



Community Under 5's

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY240248
Inspection date	04 October 2006
Inspector	Freeda Wildon
Setting Address	Lymington Road, Westgate-on-Sea, Kent, CT8 8EJ
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Registered person	Rosemary Jean Thompson
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - special measures.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Community Under 5's Pre-school is located in the community centre in Westgate-on-Sea, Kent. They have use of one large hall for work and play and a small enclosed outside play area. The pre-school is located close to the local amenities including shops and the beach.

The pre-school offers care and education to 26 children aged 2 to 5 years. There are 27 children attending the group; 17 of whom are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The pre-school welcome children who have learning difficulties and or disabilities. The pre-school has sole use of the building during operating hours Monday to Friday between 09:00 and 12:00.

There are seven staff who work with the children, all of whom have early years qualifications. All staff working in the group receive opportunities to undertake training and attend short courses. The group receive support from the Pre-School Learning Alliance development worker

and a teacher from the Local Authority. They also have regular contact with the local speech therapist and the Specialist Teaching Service.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Written procedures for ensuring that all of the premises and available equipment are clean are not effective. Consequently, the floor and play equipment are dirty, this does not provide children with a hygienic environment to play and learn. The procedure for nappy changes and clearing up bodily fluids contributes to preventing the spread of infection because the staff wear protective gloves. Children washing hands before snacks and after using the toilet help children understand about the spread of infection. However, this does not extend to hand washing after messy play to promote children's good health. For example, children share the same bowl of water.

Staff keep information about children's allergies and parents' preferences to enable them to provide children with appropriate food and drink. Individual water bottles and a jug of water are available for all children to help themselves to a drink when they feel thirsty and to keep their bodies hydrated. Children make choices for healthy snacks, because staff provide them with a range of fruit and vegetables. A sick child policy, prior written consents for staff to seek emergency medical treatment or advice and staff's first aid training help staff act in the best interest of children in an emergency or if a child becomes ill.

Children receive some daily opportunities to play outside and develop their large muscle skills, for example, they enjoy playing large musical instruments and ride bikes. Children clearly enjoy playing outside; however the programme for physical development is not included within the weekly plans, as a result the programme is given insufficient emphasis, resulting in children's physical skills not being developed or extended.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Parents and children are greeted warmly. Staff prepare the environment and set out the toys and equipment before the children arrive. Effective systems are in place to monitor the safe arrival and departure of children. For example, two members of staff ensure that the entrance is secure and that children cannot leave the premises unaccompanied. There are appropriate systems in place for the safe collection of children. As a result, children are only collected by authorised adults.

There is a member of staff who is responsible for health and safety in the setting and undertakes daily risk assessments to ensure that children play in a safe environment. However, not all risks have been identified, for example, the guards fitted on the heaters are not fully secured which compromises children safety when the heaters are on. This is a potential risk to children. Procedures are in place so that visitors are not left alone with children. Staff wear specific

tabards, as a result they are identifiable to the children and visitors as a safe person to go to if help is needed. In addition, a record is kept of all visitors to the setting.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection issue and knows what to do if they suspect a child being abused or neglected. This contributes to children's safety and welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Children arrive happily at the setting and are keen to meet with their friends. A settling in system helps children settle quickly. Staff are friendly in their interactions towards the children. Staff have attended initial training days to learn about the Birth to three matters framework. However, they remain unfamiliar with child development and how children learn. This is reflected in the planning of activities. The activities are the same for all children. As a result, the activities are not developmentally appropriate for younger children and are not based on children's developmental needs and interests.

Staff have taken steps to develop assessments of individual children. However, they do not use the information to inform the planning of activities. Staff make assessments of children's next steps with some assessments highlighting specific aspects for development. For example, staff have identified children needing to share and take turns. However, the planning does not reflect this and there is no indication of how individual needs will be developed. This results in children not playing cooperatively and including each other.

Nursery Education

The teaching and learning is inadequate. Staff lack knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. As a result, children are making insufficient progress towards the early learning goals. Much of learning that children achieve is incidental, with staff failing to use questioning techniques to develop and support children's needs. Staff do not provide opportunities for children to self-select. Children select from equipment that staff provide for them. As a result, children move quickly from one activity to another, showing little interest or enjoyment. Children's concentration is short, as staff fail to support them within the activities they select. This is highlighted when a member of staff plays a memory game, involving children remembering the contents of a box. The children respond well showing interest, however, when the member of staff leaves the table, the children's interest is lost and they remove themselves from the table.

On arrival children select their names from the table and stick it on the board. They help themselves to water from labelled water bottles. Consequently, children are receiving some opportunities to enable them to recognise their name. When staff are deployed in the book area, children visit and share books. There is some print around the setting, for example posters. However, a rich print environment has not yet been established to enhance children's understanding that print carries meaning. Opportunities to encourage writing for a purpose in the context of children's role-play are not fully explored. Children are not provided with opportunities to solve a range of simple problems. As a result, there are insufficient opportunities

for children to recognise numbers, recreate simple patterns, and use practical problem solving as part of their play.

Children are developing in their independence because they visit the toilet independently, wash and dry hands and pour their own drinks. However, they do not independently select resources because some resources are not easily accessible nor well presented. For example, felt tips pens are dry and the drawer where the pencils and pens are kept is too full for children to open. Activities are not well supported by adults, as a result, children become bored and use the resources inappropriately. For example, they throw the dough round the table. On occasions, the home corner is not well used because it is not attractively presented or supported to extend children's pretend play. On other occasions, when more resources are available, children enjoy playing, sitting in the cot and pretending to go to bed.

Opportunities for children to explore a range of media and materials to develop their creativity and skills in using tools and materials are not a daily occurrence. For example, on some days children have no paint, sand, water or dough to play with. However, on other days children receive opportunities to play with sand, dough and painting. Children use a range of equipment to explore the texture of sand and play happily together. Although children clearly enjoy this, the size of the shallow trays results in the children having to wait for others to finish. Consequently, children become frustrated with waiting, and return to play on the bikes. Other opportunities to explore and develop their creative skills include mixing paint and exploring ice and glitter, which children clearly enjoy. Children are learning about living things such as snails. However, this is not a planned activity but children find it interesting and enjoy naming the snails.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Children are warmly welcomed into the pre-school; they arrive happily and are keen to join their friends. However, staff do not always support children in their play, resulting in some children not being able to play alongside each other and include others in their play. Children have equal access to the range of equipment selected by staff. However, the lack of suitable organisation and planning of the hall restricts children's ability to freely select.

Children freely talk about their home life to their friends. They learn about their local community through activities that explore their local and neighbouring town, for example, visits to the shops and to the park. Resources such as dolls and books that reflect areas of diversity are available to the children. However, opportunities for children to participate in celebration of festivals from around the world are limited to Christmas and Chinese New Year. As a result, children receive limited opportunities to embrace differences and learn about other cultures and traditions. Children are learning to be independent in their personal care by helping themselves to drinks and visiting the toilet. They also help to wipe the tables after snack times.

All children are welcome at the pre-school. A named member of staff is the special educational needs co-ordinator (SENCO). Systems are in place to liaise with outside agencies. Although the SENCO has begun to make observations of the children with learning difficulties, none of this information is used to develop activities specific to individual needs. There is no information

within planning to indicate how assessment has been used to develop individual children. Staff have a poor knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework and how the framework is used to develop individual needs, although some training has been undertaken. In addition, staff have low expectations of children's learning. As a result, children with learning difficulties are left unsupported. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is not fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is inadequate. Although staff have begun to assess children's development, and use assessment files to record observations, these are not effectively shared with parents. Assessments of children are all held in one key worker file. As a result, parents do not have direct access to records. A parents' notice board is available at the entrance to the pre-school; however, the only information available to parents about the education programme is an old long-term plan, which indicates the themes to be provided to children. As a result, parents are unaware of the specific activities the children are completing and are not able to contribute to the activities or extend children's learning at home. Parents do not receive clear information relating to changes in legislation regarding the complaints procedure, therefore, parents are unable to make independent informed decisions. Staff are not aware of the new regulation relating to the complaints procedure. This is a breach of regulation. In addition, the information on how to complain to the registering body has incorrect details, for example, the address and telephone number.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The organisation of the pre-school is not effective; as a result, the children are not receiving a broad and balanced range of opportunities to promote their learning. Staff have worked together as a team for a long time. They meet weekly to plan the children's activities. However, not all staff attend the weekly planning meetings and the lack of clear knowledge and understanding of child development means that children's individual needs are not met. Policies and procedures are in place, which are generally known and understood by staff. However, staff are not aware of the new regulation relating to the complaints procedure, consequently they lack knowledge and understanding of the regulation. The registration certificate is displayed and therefore parents and visitors are informed of the conditions of the registration.

The leadership and management of the pre-school is inadequate. Systems for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating practice are not effective. As a result, staff do not ensure that children receive a suitable range of activities that support their progress in the stepping stones towards the early learning goals nor meet their individual needs. Staff's knowledge of the curriculum is limited; therefore they are unable to support children within the provided activities to help them progress on to their next steps in learning. Although a new assessment system has been introduced this has not been effectively implemented. As a result, assessments of children are not effective and are not used to inform the planning of activities. Activities are not adapted to meet the differing needs and abilities of all children.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care and education.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the quality and standards of nursery education and care were judged as inadequate. As a result, nine actions were identified for progress, four within nursery education and five within care.

Within the nursery education the setting was asked to ensure children have access to a suitable range of experiences and activities that allow them to explore, investigate and use their imaginations, both in and outside the pre-school; provide opportunities for children to use their initiative, to select freely and independently from a wide selection of purposeful and meaningful activities that are appropriate to their individual needs; and develop the leadership and management of the pre-school. The setting was asked to introduce appropriate systems to monitor the quality of teaching to ensure all staff implement a consistent approach to children's learning and plan and provide a suitable range of activities for children, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs. In addition, the provider was asked to make effective use of assessment to inform the planning of activities to ensure all children, including those with special needs, make consistent progress within all areas of learning. Progress towards each action has been inadequate. This results in poor outcomes for children.

Within care, the setting was asked to ensure the premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose; develop systems to ensure children have full and equal access to well-organised facilities that are maintained appropriately; and ensure vigorous cleaning and checking procedures are implemented to ensure equipment is maintained appropriately. The setting was also asked to ensure that effective procedures are in place to ensure the entrance is secure.

Actions also applying to care were - ensure children have access to a suitable range of experiences and activities that allow them to explore, investigate and use their imaginations, both in and outside the pre-school; provide opportunities for children to use their initiative, to select freely and independently from a wide selection of purposeful and meaningful activities that are appropriate to their individual needs. The setting were also asked to plan and provide a suitable range of activities for children, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs and to make effective use of assessment to inform the planning of activities to ensure all children, including those with special needs, make consistent progress within all areas of learning. Little progress have been made relating to the actions. This results in poor outcomes for children. However, there are two members of staff at the entrance to ensure that children arrive and depart safely.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework in order to provide a suitable range of activities for children, which are appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs
- implement vigorous cleaning and checking procedures to ensure equipment and facilities are clean and well maintained
- ensure hand washing procedures are hygienic to prevent the spread of infection
- develop staff's knowledge and understanding of equal opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. Ensure children are provided with opportunities to learn about the views, beliefs and feelings of others
- provide parents with a written statement of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint, which is in line with the current regulation, and develop staff's knowledge and understanding of this new regulation

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

The setting requires special measures to improve the provision for nursery education. The following urgent action is required:

- develop the leadership and management of the pre-school. Introduce effective systems to monitor the quality of teaching to ensure all staff implement a consistent approach to children's learning
- develop all staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage to ensure children have access to a suitable range of activities and experiences that are appropriate to their individual needs
- make effective use of assessment to inform the planning of activities to ensure all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, make consistent progress within all areas of learning.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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