

# Manthorpe Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	253484
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Janice Broddle / Linda Cass
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Village Hall, Low Road, Manthorpe, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 8NQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01476 573893
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Manthorpe Pre-School Playgroup Committee
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Manthorpe Pre-School Playgroup is a committee-run provision. It opened in 1967 and operates from the playgroup hall in the village in Manthorpe, on the outskirts of Grantham, Lincolnshire. The area used by the children consist of two rooms, toilet facilities and two enclosed outdoor play areas, one of which has a safety surface.

The group opens each week day 09.00 to 11.45, and on Monday afternoons 12.30 to 15.00, term time only. A maximum of 32 children may attend the group at any one time. There are currently 43 children on roll. Of these, 10 children receive funding for early education. Children attending come from the local and surrounding areas. The group currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

In total, there are six members of staff who work with the children throughout the week, three of these, including the Manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the early years support team from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment and appropriate health and hygiene procedures are in place. They are developing their awareness of good hygiene practices, such as washing their hands after the toilet and before eating but they do not have easy access to tissues to wipe their noses. As a result, children are not fully protected from the spread of infection. All staff have completed first aid training which enables them to deal with children's health needs appropriately. Effective systems are in place to ensure the contents of the first aid box are appropriate or replaced as and when necessary. There are sound procedures in place to record any accidents and the administration of medication.

Children are learning to respond to their own health needs because staff ensure that children have access to water throughout the session. Younger children ask for a drink, which is visible but out of reach in their own juice bottle. Older children can access a jug of water. Children are developing their awareness of the benefits of healthy eating through the provision of healthy snacks, such as fresh fruit and chopped vegetables. However, staff do not always use snack time as an opportunity to sit with the children and talk about the benefits of healthy food. Good written records are in place ensuring children's health and dietary requirements are met. All children have access to comfortable seating if they wish to rest or relax.

Younger children benefit from opportunities to engage in regular physical activity. They enjoy a stimulating range of outdoor equipment which provides good challenge to develop their physical skills although this can sometimes be hindered because overcrowding does not provide them with adequate space. They develop their hand eye co-ordination as they weave strips of plastic through netting attached to the fence. Older children enjoy regular opportunities to engage in physical activities both indoors and outdoors. They are developing their larger physical skills as they pedal bicycles, steering them skilfully around the mapped-out road and park in the parking bays. They have good spatial awareness and are able to negotiate their way around obstacles safely. They enjoy moving to music with staff, waving their scarves and moving their bodies with control and co-ordination. All children are developing their small hand skills and hand-eye co-ordination through the regular use of tools and resources such as scissors, rolling pins, paint brushes, threading activities and construction toys.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and well-maintained setting. Play equipment and toys conform to safety standards and the environment is secure and well organised to enable children to move around freely and safely. Staff routinely carry out risk assessments ensuring children's safety from hazards. However, the outdoor area becomes too crowded, raising the risk of accidents.

Children benefit from a range of safety measures which are in place, such as socket covers and a secure outdoor play area. They develop a good awareness of fire safety issues through regularly practising emergency evacuation procedures. Staff ensure children's safety is maintained on outings as clear written procedures for the safe conduct of outings are in place. Access to the building is carefully monitored and there are good procedures in place to ensure children are collected by named adults.

Most staff have a sound awareness of child protection procedures and the manager has undertaken appropriate training to develop her knowledge and understanding of issues. Most staff are aware of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns and know the relevant agencies to contact. All staff know to report concerns to the designated person. Systems are in place to record any existing injuries children may arrive with. Overall, children are protected from possible abuse or neglect and their welfare is safeguarded.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children are happy and settled at the provision. Staff form warm relationships with most children, enabling them to feel secure. Staff promote children's self-esteem by acknowledging their achievements. Children are given a certificate if they do something well, such as tidying up. Children are able to play with a good variety of well-presented and interesting resources that have been carefully selected by staff to promote all aspects of children's development. Children have fun as they dress up and play in the well resourced home corner. Staff support most children during activities, such as cutting and sticking, or making cakes with the play dough. However, staff do not fully encourage all children to join in with activities, and some quieter children can go un-noticed. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework because they have attended training and evidence of implementing the framework is demonstrated through photographs of the children linked to the components that are attractively displayed on the wall. Children can freely explore their environment and are encouraged to build on their natural curiosity as learners. They are encouraged to join in with singing and rhymes. Children are developing their confidence and have access to some activities to develop their creativity and use of imagination, such as the role play area and free painting. The organisation and delivery of some group activities, such as story time, is not effective in ensuring all children are engaged and able to sustain their concentration.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The staff team are developing their knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage through training and their ongoing involvement in planning of activities. They work together to plan a broad range of activities that cover the six areas of learning. Staff regularly make observations of children's progress. They have recently implemented a new system, however, this is still in the early stages of development and systems to show children's progress along the stepping stones in learning and to guide future plans of activities to help them make further progress and build on what they can already do, are not yet fully effective. There are some inconsistencies across the staff team in managing children's behaviour. Although some clear rules are in place and consistently applied, others are not, and not all staff always offer appropriate explanations to support children in their understanding of right and wrong. Staff do not effectively identify triggers for individual children in order to avert unwanted behaviour and support them to behave in a more positive way which can disrupt learning experiences. However, children generally behave well due to staff's effective use of praise and reward. Adequate teaching methods are used to support children's learning. At times they work as part of a larger group for stories and some planned activities, or alongside an adult to practise their counting skills. Daily routines are not used effectively by all staff however, to reinforce learning. Staff create a stimulating environment and children are active and interested. They freely choose from the wide range of planned activities and resources and a wide range of innovative additional resources are also available. However, the deployment of staff is not fully effective in

encouraging children to access and explore all the resources available to extend their experiences and learning.

Overall, children make sound progress in their learning. Children's personal, social and emotional development is nurtured so that children feel confident, secure and ready to learn. Children's behaviour is generally good due to staff's positive verbal reinforcements throughout the session and reward systems. Good relationships are evident between the children, they work alongside each other and those who are more confident support those who are less so. Children's independence is fostered as they manage their toileting needs, pour their own drinks at snack times and make independent choices regarding their play. Children begin to develop their knowledge and understanding of different cultures and beliefs through the range of resources available, positive images displayed and through planned activities to support this. Appropriate systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities. Most children are confident speakers, sharing their experiences and ideas both in large groups, during one to one situations with staff, and whilst playing with each other. They are developing listening skills as they participate in adult-led large group activities such as story times. A wide range of books are available to develop children's awareness of reading conventions although staff deployment is not fully effective in encouraging children to make good use of these. Children's awareness of print is supported by labels displayed around the room although staff are not consistently active in drawing children's attention to these. Some children begin to recognise their own name on their coat pegs. Children practise their pencil control during planned activities and are able to consolidate these skills through free access to the mark-making table.

Children benefit from being able to see numbers displayed around their indoor and outdoor play areas. Older children count confidently to 10 and recognise some numerals. They practise their counting skills during planned activities although these sometimes present a lack of challenge for children who are more able. They explore concepts of size during focussed activities and during free play with play dough, when, effective questioning by staff encourages children to think and explore the changing width and length of the piece of play dough as they roll it out. Practical learning opportunities that arise through routines, such as counting children present and singing number rhymes, are infrequently used. Children frequently explore features of the natural world. They talk about the date and weather at snack time and freely explore the natural resources in the sensory area including fir cones, shells and pebbles. They enjoy interesting opportunities to visit a local resident's garden to observe the vegetables growing and look at insects and seasonal changes. They talk with enthusiasm about past events in their own lives and those of people they know. Children have good opportunities to explore their local environment through regular walks around the surrounding area. Children explore some information and communication technology, they investigate equipment such as calculators, remote controlled vehicles and battery operated toys. Although some children have opportunities to explore computer technology, organisation of routines does not enable all children to do so. A good range of equipment supports children's creative development. They use a variety of mediums to freely express themselves including paints, recyclable materials, construction toys, music and the role play area.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's sense of belonging is encouraged through staff warmly greeting children and parents on arrival. There is an equal opportunities policy in place that is implemented in the setting. Children are taught about festivals and learn about other cultures through practical activities

such as dressing up in saris. Children have access to a satisfactory range of resources to develop their awareness of diversity and the wider world.

There are systems in place to identify children with additional needs and the Play Leader has developed her knowledge and awareness of issues through appropriate training. Staff work sufficiently well with parents and other professionals to ensure children's individual needs are met and that they receive sufficient support to enable them to make progress. For example, children who have English as an additional language make good progress because staff encourage them to join in with activities and offer good support.

Most children form positive relationships with each other and with adults and play co-operatively together. Staff are good role models and generally use effective strategies to manage children's behaviour, although children are not always given clear explanations as to why their behaviour is unacceptable. On the whole, children are well supported by staff and learn to take turns and share toys. Staff use praise and encouragement to promote children's self-esteem. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are encouraged to complete a questionnaire before their child starts. Staff are interested to know a child's likes and dislikes which helps the child to settle more easily. The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. There is written information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and planned topics. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning through activity sheets which children take home, and by supporting their child to choose objects from home to bring into the setting to support topics. Although staff are exploring ways for parents to contribute to their children's developmental assessments, they do not yet have regular opportunities to view these and systems are not yet in place to enable parents to share what they know about their child from the outset.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Children's health and well-being is protected because there is a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place. Required records are in place and contain sufficient detail. The committee is supportive of the provision and regularly organise fundraising events. Members of the committee are provided with full information and guidance on their roles and responsibilities. Ofsted is kept informed of most changes and vetting procedures are always undertaken to ensure the suitability of adults providing day care. However, Ofsted were not notified of a significant event involving the absence of the Supervisor and Deputy. The contingency plans to cover such an event are not effective because the proposed named person is not the most skilled and experienced and does not yet have adequate knowledge and experience to manage the setting.

Effective recruitment and selection procedures are in place to ensure equal opportunities are promoted with regard to employment, although systems are not in place to ensure staff are both physically and mentally suitable to work with children. Staff have opportunities to meet as a team and identify areas for improvement. They have access to opportunities for further training and ensure these are well matched to the needs of the children attending. For example, staff have developed their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to enable them to develop the learning outcomes for younger children. Sufficient staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications. However, they are not always deployed effectively within the setting, leaving children unsupervised for short periods of time, compromising their safety. Overall, children's needs are not met.

The leadership and management of funded children are satisfactory. The supportive committee ensure that staff have sufficient resources to support their teaching. However, the deployment of staff is not fully effective in supporting children's learning and there is not yet a rigorous system for monitoring the quality of teaching and ensuring that all children are provided with appropriate challenge. The staff team meet regularly to share ideas. They demonstrate a real commitment to improving the educational provision through their attendance at numerous training courses and their commitment to creating play resources to support topics. They work effectively with relevant professionals and take on board advice to support the continuing improvement of the nursery education.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

#### **Care**

At the previous inspection, five actions were raised regarding care. The first was to ensure that Ofsted is notified of changes to committee members and that they submit to a vetting procedure. Systems have been established to ensure notification takes place and all committee members have submitted to the vetting procedure. An action was raised to improve the outcomes for children under the age of three years using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. All staff have attended 'Birth to three matters' training and are using their knowledge to link the components to activities provided. An action was raised to develop staff's understanding and awareness of issues relating to equality and inclusion. Staff have since attended some training, and they have developed a range of resources to promote positive images within the setting. The Supervisor has attended special needs training to extend her knowledge and skills at supporting children with additional needs. An action was raised to ensure sufficient information is included when recording accidents and maintain written records of all medicines administered to children. Staff have devised new accident and medicine record policies and records now contain sufficient detail.

The final action related to care and nursery education and was to improve the partnership with parents and carers to enable them to be fully involved in their children's learning and contribute to their assessments, and to identify starting points for children's learning. Some progress has been made, however, this action has not been fully met and some issues are carried forward from this inspection.

#### **Nursery Education**

At the previous inspection, three actions were raised regarding nursery education. The first was to ensure systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the delivery of nursery education to identify its effectiveness for all children. Although some evaluation of planned activities takes place, there is not yet a rigorous system for monitoring the quality of teaching and ensuring that all children are provided with appropriate challenge and this is carried forward from this inspection. An action was raised to develop staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage and to ensure learning objectives are identified and children receive appropriate support or challenge according to their individual needs. The staff team have all attended training and all participate in planning in order to continue to develop their understanding of the Foundation Stage. This helps to ensure that they deliver a broad and balanced curriculum covering all areas of learning and identify clear learning objectives. The systems for ensuring that all children receive appropriate support or challenge, according to their individual needs is not yet fully effective. The third action was to ensure that assessment systems clearly show children's progress along the stepping stones and are used to identify the next steps in children's learning.

Staff have since attended training to support them in monitoring children's progress and regularly make observations. A new assessment system has been implemented, however, systems do not ensure that they are kept up to date and therefore are not fully effective in informing planning.

### **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.

## **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 satisfactory.

### **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:

- ensure the person left in charge in the event of an emergency, has the appropriate experience, skills and ability for the role
- ensure Ofsted are informed of all significant changes or events
- ensure staff are deployed effectively to meet the individual needs of all children attending the provision.

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**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure assessment records clearly indicate children's starting points in order to identify progress made, develop opportunities for parents to contribute to these and ensure that staff make regular entries so that they can use them to effectively monitor children's progress
- develop planning systems to ensure that activities are adapted to meet children's individual needs, particularly with regard to more able children
- develop systems to effectively monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education

- ensure that the deployment of staff is effective in maximising the use of available resources in order to progress children's learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)