



The Pre-School Play Station

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	226492
Inspection date	08 September 2006
Inspector	Paula Hunt
Setting Address	Station Road, Broughton Astley, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE9 6PT
Telephone number	0776 1173658
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Registered person	Pre-School Play Station
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Pre-School Play Station registered under its current management in 2001. It is a privately run group which operates from the village hall in Broughton Astley in the Blaby district of Leicestershire and serves the local community. Children use the Broughton Hall and Alan Talbot room within the centre, together with associated toileting facilities. Staff have additional access to kitchen and storage areas. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

The pre-school operates during school terms on Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 12:00 and on Tuesday and Thursday from 12:30 to 15:00. A maximum of 52 children aged from two to under five years may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 59 children on roll of whom 27 receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The pre-school employs eight staff including the proprietor of whom all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level two or three. They receive support from the local authority and are currently undertaking a quality assurance scheme. They are also members of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing a satisfactory understanding of personal hygiene as they are encouraged to wash their hands before snack and after going to the toilet. The implementation of appropriate hygiene and cleaning routines positively supports the health of children. Accident procedures are efficiently implemented however, written consent to seek emergency advice or treatment has not been obtained and the written medication policy does not reflect current practice.

Children are provided with a good supply of drinks and snacks to meet their needs. The setting operates a healthy eating policy so that children develop a sound awareness of healthy foods, such as fruit and milk. Individual dietary needs are taken good account of, ensuring that children remain healthy.

Children enjoy a varied range of physical activities which contributes to their good health. They have regular access to physical activities both indoors in the hall and outside in the secure garden. Children can balance and climb, throw and catch balls, jump on a trampoline and pedal bikes. They delight in steering around obstacles and notice the effect of exercise on their bodies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, safe and secure environment where risks are identified and minimised. Staff comply with health and safety requirements to keep children safe. Access to the provision is monitored appropriately, doors are kept locked protecting children from unknown visitors and there are adequate procedures in place to prevent children from leaving the setting with unknown adults. Children are also learning well about their own personal safety, when they are reminded not to climb on chairs in case they hurt themselves.

The pre-school is welcoming to children as toys and activities are set up prior to the arrival of the children. Play areas are creatively arranged to allow children to move spontaneously and independently around all areas of play and learning. Children are

accessing a wide range of resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development. Resources are effectively arranged to allow children to make individual decisions about toys they are going to play with. There are effective procedures in place to ensure equipment and resources are well maintained and safe for children to use.

Children's safety and welfare is further promoted as staff clearly understand the procedures for recording and reporting any concerns relating to child protection. The child protection statement includes relevant telephone contact numbers and procedures should an allegation be made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in playgroup and arrive happy and eager to participate. They achieve well because staff use their developing understanding of early years guidance, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage, to provide satisfactory care and education. The two to three-year-old children have fun with painting, playing with dough and sand. They use their imagination as they play in the camping role play or with the dolls house. The younger children are able to participate in all the play opportunities available for the funded children, although activities are not specifically planned for them. Children's emotional well-being is fostered through warm relationships with other children and staff which helps them to develop their confidence through sensitive interactions and regular encouragement.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress because staff have a secure understanding of the early learning goals. They plan an interesting range of activities using practical experiences and play opportunities which supports most areas of learning and includes some adaptations for different levels of ability. These plans are evaluated to help inform future activities for the children. However, there are some gaps in the short term planning for example, in creative, physical and knowledge and understanding of the world where activities do not cover all six areas of learning and may not help staff to focus clearly on what they wish the children to achieve. Regular observations and clear records help staff to track children's progress effectively.

Children with special needs are supported in their learning well. Staff are patient, they listen to the children, respect their views and create warm caring relationships, which gives children a sense of belonging and boosts their self-esteem. Staff take an interest in the children, engaging them in conversation and some are skilled at encouraging them to think, for example when building a tower of bricks one child was asked if he had more or less bricks than his friend. Another child was asked how many pieces there are when an apple is cut in half.

Children's independence skills are fostered as they are encouraged to put on their own coats to go outside, wash their own hands, select their own drinks and fruit at

snack time. Children also participate well in tidying up, promoting their self-help skills. Staff show interest in the home life of the children, fostering feelings of self-worth.

Children listen and respond well to stories. They enjoy relaxing with a book and freely talk about what they can see in the pictures. Staff use open questions well to encourage children to describe what they have done at the weekend promoting their language development. Children use their imagination well, developing language and ideas during a variety of role play activities. Early communication skills are developing well, as they confidently make marks with paints and pens to represent letters. However, there are limited opportunities for children to recognise their own name or see a variety of letters and labelling to promote letter recognition or early reading skills.

Children are beginning to use mathematical language during practical activities and solve problems such as when building with various shapes and sizes. Staff provide opportunities for them to count and most children are able to count to five confidently. Children develop good early calculation skills such as through number rhymes and songs. However, there are no opportunities for children to see and recognise written numerals within the pre-school environment.

Children enjoy looking at the world around them and develop an interest in living things by observing the changes in trees in autumn time and planting bulbs in pots outside. They examine the leaves of plants and observe how they grow. They create and experiment with technology as they build using construction sets and recycled materials. Children have good opportunities to explore information technology as the computer is available daily and they operate simple computer programmes well.

Children's creativity is valued and they have access to a wide selection of texture and media such as paint, collage, dough and sand. They regularly talk with staff about colours, shape and what things like paint or wet sand feel like. Children experience a variety of music, with songs or rhymes daily and instruments to provide opportunities for them to express their ideas and feelings. They also have daily opportunities to use their imaginations in role play situations.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are enthusiastically welcomed into the setting, they are valued and respected because staff ensure that each child has the opportunity to engage in all aspects of the curriculum, whether they attend daily or on a part-time basis. There are procedures in place, such as the implementation of a settling-in and equal opportunities policy, which help children to gain a sense of belonging and are treated with equal concern.

Children gain a positive view and understanding of diversity as staff provide a selection of meaningful activities and resources. For example, they have access to appropriate resources and celebrate festivals from around the world such as Diwali. Support for children with learning difficulties is good. Designated staff have had training on the revised Code of Practice and they know how to signpost parents to

appropriate professional advice if necessary. As a result, children's needs are effectively met.

Good behaviour is promoted well and children are encouraged to share and take turns. Positive interactions from staff promote children's self-esteem. Children respond to the clear and sensitive explanations from staff and have a sound understanding of the behaviour codes within the pre-school. Children receive ongoing praise and encouragement for their efforts, for example, for assisting in tidying-up when requested. As a result, children learn right from wrong and their behaviour is good. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children are cared for by staff who work with their parents to meet their individual needs and ensure they are included into the life of the setting. They benefit from the close relationship between staff and the parents and carers. Parents are kept informed about their children because staff share ongoing information with them through daily discussion, information displayed on the notice board and regular newsletters. Full knowledge of dealing with complaints and associated requirements are indicated in the written procedures and a complaints file is held. Parents express their positive views on how their children are progressing and acknowledge the good work of the staff. However, parents have limited knowledge about the Foundation Stage or whom their child's key worker is.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures, and a commitment to ongoing professional development ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and understanding of child development. The staff team work well together and are developing their individual roles and responsibilities. There is a staff induction in place and staff are continually monitored through annual appraisal. Staff have a high regard for the well-being of the children. They show respect for children, their parents and each other and work hard to provide a stimulating environment. This means that staff share a common understanding of good practice which benefits all the children receiving early education.

Policies and procedures generally, work in practice to promote the children's health and safety and ability to make a positive contribution. There is an operational plan containing information to ensure the smooth running of the setting. All staff have read the policies and have a good understanding of their responsibilities. While regulatory documentation is in place, this is not effectively monitored to ensure it is completed appropriately. Staff and children's attendance times are not accurately recorded upon arrival and some policies have not been updated in line with current legislation and guidance. This presents a risk to children and does not keep parents sufficiently informed of vital information. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to improve children's independence in routine tasks, develop the use of a key worker system, improve observations and assessments of what children do to ensure activities and routines are well-planned.

Satisfactory progress has been made in improving the effectiveness of the key worker system and the way children's assessments of learning are used. Both are now used well to ensure children feel secure and nurtured by the close support and continuity of care they receive. Parents and staff work closely together, sharing information and helping children to feel safe, secure and well cared for. Children's independence has been increased as a café style system has been introduced where children wash their own hands and help themselves to a carton of milk and a piece of fruit. Children choose the time and whom they wish to sit with. This means children's independence has been improved.

Further more, they were asked to provide more opportunities for children to see written words within the environment, and ensure more able children have regular calculating experiences as well as develop more effective use of activities and resources to promote awareness of aspects of equal opportunities.

Staff made signs to label parts of the room as well as name labels for children's bags. However, labelling is not consistent and a further recommendation has been made. Staff planned activities to provide calculating experiences using number scales, number camels and intend to purchase more resources. Children are now developing good awareness and respect for diversity as staff have purchased resources such as dolls, small world figures and books which promote positive images of culture, religion and disability. A variety of religious festivals are incorporated in to the planning to further promote awareness.

Complaints 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.

There has been one complaint made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004. Concerns were raised with Ofsted about behaviour management at the provision and the way in which a staff member was alleged to have spoken to a child. An Ofsted Inspector visited the provision to discuss this, to observe practice on the day of the visit and to review relevant paperwork under National Standard 11 (Behaviour). Based on the information and evidence obtained Ofsted are satisfied that National Standard 11 is being met appropriately and will be taking no further action. The provider 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):

- further develop staff's understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to enable them to undertake planning for young children, for example, by accessing training
- obtain written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment
- review and update policies in line with current legislation and guidance with regard to special needs, uncollected children, sickness and medication
- ensure the system for registering children and staff attendance show hours of arrival and departure.

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):

- further develop and improve planning to ensure it is clear and covers all areas of learning
- improve the information provided for parents regarding the Foundation Stage curriculum so that they understand and can contribute to the programme of education their child is receiving
- provide an environment rich in print and numerals to encourage children's early mathematical, writing and reading skills.

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