



Pixies Tree

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131606
Inspection date	22 May 2006
Inspector	Clare Moore
Setting Address	63 Portsmouth Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO19 9BE
Telephone number	023 8044 5869
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Registered person	Pixies Day Nuseries
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

The Pixies Day Nursery Group was established in 1996. Pixies Tree Day Nursery and Pre School opened in 2000. It is owned and managed by the Pixies Day Nursery Group and operates from six rooms in a building in the Woolston area of Southampton.

A maximum of 48 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 all year round. All children have access to a

secure outside area.

There are currently 90 children from three months to under five years on roll. Of these, 27 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area and attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. They also welcome children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 18 staff who work with the children. Of these, 14 hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are currently working toward a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is very effectively promoted. They are served with nutritious home cooked foods at lunch times, fresh fruit at snack times and water or milk at frequent intervals through out the day. Fruit flavoured squash is served with meals. The regular drinks keep them hydrated. Older babies are encouraged to develop skills and become independent at meal times through feeding themselves and being supported and encouraged by staff. Specific needs of children such as allergies and sensitivities are carefully recorded and very good systems are in place to ensure their needs are met. Children rest and sleep according to their needs. Those that need reassurance are sympathetically supported and soon respond to skilled efforts to calm and re-assure them.

Children enjoy fresh air, exercise and physical play in the garden with a variety of activities which gives older children opportunities to climb, slide, balance, throw and catch balls, use ride on toys and play games. Younger children also have opportunities to develop skills and enjoy the outdoor environment as they explore the sand, the slide and dig in the earth. This helps children to develop physical skills and to keep fit and active. Children spend as much time as possible outside but this time is limited due to planning restrictions placed on the nursery. This means that opportunities for children to participate in outdoor activities and to experience the outdoor environment are less than would otherwise be the case. Children also develop physical skills indoors through dancing, action songs and rhymes. They practise finer motor control through for example pouring drinks, using tools, construction and sowing seeds and feeding fish.

Children understand that they need to be appropriately equipped for outside play. They wear coats in cold weather and sun screening creams and hats to protect them from the sun.

Children are cared for in a comfortable clean environment and older children learn about the need for good personal hygiene. They become independent by managing their toilet needs and washing their hands as soon as they are able to with sensitive support from staff. Children's toys and equipment are clean and well maintained. Environmental and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures are promoted. A very

effective sickness policy and helps to prevent the spread of illness and cross infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Risks to children are minimised effectively because the setting has a high level of security. Risk assessments are carried out daily both indoors and outside and all medicines and cleaning materials are stored safely. Children know about fire safety procedures as these are practised regularly. First aid kits are available throughout the nursery and staff are qualified in first aid so that action can be taken to treat children in the event of an emergency. Children are carefully supervised during the time they spend in the care of the nursery. Babies are checked frequently when they have sleeps and older children learn to become aware of safety issues such as walking rather than running indoors which helps to prevent injury to themselves and others. Children with allergies are protected from harm as there are clear signs displayed to ensure all staff are well informed.

Staff have a secure understanding of child protection procedures which helps to ensure that children's needs are met.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are relaxed and happy at the nursery due to carefully considered settling in procedures and attention to individual needs. Children are confident and demonstrate a sense of belonging as they arrive, exchange greetings with staff and in the pre school go to the window to wave off their parents and get something out to play with.

Children spend their time purposefully in a variety of ways which helps them to enjoy their time at the nursery and maintain interest. They enjoy books, games, music and benefit from very good resources and a wide range of accessible toys and equipment. They have frequent opportunities to enjoy sensory experiences. Older babies and two to three year olds explore sound and texture with toys such as shakers, activity centres and natural materials. All children are supported in developing language skills because staff talk, listen and play with them. For example there is great hilarity in playing peep-bo with the babies who are transfixed by the practitioner covering her face with her hands then surprising them. They enjoy and participate in songs, rhymes books and stories. Children of different ages and siblings have opportunities to interact when they meet and spend time together. This creates an environment where older children can help younger ones, for example showing them where resources are or guiding them to the toilet which encourages children to consider the needs of others.

Daily notes and records about progress are written by staff, compiled into a development record file with photographs and shared with parents ensuring continuity of care for the children.

Nursery education

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Three and four year olds are making consistent progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage of learning. They provide a broad range of activities and experiences, ask questions and frequently offer praise and encouragement. Children enjoy their activities and can access many of the resources available to them. They use their imagination when they explore paint, play with small worlds and engage in role play. They enjoy rhymes, puzzles, books and games which help them to practise number and language skills. Staff meet together and share their ideas to produce well designed activity plans.

Children are motivated and interested in what they do. For example they look excitedly at caterpillars in a viewing box and monitor their development into cocoons and they take turns to feel the texture of a kiwi fruit and describe how it feels to them. They concentrate when they operate the computer and click the mouse on icons to produce a well liked nursery rhyme that they have chosen. They enjoy painting with a variety of different applicators, cooking, growing plants and construction.

Children are confident speakers and listeners. They practise and develop skills as they take part in conversations with staff and other children. Their vocabulary is extended through talking about experiences, for example when digging for worms and snails using words such as look, find, dig, snail trail, wriggle and comparing lengths. They discuss a range of topics taking turns to share their news at circle time. Children learn about number through rhymes, games and practical activities such as counting and working out how many beakers are needed for drinks at snack time. They explore space and shape as they play with small worlds with dinosaurs, a farm and a railway track, build with large blocks and negotiate an obstacle course. They practise reading and writing skills when they identify their name at the table, on their coat pegs, make marks in role play, label their work and share books and stories.

Written assessments and records show children's achievements and these are clearly linked to the areas of learning. Planning builds on what individual children already know and ensures there is a wide variety of activities. There is a good balance of activities initiated by children and activities directed by staff.

Children are able to make use of the outdoor environment by spending the time that they have in the garden to play on wheeled toys and engage in other meaningful activities such as sand, water, outdoor painting and games for example hop scotch and "What's the time Mr Wolf?" They also find snails, worms and grow plants such as herbs and sunflowers which helps them gain an understanding of the passage of time and the natural world.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave very well, they enjoy playing together and older children develop a sense of responsibility by helping to tidy away before meal times. Younger children are supported with sharing and taking turns which helps them to work harmoniously

with others. Children and staff use the rules as a discussion point when support is needed which gives children responsibility and control. Children develop a positive attitude to difference when they explore their homes and families in topics such as "Where I live." They find out about different cultures when they celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year and Easter, and try a variety of exotic foods. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are valued as individuals and are frequently independent in selecting their own resources from storage and making choices about their activities. Children are happy and settled. They play together well, enjoy each other's company and are at ease with the staff. Children with disabilities and learning difficulties are welcomed and can be effectively supported as staff are experienced and qualified in this area. Staff also have established links with other agencies for support and further expertise.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are warmly welcomed into the setting to help settle children and provide information about home routines, allergies, likes and dislikes. This is used to help children to feel comfortable, at ease and minimise disruption to routines. Parents are invited to serve on the Parents Committee which produces a regular newsletter and are able to log into the Pixies web site and use electronic mailing which aids communication.

Parents are given opportunities to contribute to children's records initially but opportunities to contribute to the records are more limited in the pre school. They are given information about topics but are not often offered suggestions to help them to take an active role in their children's learning. Parents are given comprehensive information about how the setting runs, newsletters and information about each stage as their child moves through the nursery to different groups. For the parents of babies there are written daily record sheets about diet, nappy changes and their child's day. This helps to ensure continuity for children between the setting and the home. Parents of older children are given this information through informal discussion with staff

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provider meets the needs of the range of children who attend. Space and resources are very well organised with different base rooms for different age groups. Areas are used for different activities, for example sand and water play, role play, book areas and storage which is mostly child accessible to maximise opportunities available to children.

Policies and procedures are clearly set out, shared with all staff and made available to parents which contributes to children's well being in the nursery. All the required documentation is in place and there are very effective recruitment, induction procedures and training for new staff. Staff are clear about their responsibilities through written job descriptions and effective support. They are encouraged to share their ideas and take an active role in their development. There are measures to cover unexpected staff absences so that ratios are maintained. Children can be treated in

the event of an emergency because permissions have been obtained from parents to cover medical treatment or advice.

The leadership and management are good. The management and staff teams work together and are committed to continuing to develop, reflect upon and improve education and care through training, working with the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, the National Day Nurseries Association and the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to make sure the premises are secure, give all children daily access to the garden, make the complaints procedure clear to parents and extend the range of books.

The door is now secure and there is a double gate. A rota system has been introduced so all the children use the garden each day. There is now a greater selection of books and the complaints procedure is clearly displayed.

Complaints since the last inspection

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since the last inspection. This was in January 2006 regarding National Standard 6: Safety and was referred to Ofsted by the provider. The provider instigated an internal investigation leading to an action plan which was immediately carried out. An inspector visited, an action was set and was addressed by the provider.

The provision remains qualified for registration.

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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):

- continue to work towards increasing the amount of time that children can use

the garden.

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 the opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's education by encouraging them to contribute to progress records and giving them suggestions about how they can help their children to learn.

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