In this way staff actively encourage children to explore in different play situations. For example, children were fascinated by the look and feel of coloured gel, which they carefully investigated with their hands on large trays. Staff help children to follow up their interests by joining them in their exploration and engaging them in conversation. Staff are adept at encouraging children to talk for a purpose. This helps children learn to use spoken language in different ways to express meaning.

Staff make good use of books to help children develop their language skills. Children share books spontaneously with staff, both individually and in groups. Staff take the opportunity to read to children, talk about the pictures, sing songs and answer questions. As a result children show much interest in books and are beginning to enjoy them. At adult-led group times staff encourage children to choose their favourite books to be read to the group. Children enjoy the chance to join in with familiar phrases and in this way extend their use of language, learning how written and spoken language link together. Staff's focus on helping children to learn through talk, and books, is especially useful in supporting those children who are learning English as an additional language.

Staff are particularly good at increasing children's understanding of mathematical concepts during free play. For example, staff talked with children about toy animals, drawing their attention to the different sizes and shapes. Children are beginning to notice patterns and to make their own patterns as they sort and arrange objects. They learn about rhythm and pattern in language when joining in rhymes and songs at adult-led group times. Children have access to a variety of resources that reflect different cultures and languages. Staff extend children's awareness of diversity by planning activities for special celebrations, for example, Black History Month.

Staff make use of an effective system of observational assessment, which enables them to note their observations of children's learning and monitor children's progress. This works well as a tool for monitoring children's development across each area of learning. Staff collect their observations into learning profiles and include information from parents, who are asked to observe their children at home. Staff use their knowledge of children's interests, and stage of development, to plan focus weeks, which provide an opportunity to extend children's individual learning through relevant play activities. As a result children make good progress in their learning given their individual starting points.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

Staff prioritise the well-being of all children. There are good ratios of adults to children in each room and, as a result, staff are able to spend time individually with children to enhance their play. Children enjoy the interaction of staff in their play activities and benefit from the staff's calm and relaxed approach. Staff are happy to spend time with children, for example to sit and read a book or to talk about toy animals. They have fun with children, for instance, staff helped and talked with children in the baby room while they jumped and walked on a set of large blocks. As a result children develop good relationships with staff and enjoy their play.

Children show that they feel safe as they move around freely making their choices of activities. They gain self-confidence as they select from the available resources. They show interest in new activities, such as exploring gel and shaving foam. Staff encourage children to become independent and this helps children to access learning opportunities in their own way. For example, children can choose between various types of sand to explore in different places, and they use a variety of drawing and writing tools in different situations. This helps children to explore in different ways according to their own interests and abilities. Consequently children become confident and active learners.

Staff are firm in their management of children's behaviour and this helps children to be aware of the boundaries set. Staff show children how to negotiate with others if there is a dispute, bringing them together to talk. They remind children of the need to share or wait for their turn when playing with others. For instance, children were learning to take turns when waiting to balance along a set of crates outdoors. Children also learn to follow instructions at adult-led group times, for example, when staff teach a new song or introduce puppets to 'accompany' them. Children are attentive to staff, especially when listening to stories read aloud in a group. They show an increasing awareness of when to listen and when to join in. In this way they are learning to respect group rules and also others' needs within the group.

Staff provide a selection of healthy snacks each day, offering children a good choice of interesting foods. In the baby room children gather together for snack. This helps them to learn social skills and encourages them to try different foods. In the toddler room snack is available throughout the day so that children can access food and drink independently. For example, children enjoyed sitting at the table choosing pieces of fruit. They are encouraged to pour themselves a drink of water when they are thirsty.

Staff are attentive to special dietary needs and, if appropriate, help children to make the correct choices so that they learn to manage their own dietary needs. Lunchtimes are well organised, with babies eating in their own room and toddlers using the school's dining room. The school's lunch menu is well balanced and nutritious. Staff sit with children at lunch times, encouraging children to learn more about healthy eating. Children benefit from the opportunity to eat together in school as it helps to increase their personal independence in readiness for joining the nursery class.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The centre manager is effective in her leadership role. She monitors the educational programme and also introduces new ways of working to continually improve the provision. There are good procedures in place to safeguard all children. The management team in the school ensure that all staff working in the setting have undergone the necessary checks relating to their suitability to work with children. The manager has attended extra training to support her in the role of designated person for child protection. She regularly updates the associated policies. She liaises with families and other professionals in order to promote safeguarding. Staff in the unit update their training in safeguarding issues

regularly. They have opportunities during meetings with the manager to reaffirm their understanding. All staff know what to do if they have any concerns regarding child protection.

Staff carry out daily safety checks on the premises to ensure that the play environments are safe for children. The outdoor play equipment is checked regularly by experts attached to the school. There is an on-site caretaker able to deal with any safety concerns arising from safety checks. Staff supervise children closely when playing outdoors. They allow them to learn about assessing risk for themselves, for example, when learning to use steps, ramps and balancing equipment. All staff have attended training in first aid and hold up-to-date certificates. Consequently there is always a qualified first aider present wherever children choose to play. Staff have good access to first aid equipment and always carry equipment when taking children on trips away from the centre. Staff are efficient in their maintenance of records relating to children's health and safety.

The manager encourages staff to reflect on their practice and to consider ways to improve their teaching. She has introduced a new system of supervision to encourage staff to exchange information about children's progress as well as discuss their own professional development. In this way she hopes to monitor staff's use of systems and procedures and be able to track children's individual development more closely. Staff have good opportunities for further training and this helps them to meet the differing needs of children continually. For example, staff have revisited their training in the 'Every Child A Talker' programme. They have attended extra training to help them understand the differing needs of two-year-old children and have looked at ways of meeting the needs of children who are challenging. This training has helped them to raise their expectations and offer better support to children. At present staff are working on developing their understanding of children's repeated actions in play, to help them plan more appropriate experiences to meet children's individual learning needs.

The centre has a close working partnership with parents, resulting in children settling well and quickly developing a sense of belonging. Children benefit from the home visits that staff organise prior to children starting at the unit. On these visits staff are able to find out more about children at home and get to know their families, so that children's needs are met appropriately when they begin attending. Parents are given detailed information about the day care provision for children in a printed booklet. This details the care and learning available to their children and explains the use of the individual learning profiles. Extra daily information is made available to parents on a large whiteboard. This includes, for example, a recipe for scones made by the children and a request for help for a forthcoming cultural event. The manager is continually working to involve parents more. For example, parents can now access further information on the website and recently enjoyed staying for breakfast with their children.

The manager works closely with the children's centre and with other early years professionals in order to offer good support for children with special educational needs. She liaises closely with the school's head teacher, who is very supportive of the work done in the extended services unit. This enables the manager to implement new ideas and develop systems and procedures continually. She has a detailed action plan in place. This includes a list of relevant targets for further improvement. Since the previous inspection

she has liaised with staff and parents with regard to developing the outdoor play area and has created a more exciting play area with a greater variety of activities available to children. At present she is working towards the development of other aspects of the educational programme, for example, different learning areas, such as music and phonics, and a system of more effective feedback for parents. Her efficiency in maintaining an ongoing action plan contributes to the unit's good capacity for continuing improvement.

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 2	Good	Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning.
Grade 3	Requires improvement	The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection.
Grade 4	Inadequate	Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection.
Met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration.
Not met		There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration.

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

Unique reference number	EY333836
Local authority	Islington
Inspection number	828232
Type of provision	Full-time provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 5
Total number of places	33
Number of children on roll	26
Name of provider	Robert Blair Primary School Governing Body
Date of previous inspection	not applicable
Telephone number	02076074115

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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