



## Pin Green Play Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	146464
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 August 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Paula Durrant
<b>Setting Address</b>	Webb Rise, Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG1 5QU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01438 726749
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Stevenage Borough Council
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Childcare
<b>Type of care</b>	Out of School 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

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.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Pin Green Play Centre is one of seven open access play schemes run by the local Borough Council. It is situated in a purpose built pavilion in Hampson Park within Stevenage. The Play Centre has use of a hall, office, kitchen and toilet facilities. There is a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The scheme is for children aged from five to 14 years, who may attend and leave as they wish. A maximum of 40 children aged from five to eight years may attend at any one time. Children under the age of five can attend providing they are accompanied by an adult.

The Play Centre is open Monday to Friday from 09:00 until 12:30 and from 13:30 until 17:00 during all school holidays. It is also open on Tuesday through to Friday from 15:30 until 18:00 and on Saturday from 10:00 until 12:30 and from 13:30 until 16:00 all year round. The scheme employs four members of staff in addition to further adult volunteers and helpers. Of the main core staff team, two staff members hold an appropriate early years qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because practitioners follow rigorous health and hygiene procedures in compliance with environmental health guidelines. For example, staff wear latex gloves when dealing with bodily fluids, such as blood from an open wound in order to eradicate the potential for cross-contamination. Although children are highly independent in meeting their self-care needs staff monitor children to ensure they wash their hands at appropriate times, such as after using the toilet and prior to eating. This provides an opportunity to raise discussion about germs.

Children's health care needs are maintained as all staff hold a valid first aid qualification, there are sufficient medical supplies within the first aid box and appropriate systems to document accidental injury. Due to the type of provision and care offered there is minimal contact with parents and carers. This is recognised by the organisation who have implemented a triplicate record form to document accidental injuries. This supports compliance to the national standards as parents receive their own copy which children take home with them. Should a child require medication whilst in attendance then it is made clear to parents prior to the child attending that they must be competent in self-medicating. If medication is brought on site then this is clearly labelled and stored safely in the locked office. Children are aware of the procedure and know to ask staff should they need to take their medicine.

Children have access to a tuck shop facility. This provides healthy choices, such as fresh fruit in addition to children's favourites of biscuits and crisps. Children know to bring money and access the facility at their leisure during it's opening periods. Children stay well-hydrated as drinking water is available at all times in addition to being able to buy additional drinks, such as squash from the tuck shop.

Children take part in regular physical activity. Access to a substantial outdoor area with an array of challenging resources, such as the 'American swing' and static climbing apparatus ensures children have plentiful opportunities to develop increased control and coordination. Children rest and are active in accordance to their needs. They take time out to recuperate their energy levels, such as to sit on a bench mid-way through a game of football.

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

The provision is good.

Children's safety is high priority in this well-organised and managed provision. They are cared for by suitable adults who have appropriate training and experience in childcare. All staff hold appropriate vetting clearances and have completed a vigorous induction programme. This includes mandatory training in first aid and child protection.

Highly comprehensive and detailed health and safety procedures support staff in their working practice. For example, rigorous risk assessments identify potential hazards to children in relation to the premises, equipment, specialised activities and outings. Staff also carry out checks at

the commencement of each session. Although staff undertake daily checks these are limited in detail. There is no given structure to specify what hazards staff are looking for therefore leaving the assessment to individual interpretation. This means that on occasion hazards are not always identified or action taken to address. For example, the garden bins were overflowing and nettles and ivy were beginning to shoot through the undergrowth. Although the potential structure of safety protocols are highly rigorous the insufficiency of detail on current daily check lists impact on the full effectiveness of procedures.

Children access a diverse range of age-appropriate resources that are maintained in good working order. Should staff recognise that equipment is in poor repair then this would be removed from circulation, such as the second swing on the 'American swing' which was removed as the chain had broken loose from it's central anchor.

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

The provision is good.

Children thrive within this inspirational and much needed provision. They enjoy the freedom of being able to come and go as they please and in accessing good quality play equipment and well planned activities. Many children attend most days of the holidays. They arrive full of enthusiasm politely greeting staff as they sign themselves in. They respect the services offered and know where they can access and where they have restricted access, such as the kitchen. Children are aware that the only time they can access this area is when they are supervised, such as when assisting in the tuck shop. Children are eager to contribute to the operation of the setting as they request a turn to be a shop assistant for the tuck shop. This provides children with an opportunity to take responsibility and also to support their mental arithmetic skills, such as when adding up the total of items purchased without using any mechanical or written aids.

Children disperse into small friendship groups as they select the activities they would like to participate in. Most stay outside due to the warm weather as there is a vast array of challenging physical equipment, such as the 'American Swing'. Children take turns and share resources without any fuss. They know that there is plenty of time to complete all that they would like to do and that their turn will arrive if they remain patient. Should there be a long wait then they know to come back at another time. Due to the availability of a wide range of equipment children are never bored or disinterested.

Children really do gain a lot from this setting. For example, children learnt about the 'Romans' and 'Vikings' from external professionals who provide practical workshops for children to participate in. Children keenly sit down to make swords and shields. They also have their face painted with 'Woad' a blue dye drawn from the extracts of vegetation and believed to have been used by the Romans as tribal war paint.

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

The provision is good.

Children from a variety of backgrounds and children with learning disabilities are warmly welcomed in this setting. Most children attend regularly. They develop strong relationships with staff and their peers as they actively play with the resources available and participate in group activities. Although children may come and go as they please without giving any notice most do not. This means that children really do feel a true sense of belonging and respect the adults who provide the care.

Children understand that they have free reign within reason. They know that they can make independent choices and that they do not have to be directed by staff to participate in activities that they show no interest in. Staff understand and value children's play and need for space to develop their creativity. For example, staff provide children with the materials to make a den in the woodland but do not input their perception of how it should be built unless invited to share their ideas by the children.

Behaviour is exemplary. Older children set good examples to younger children. They share and take turns in the use of equipment and gently remind them to get to the back of the queue when lining up at the tuck shop.

The partnership with parents and carers is extremely effective. A detailed prospectus in addition to site notice boards means that parents can easily access information about the scheme, it's activities and general working policies and restrictions. The scheme have in place an open complaints procedure which adheres to current legislative changes.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

A strong management team, comprehensive written procedures and a skilled and committed staff base ensure children receive good quality care in this well-organised provision. Staff acknowledge their working ethos centralising on promoting learning through inspiring and interesting play opportunities. For example, they provide specialised workshops within their summer programme, such as a 'Romans' Day', 'Vikings' Day' and an 'Asian Day' where external professionals facilitate practical activities which children are eager to participate in. This supports children's engagement in play and ability to contribute in small groups.

Staff are highly respectful and value children's participation in activities. They do not engage alongside the children unless invited to do so. For example, children request additional players to make up a five-a-side football team comprising of a mixture of adults and children. This supports the team dynamics and assists in the rule keeping. Staff are extremely competent in their practice. They move freely with the flow of the children maintaining ratios both inside and outside. Although children are allowed to come and go as they please, many stay for the full session. A register and intermittent head counts ensures continued monitoring of numbers. Should the group identify that they are approaching their cut off limit for registration then children will be told that they cannot attend, although this is infrequent. This means that the

group are proactive in fully adhering to registration requirements. 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 group were required to ensure that staff are deployed effectively within the setting. Children's welfare is maintained as staff ensure that they follow the flow of children moving outside when numbers decrease inside. Staff are respectful of children's wishes only involving themselves alongside the children in their play when asked to do so. They were also required to ensure the room is maintained at an adequate temperature. Children stay sufficiently warm as there are wall mounted heaters in place and systems to record and monitor the levels of temperature in line with environmental health guidance. Should the premises become too cold then staff would close the provision until such time that the temperature could be raised. They were also required to make table top toys and games readily accessible to the children. Children remain focused with activities as table top toys and games are readily available. Lastly the group were required to complete a written risk assessment regarding the outside lighting. This is now in place.

### **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**

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.

### **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):

- enhance, further current risk assessment systems through extension of a more structured daily checklist to ensure full effectiveness of the procedures.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)