



Piggy Lane Playgroup at Hindpool Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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Registered person Piggy Lane Playgroup at Hindpool Nursery School

Type of inspection Childcare

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

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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?

Piggy Lane Playgroup at Hindpool Nursery School is run by a committee of the governing body. It opened in 2001 and operates from two classrooms and a childcare unit in Hindpool Nursery School. The playgroup is situated in Barrow-in-Furness, Cumbria. A maximum of 78 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.30 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 79 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Children come from the town of Barrow-in-Furness and the surrounding area.

The playgroup employs seven childcare staff and two support staff. Of these, six staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's healthcare needs are known and met competently in discussion with their parents. Their individual medical care needs are provided for through good healthcare plans and additional support from the health visitor. Sick children receive appropriate attention as there are good procedures in place for emergency care as needed. The arrangements for children's healthcare do not include full information given to parents about the health policies. Children with specific allergies explain confidently why some foods or drinks may cause harm to their health. Children understand why they need to have sun protection cream applied before they go out to play on a hot day. There are good arrangements to protect children's health through the staff's scrupulous attention to cleaning and hygiene procedures. Children have good hand washing routines, know when they need to wash their hands and go independently to do so. Their understanding of how this protects their health is promoted as the staff consistently remind them that it prevents germs. Older children confidently attend to their personal care needs. Younger children are given good support to achieve continence before they transfer to school.

Children have a good selection of healthy foods as the snacks provided are nutritious with drink choices of water and milk. They thoroughly enjoy eating their choices of fruit from the attractively presented pieces of strawberries, melon, tangerines and grapes. Children are encouraged to discuss their likes and dislikes, and try new tastes. Their understanding of making healthy choices is extended as they learn that water is good for their health. Children have the choice of a hot meal each day through the good arrangements set up with a nearby school. They tuck into roast chicken, baby new potatoes, fruit puree and yoghurts. Their social skills are encouraged as they learn to share and pass each other the snack plate to choose from. They do not have easy access to fresh drinking water at all times as the jug and cups are placed up on the sink unit. Children attending the breakfast club are offered toast or cereal. Children's food is prepared observing good food hygiene procedures as staff have received training. Their dietary needs are known in discussion with their parents.

Children have good opportunities to be healthily active through the daily planned physical activities and the very good enhanced provision for outside play. They are competent in the use of sit and ride toys as they scoot around the track laid out. Children use their good large movement skills to run freely and climb on the large apparatus constructed from tree trunks. Younger children are confident to try to climb up a few rungs with good staff support and encouragement. Older children confidently hold onto the rungs to swing freely. Children enjoy being out in the fresh air as they readily explore the excellent external resourced areas. They dig in the large sand area, explore the wild area and play in the bark area. Children enthusiastically join in the 'Sticky Kid' exercises and concentrate hard to wriggle their

hips. They enjoy the fun of the energetic active play in the soft play area. Children attending the after school facility choose readily to be active outside. Their favourite physical activities are playing games and using the football nets. Children's understanding of how being active supports their good health and what happens to their bodies is extended by staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play safely in the areas for childcare as good thought has been given to their safety and security on the premises. The arrangements to keep children safe include good risk assessments, a security camera system and key code entry doors. They safely enjoy the freedom of the extensive outdoor play area as staff carry out thorough daily checks. Children access a safe range of resources that are set out for them in the adult supported activities and planned areas of play of the continuous provision. They enthusiastically tidy up before their next activities. Their understanding of how this promotes their safety is not consistently extended. Children are not encouraged to extend their play ideas through the provision of easily accessible named resources in the available storage units.

Children's safe care is competently managed as the staff work to detailed health and safety procedures. They are consistently encouraged to play safely. Children learn not to throw sand as it might cause harm to others. They explain confidently that they need to get a mop to wipe up spilt milk. Their care in an emergency is given good thought as they participate in regular planned emergency evacuations. Children can explain what to do to stay safe if the alarm sounds. They know that they line up, stay quiet and go with the grown ups. Their understanding of how others help to keep them safe is extended as they visit the fire station. Children access outings safely as there are good procedures to manage their safety when out and about. Their understanding of road safety is consistently encouraged. Younger children confidently explain that they hold a staff member's hand and watch for cars.

Children are protected as the staff are trained, have a good practical knowledge of child protection procedures and know how to make a referral if necessary. Their welfare is closely monitored. The arrangements to protect children are detailed in the policy although the system to share this with parents is not in place. Children are collected safely at the end of sessions as there are good procedures used by staff to personally meet any other persons nominated by parents. Their understanding of protecting themselves and staying safe is fostered. Children meet with the community police through a whole school shared approach to developing their safety awareness. They learn about 'stranger-danger' in carefully managed discussion times. They know that they stay with staff when out and about, and do not approach strangers.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and happily enjoy their play and learning at the playgroup.

They eagerly go to see what is set out for play. Children make good progress in achieving developmental skills from their starting points as staff competently extend their learning in the supported activities. They are encouraged to write their letters to post, and explain what their marks mean. Children decide to draw zig-zag lines to represent their writing. More able children write recognisable letters. They listen intently to the story of 'The Gruffalo' and delightedly make facial expressions to imitate his appearance. Children are consistently encouraged to use their recall skills and describe what they see on the pages of the story book. They enjoy reading and frequently cuddle up in the cosy book corner with their chosen book. Children show good care and interest for their pet guinea pig and eagerly go to fetch food for the pet. They explore a range of textures as they participate in a pasta painting activity. Children describe whether oats, rice, lentils and pasta feel hard or soft. Their numeracy skills are good as staff consistently extend their use of mathematical skills as they play and learn. They develop their creative ideas as they discuss with staff how to make pretend cakes with the glittery sand and create an oven to bake these.

Children aged under three years have good planned play and learning opportunities based on the Birth to three matters framework. Their achievements are regularly observed and assessed to inform the planning to meet their developmental needs. They develop their physical skills as they build towers with wooden blocks. Younger children become playfully engaged as they have fun finding out how to blow bubbles. They have planned activities to develop their sensory skills through exploring the contents of treasure baskets. Children attending the before and after school sessions have a good selection of planned activities to choose from. They describe one of their favourite activities as playing board games. Older children chat happily to staff about their ideas as they find out how to paint with string. They use their design ideas as they choose from a variety of cardboard boxes, tubes, stones and pebbles to make up present boxes. Children competently use the numeral and number dot stamps to create patterns. Their understanding of the relationship of the number dots to the numerals is skilfully extended by staff as they create patterns. They enjoy the shared laughter of a spontaneous game of 'I spy'. Older children have time to complete their homework through good planning for the sessions.

All children's play and learning is regularly observed and assessed with the information collated in their individual files. Summary reports of their progress are provided to their parents at the end of their time in the provision. Children have very good opportunities to develop their free play ideas in the exceptionally well-resourced, outside play areas that support the areas of learning. They decide to wear the police safety jackets and ride their tricycles. Their learning is extended as the staff introduce collecting a numeral card and riding off to match to a number painted on the patio area. They develop good spontaneous play on the external decking area as they decide to take their sand diggers to a pretend garage to fix. Their ideas are extended as the staff help them to design a road by chalking on the decking. Children have insufficient opportunities to fully develop their free play ideas inside the unit as most activities set up are staff planned and led. Their independent free play skills are not extended through the existing organisation of the resourced areas to support the balance of free play with focused activities. The existing play and learning provision for children aged three and four years old is based on extending the aspects of the Birth to three matters framework. Their developmental

needs are not fully met through this planning strategy.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have good self-esteem and are confident as they arrive at the playgroup. They go eagerly to play with their friends. Children new to the setting are sensitively supported by the staff working closely with their parents. All children make choices readily about which of the activities set out they will go to. They are secure in their relationships with staff and proudly show what they are doing. Children play equally without bias as they share resources. Boys and girls play with the tractors and diggers in the sand. Boys enthusiastically get out the brush and pan to sweep up the piles of sand that the girls have swept up. They are consistently encouraged to share and care for each other. Children have regular opportunities to be involved in their local community and support others. They participate in the Barnardos Big Toddle at the South Lakes Wild Animal Park and support the activities for Comic Relief. Children have planned topics and activities to encourage their understanding of diversity. They meet a local Chinese restaurant owner and enjoy the tastes of Chinese food. Children share in the special events held in the nursery school and attend the Christingle service at the local church. They have insufficient access to visual and physical resources to support their awareness of diversity and disability. Children confidently transfer into the nursery school through the good induction systems planned by school and childcare staff.

Children with learning difficulties are given good support as the staff closely monitor all children's development. Their identified needs are discussed with their parents and additional professional support sought as agreed. They are supported by staff who have accessed additional training and work very closely with the school's coordinator to meet each child's particular needs. Children's behaviour is generally good. Their understanding of desired behaviours is consistently encouraged by the staff. They know that they do not run inside the rooms as they discuss the setting's rules. Any squabbles between children over the sharing of resources are quickly resolved by staff using appropriate strategies. Children are given many opportunities to settle quietly with staff if they want to talk about any matter. They are readily praised for their achievements and their work displayed. Children proudly show their sheep pictures that they created after they enjoyed the visit of the Sure Start group with the sheep puppet. The strategies to manage children's behaviour are outlined in the policy although the coordinator is not named, and the statement about bullying is omitted.

The arrangements for children's care are praised by parents as they explain that their children are settled and keen to come to the playgroup. Parents of new children emphasise the good support they receive from the supportive staff. Information about children's care is shared with their parents through the regular newsletters and an individual copy of the setting's handbook. The provision made for children is verbally discussed with parents but they do not have easy access to the policies and procedures. Information about children's day at the setting is discussed to some extent with their parents at handovers but there are no systems to share written

information about daily routines, achievements and experiences. The arrangements for children's care do not include sufficient detail into the complaints policy about the procedures to be followed. The provision for children does not include establishing a system to record complaints with access to this by parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children receive good quality care as they are cared for by staff who are employed through robust recruitment and employment procedures. They are cared for safely through the good systems to record the checks made for the suitability of staff members to work with children. The good arrangements for their care include a detailed operational plan that is collated to indicate how the outcomes for children are met. The strengths and weaknesses of the childcare provision are discussed in staff and governing body meetings, with clear development planning in place. The quality of the care for children is regularly monitored by the headteacher and overseen by the governing body. The provision for children is being extended and developed as the governors, headteacher and staff are committed to supporting the needs of their local community through the changeover to a children's centre. The development of the provision for childcare is informed by seeking parental views about the types of care that they need.

Children are cared for by staff who are well qualified and experienced although there are no written staff induction procedures. They are confident in the setting through the support offered by staff who enjoy helping children to have fun as they play and learn. Children are supported by an effective key worker system. They receive a good level of adult attention and support as the staff-to-child ratios are favourable. Children attending other schools are escorted appropriately although there are no written procedures. The organisation of children's care, play and learning is generally effective as most documentation is in place to meet their individual needs.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection made recommendations for the provider to have regard to extending the content of the child protection policy and the procedures for the safe collection of children. The provider was also asked to have regard to minimising the risks to children from the internal doors.

The arrangements for children's safe care have been improved as the content of the child protection and collection of children policies has been extended. Children move through sliding doors safely as finger guards have been fitted.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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):

- extend the opportunities for children to freely choose resources and develop their imaginative play ideas by reviewing the balance of free play and planned focused activities
- extend the complaints policy to provide sufficient detail about the procedures to be followed in the event of a concern or complaint, and consider how the system to record complaints will be established including how this will be shared with parents.

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