



The Forest Chapel Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	226487
Inspection date	10 May 2006
Inspector	Kate Bryan
Setting Address	The Forest Chapel, Charnwood Drive, Leicester Forest East, Leicestershire, LE3 3HL
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Registered person	Ruth Lynam
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 satisfactory. 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?

Forest Chapel Playgroup has been established since September 1996 and is registered for 20 children aged from 2 years to 5 years. The group operates Monday to Friday from 07:30 until 18:00. The group is located in a small chapel in Leicester Forest East. The group serves Leicester Forest East and the surrounding area. There are currently 40 children on the roll, including 30 funded children. Staff have experience of caring for children who have English as an additional language and for

children identified as having special educational needs. There are two rooms available for the children to play in and there is also an outdoor play area.

There are five part-time staff of which three hold a relevant child care qualification. The group is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from the Leicestershire local authority through visits from a qualified teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well aware of daily routines, such as hand washing, which effectively promotes their health and development. Younger children receive help with hand washing whilst older children use the toilet independently and wash their hands with confidence. However, children are not engaged in any discussion about why healthy practices are important, for example, a child put her shoes on the table during break and was asked to remove them without explanation. Therefore, staff are not using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to increase children's awareness of healthy practices. All policies and procedures are in place to ensure that children's health is suitably promoted.

Children have access to a good range of equipment for developing physical skills and enjoy physical activity such as using the slide, climbing frame and ride on toys on a daily basis. There are also good opportunities in place for children to enjoy indoor activities, such as matching actions to music which helps to foster their balance and co-ordination well.

Children's emotional well-being is effectively promoted as staff quickly respond to children's needs, for example, a crying child was cuddled until he felt comforted.

Children have a snack during the day and healthy drink options are promoted as they can choose to have milk, water or cordial. However, staff do not use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to engage children in any discussion or explanation about why healthy eating is important. Consequently, children are not learning about healthy choices. Children's dietary needs are suitably promoted as staff work with parents to obtain all relevant details about their child's health.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a large room with a smaller room off this. The large room is bright and cheerful with many tables of activities that children can enjoy. Children are closely supervised both inside and outside to ensure they are kept safe. There are good measures in place to ensure this, such as a risk assessment, and access to the group is safely maintained as only staff allow people into the locked building. Children's safety is well maintained on trips out as prior to these they undergo road

safety training to make them aware of safe procedures. However, the 'Birth to three matters' framework is not used to plan effectively so that children are aware of the reasons for safe practices.

Children have easy access to a good range of developmentally appropriate resources, many of which are stored at children's height to promote independence and choice. They are able to use child sized furniture which further contributes to their safety as they do not have to reach for a work surface. Children are well protected from the risks of fire by regular drills and all electrical equipment is tested yearly to enhance safety measures in place.

An effective child protection procedure is in place which is well known by staff at the group. This ensures that children's welfare is well promoted at all times. The manager has attended training in this area and ensures that child protection is a part of all staff's induction process, this means children are always kept safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the group because staff are interested in providing a good service to the children in care and education. They are enthusiastic practitioners who use their knowledge of the children to ensure younger children make good progress. However, the 'Birth to three matters' framework is not used to plan outcomes for children which means they may not progress as effectively as possible. Older children make generally good progress in learning as staff use their knowledge of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage.

Children are treated as individuals and receive good levels of staff support to ensure that they develop independence and confidence. Children are developing good communication skills because staff spend time talking to them and involving them in purposeful activities such as painting with stamps. Children have a good range of activities offered to them and they are encouraged to make their own choices and learn at their own pace. They have many opportunities to foster their imagination and creativity in a wide range of craft activities and enjoy working with a variety of mediums such as feathers, clay and sand.

Very warm relationships are in place between the staff and the children which means that children can develop in a supportive environment where they receive lots of praise and acknowledgement. Children are well supplied with good quality resources which provide them with many opportunities to explore their environment and make sense of the world.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are interested in the good range of activities provided which engage and promote their interest and ensures that they are making good progress in most areas of learning. Children work well together and know the importance of cooperation, for example, children work together to ensure that train tracks are completed. They are confident and skilled speakers and

use words effectively to convey their experiences both real and imaginary in activities such as constructing a house out of cushions.

Children show confidence in mark making and letter formation and are making good progress recognising their names and letters. They show skill in counting and can use basic subtraction to make sense of numbers. They also have a good awareness of shapes and are learning to recognise these as, for example, they search for them on trips out. Children show good use of imagination in activities such as junk modelling and dressing up which allows them to explore a range of experiences. Children's physical skills are suitably developed through the use of daily outdoor and indoor play and equipment. They have a good awareness of life cycles and how things grow but have little access to programmable toys or information technology which means their awareness is limited in this area.

Good levels of adult support ensure that children receive a good balance of child initiated and adult led activities which allows them to enjoy their time at the group. Staff use a good range of questions and activities to promote children's thinking and this is particularly evident in mathematical development. For example, following work on shapes, children went into the community with a clipboard and worksheet to find matching shapes, for instance, in bricks. Staff are enthusiastic and enjoy their work which provides an atmosphere in which children can enjoy learning.

Planning is effective in covering all areas of learning and is made out for long, medium and short term goals. Staff make useful observations about children and ensure their learning is secure by observing repetitions of skills. Teaching is good and staff are aware of what the children have learned and what they need to learn next.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the group and are valued as individuals. Their needs are met well because staff work very closely with parents to ensure that they have all relevant information about their changing care needs. Children are encouraged to have positive attitudes towards each other by the provision of a good range of resources and learn about festivals such as Chinese New Year. This ensures that all children develop a good sense of self-esteem and belonging. It also promotes children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. The use of policies about admissions and equal opportunities supports practice at the group and ensures, for example, that all children can play with all resources.

Children with special needs receive an appropriate service at the group. An informative policy supports their rights to suitable equipment, staffing levels and the same opportunities as all children. Individual education plans have been devised for children to ensure their needs are well met.

Children are well behaved and are learning to use good manners at all times. Behaviour, such as sharing, is effectively promoted in activities, for example, children take turns to use outdoor equipment. They are aware of the need for rules to ensure

that activities are successful and happily help with tidying away which helps them to feel included in the routines of the group. Children's behaviour is managed well by developmentally appropriate strategies, such as distraction and 'time out' for older children, which allows them to reflect upon their behaviour. Staff are patient and calm with children, clearly praising good behaviour and making their expectations clear so that children know what is acceptable.

Staff are available to speak with parents daily and a key worker system is in operation so that children feel acknowledged. There are also opportunities for parents to be involved in a rota and to work alongside their child at the group.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory.

A satisfactory partnership is in place with parents which contributes to children's well-being and learning. Information is taken about individual children but parents do not contribute to a baseline assessment of their child so staff cannot build upon their existing skills, they also do not receive information about the Foundation Stage of learning or planning. Parents receive a satisfactory range of written information about the setting which includes newsletters and a prospectus but there are no formal arrangements to view children's assessments. Parents have good opportunities to be involved in their child's learning by the use of book bags, homework files and a communication book.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a cheerful room with a happy atmosphere that is created by relaxed staff who know the children well. Most legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed to ensure that children's needs are well met. However, the absence of a procedure for outings may result in safety being compromised. Staff also have not undertaken training in the 'Birth to three matters' framework which means that some outcomes, such as health and safety, are not promoted as effectively as possible. Staff undergo a sound induction procedure, which includes child protection procedures, so they are immediately aware of how to maintain children's well-being. All staff are cleared to work with children, however, the recruitment procedure requires updating to include application forms so that all relevant details are known about staff and children are suitably protected.

Sound policies and procedures are known by all staff and training is well supported so that children benefit from skilled and qualified staff with current knowledge. Children also have the confidence to initiate their own activities because good levels of adult support provides them with many opportunities to access a range of activities.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The manager is an effective leader with a good vision about how to provide a quality service to children and parents that meet their individual needs. Systems to monitor and evaluate the provision for group education are sufficiently robust to ensure that individual children

will be challenged and supported in their learning. The manager is committed to staff training and development and ensures that all staff have good opportunities to attend and share their learning. Regular appraisals ensure that staff's needs are acknowledged and staff members feel valued. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to conduct a risk assessment on the premises identifying action(s) to be taken to minimize identified risks, to include the outside area. Ensure that the child protection statement includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or a volunteer. Ensure that the action plan, in relation to staff qualifications, is followed and completed. Ensure there are operational procedures for the safe conduct of any outings and make sure that glass panels are safe or inaccessible. Most required policies and procedures are now in place and glass panels are inaccessible which has enhanced existing safety measures in place for children. A procedure for outings is currently outstanding. The manager was also required not to exceed the registered numbers of children which has been adhered to and ensures children safety is maintained.

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 complaint 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):

- ensure that there are operational procedures for the safe conduct of any outings

- ensure that the 'Birth to three matters' framework is used to plan outcomes for children
- ensure that recruitment procedures are sufficiently robust to ensure children's safety

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 that parents can contribute to their child's learning by completing a baseline assessment and having planned access to their child's assessments
- ensure that parents are informed about the Foundation Stage of learning and that planning is displayed so that they can support their child's learning

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