



Brookdale Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	306355
Inspection date	06 June 2006
Inspector	Elizabeth Margaret Grocott
Setting Address	Escolme Drive, Greasby, Wirral, Merseyside, CH49 1SE
Telephone number	0151 522 0253
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Registered person	Brookdale Pre-School Playgroup
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?

Brookdale Preschool is a voluntary organisation run by a management committee. It opened in April 1977 and operates from a classroom at Brookdale primary school in Greasby on the Wirral peninsular. A maximum of 18 children aged from two and a half to under five years may attend the preschool at any one time. The preschool is open each weekday from 09.00 to 15.15 in term time only. All children share access to secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 40 children from two to under five years on role. Of these, 32 children receive funding for early education. The preschool currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The preschool employs four members of staff, who all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children engage in an excellent range of physical activities on a daily basis, helping to develop their understanding of the importance of taking regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. They develop good techniques in throwing and catching and superb skills in target practice as they negotiate the football into the goal. Children are very aware of the dangers of the sun and always collect a hat to protect their heads before going outside. They have free access to drinking water throughout the session, helping them to recognise when their bodies are hot and need cooling down. An outdoor self-serve cafe providing cool water is set up, as the outdoor weather is exceptionally hot.

An excellent range of healthy foodstuffs are provided and enjoyed by the children. This is encouraged, as the children grow their own fruit and vegetables to eat during snack time. For example, they grow their own tomatoes, chives, carrots, radishes and strawberries. Each session children are invited to choose from a variety of seasonal fresh fruits which they consume with genuine enjoyment. Self-care skills are promoted because they are encouraged to serve the fruit to each other and pour their own drinks, which give them opportunities to develop their independence.

Children know they must wash their hands to remove germs after playing outdoors, using the toilet and before snack time. The very good staff support encourages the children to learn about germs and what will happen if they get inside them. Children's health is further promoted because all practitioners have relevant first aid training and know how to deal with accidents, which are recorded in detail. A clear sickness policy helps protect children from the spread of infection. Staff have clearly established routines for cleaning toys, equipment and surfaces.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel at home in a comfortable and welcoming environment. Their work is valued as it is displayed around the walls, promoting their confidence and sense of belonging. They use a wide range of suitable and safe equipment. This they can self select from easily accessible storage, enabling independence and making their own choices about what they play with.

Children benefit from a safe environment as continuous risk assessments and daily

safety checks are carried out on the setting. A range of robust policies and procedures underpin the smooth running of each session and children are made aware of dangers through topics, general conversation and consistent rules. For example, they know they must not run in the provision and if they put their feet under the legs of the chair, their toes will be hurt. They learn how to keep themselves safe by being reminded how to use equipment safely and practising fire drills. Safety is further ensured as the doors are kept locked and visitors have to sign in and out of the building.

Staff have a strong awareness of the procedures to be followed regarding child protection. They have a good understanding of the policies and procedures and their responsibilities to maintain a safe and caring environment for children. All existing injuries and incidents are recorded and parents sign to acknowledge the entries, helping to keep children safe and protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happy and ready to enjoy their time at the setting. They achieve well and benefit from a broad range of activities which promote their good all-round development. Staff provide activities which are setup to promote children's interest and encourage exploration. They enjoy bug hunting in the garden as they search for beetles, worms, slugs and snails. They look at them through magnifying glasses and make a wormery. They recall caterpillars that turn into butterflies in their butterfly garden before half term and predict where they may be now. They look at all their planting and how much it has grown over the holiday. They discuss how dry the soil is after all the sunshine and how much the plants need a drink, just as they do when they are thirsty.

Children enjoy all their activities in the sunshine out in the garden, relaxing in child sized deckchairs at the role play, make patterns with paint with painting tools and whizzing around on foot and in cars as they engage in their own imaginary games. Staff have recently attended Birth to three matters training and are beginning to use it to inform planning for children under three.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children are encouraged to make marks and specific areas are available in the setting with access to appropriate tools. They have good opportunities to recognise their names as younger, less able children look for their first names and older, more able children, look for their surnames, on the snack table. Children are encouraged in pre-writing skills and have resources and opportunities that promotes word and letter recognition, such as listening to story tapes and independently looking at text in books. There are written words displayed around the setting for the children to identify and familiarise with, further promoting their literacy skills.

Children's spoken language is developing well as they talk confidently at circle time.

They learn new words such as predator and secrete when they discuss their topic about minibeast. They are happy to interact with their peers and staff during play or a group time. Children's levels of concentration are good as they persevere with activities or listen to stories and group discussions. They are confident and happy within the setting and most separate from their parents without being upset. They demonstrate how they are developing good personal, emotional and social skills by enthusiastically participating in play activities independently or with their friends and being very polite to staff and each other.

Children have good opportunities to recognise shape, measurement and numbers. Everyday routines encourage mathematical skills. Staff use vocabulary such as more or less and compare numbers which develops mathematical understanding of calculation. Children are learning simple subtraction, for example, there are six children on the table and four children have chosen apples for their snack, the adult asks the children to calculate how many children choose bananas. Children are correct in their answers and can predict how old the birthday boy will be at his next birthday. Children use a ladybird and put it inside, behind and under the bowl, as they learn about position. They demonstrate good skills at this game.

Children's curiosity, investigation skills and interest is promoted by staff providing a good selection of resources and activities such as, the mini beast theme, magnifying glasses, computers and computerised toys. Sufficient resources and activities are in place to promote knowledge and understanding of the world such as learning about senses, changes in the weather and discussions of past and present events such as birthdays, holidays and the recent local football match. However, the emphasis given to encouraging the use of the computer is weak.

The children have good opportunities to develop skills in using a range of tools and materials such as paint, scissors, glue, gloop, shaving foam and dough. They enjoy baking biscuits, bread and food to celebrate festivals as well as home-made soups from the vegetables they grow. They enjoy imaginative play in the home corner and with small world resources. They express themselves creatively using musical instruments, listening to story tapes and participating in physical team games.

All qualified staff have good knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and Foundation Stage. They plan and implement effective activities and resources, which ensure that children make good progress in their learning. Staff evaluate activities, so teaching and plans for the children's next steps for development are taken into account. Relationships with children are good and staff effectively question them to promote independent thinking.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have a positive attitude towards themselves and others and develop a sense of belonging as they form very good relationships with the staff and their peers. Staff meet individual needs well and value each child as an individual. Children show good confidence and self-esteem and are pleased when they are rewarded with a flower badge for helping at snack time. They develop an

understanding of different cultures and explore the world around them as they learn about themselves and others through topics, activities and discussions. Children learn about festivals and special events that people celebrate including Chinese New Year and the Festival of Light from St Lucia. They experiment eating noodles and egg fried rice using chopsticks and engage in a variety of craft activities.

Children negotiate, share resources and take turns as they involve themselves in their play, showing a caring attitude towards each other. For example they show concern for a child who is upset as she arrives and later ask her if she is feeling better. They behave very well as staff give plenty of praise and support for their efforts and achievements. Staff act as good role models, showing respect and consideration for the children and each other.

All children are included in the activities provided and a good partnership with parents contributes significantly to the children's well-being. Children benefit because all staff have a good knowledge of their individual family and home circumstances. They work closely with parents, securing the links between home and the setting. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents is good.

Parents are well-informed about the group in a variety of ways, including a prospectus, notice board and regular newsletters. Regular discussions and meetings with key workers helps to keep parents involved in their child's early learning and they are invited to come into the setting to view their children's work.

The settling in policy helps children to be reassured and feel that they belong. Parents views about their child's needs and interests are actively sought, before the child starts at the group and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Parents receive information about the Foundation Stage and topics, helping them to understand the links between play and their child's learning. They are well-informed about daily activities the children are involved in through discussions with staff, written plans and newsletters. Children's individual achievements are discussed on a regular basis through the home link diary and staff identify individual targets on an ongoing basis. These are discussed with parents and they are encouraged to support their child's learning in the home. The effect of the communication between parents and staff helps to promote children's welfare, safety and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is significantly enhanced by exceptional organisation. All the policies and procedures are individual to the setting, robust and fully support the expert practice of highly skilled and dedicated staff. They are committed to improvement and development which has a positive impact on children's care. A continuous appraisal system addresses any training issues that are required and planning time is utilised to evaluate sessions and ensure children's interests and aspirations are fulfilled.

Children are cared for by a consistent staff team who have positive relationships with

them, and they in turn, are settled and happy in their surroundings. Staff deployment is effective, ensures continuity and secures positive trusting relationships. They have a wealth of experience and attend relevant courses on subjects such as Birth to three matters framework, to inform their planning. Staffing levels are organised to ensure that they are above the required ratios at all times, so that children receive a good level of attention and support. The high ratio of staff meets the needs of all children.

The quality of leadership and management is good.

The manager who has many years experience, gives clear direction and guidance to the team through her strong leadership style. She has a good awareness of the strengths and weaknesses of the provision and has a clear vision for the future in developing the setting. The manager involves all staff in reviewing their established practices to assess whether the methods they use match the intended learning and development aims. Good systems are in place, to assess children's progress in all areas, and to monitor and evaluate the learning programme to ensure all aspects of the curriculum are covered.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last childcare inspection recommended that the provision ensure that children have an appropriate range of resources that promote positive images of disability and that staff are able to sit comfortably at children's level. Additional resources have been purchased to promote disability such as small world play, posters and books and some adult sized seating has been provided.

The last nursery education inspection recommended that staff effectively exploit everyday activities to promote children's counting skills, provide appropriate activities to develop the children's sense of time and improve systems for monitoring planning and teaching, to identify areas for development. The staff team have devised an action plan to address these issues. Planning has been altered to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are covered and revisited to consolidate children's learning. Systems for monitoring have been implemented to quality assure the planning.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.

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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 develop the use of Birth to three matters framework, to inform planning and practice.

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 there is sufficient emphasis in planning, for children to use technology to support their learning.

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