



Pebbles Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY320329
Inspection date	01 August 2006
Inspector	Diane Mary O'Neill
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Registered person	Carol Bowman
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Full day 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Pebbles playgroup opened in 2006 and operates from a playroom adjacent to the Lewsey Learning Centre. The play room is open plan with two different areas for play. It is situated between Dunstable and Luton. A maximum of 14 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 9.00 - 11.30 with a half-hour lunch club and from 13.00 - 16.00, mainly term-time only with occasional operation in holiday periods. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 35 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these,

five children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area. The playgroup currently supports children who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup employs four staff. Of these three hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards their National Vocational Qualification Level 3 in child care.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy good health and a healthy lifestyle because practitioners effectively adhere to well structured health and safety procedures, which are applied. For example, all staff wear protective clothing and gloves when changing nappies or supporting children with toileting needs. Staff frequently clean changing mats and tables with bacterial spray after each use and ensure the toilet area is clean. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned daily routines. They know for example, that it is important to wash their hands prior to eating, after using the toilet and when returning from outside play.

All staff have undertaken a recognised first aid training course to ensure they protect children from accidents. Although systems are in place, there is not enough relevant information recorded or parental permission for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment, this may cause a significant risk to a child as there could be a delay in obtaining urgent treatment.

Children benefit from healthy snacks that are prepared daily at the playgroup. Children are given a drink with all snacks and meals, and are able to keep hydrated throughout the day by accessing independently drinks from a small water machine. Children who stay for lunch bring a packed lunch which is stored appropriately.

Children have daily access to a secure outdoor play area that enables them to have plenty of physical exercise. They confidently use slides, ride on scooters and bikes and kick balls. They are able to manipulate different soft materials such as, play dough. They happily sit and build with stickle bricks and other equipment that is used both inside and outside enabling children to get full use of the play materials on offer.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety and welfare is given due attention as the playgroup has suitable systems for ensuring the safety of the children and premises at all times. Clear risk assessments and documentation is maintained, the staff team know about health and safety regulations to ensure children's safety and well-being. Good safety practices are in place, for example during the walk to the outside play area the children know they must walk in pairs and hold hands. Staff talk with the children about being safe and are proactive in continually installing this information through topics such as people who care for us.

Children use a sufficient range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate resources which are organised in child height furniture to encourage independent access. However, some areas are not presented in an attractive or inviting manner to the children, so play and learning opportunities are not used to their full potential.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give priority to children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy when they arrive and keen to communicate with staff, such as showing a special toy they have brought from home. Staff give time and consideration to any child who takes time to settle into the playgroup routine and leave their carer. This shows their flexibility and recognising individual children's needs. Children benefit from warm relationships with staff who are interested in them and give them lots of praise and encouragement. Children play well together, they learn to share, take turns and are beginning to respect each other.

Children respond excitedly to a wide range of creative activities. They sing and dance with gusto, love role play, dressing up and exploring paint and other materials. They take their imaginations outside to the play area, such as making lolly pops and birthday cake from stickle bricks.

Children play an active part at the setting and their independence is promoted through a variety of opportunities which allows them to initiate their own play. They move around freely and confidently accessing toys and play equipment and are fully involved in a range of enjoyable activities which helps to develop their play and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. All children are welcomed into the playgroup and encouraged to take part in activities. Staff provide good role models for children by being calm and polite. Children behave well and are beginning to understand right from wrong, through consistent boundaries and age appropriate methods used by staff. Praise is given freely to children, ensuring they develop confidence and self-esteem and understand when they have done well. Children respond with enthusiasm to requests for help from staff at tidy-up-time. They enjoy the opportunities given for taking responsibility for snack time, such as helping to hand out the snack and drinks.

Partnership with parents and carers is suitably well maintained with staff being sensitive towards the settling in arrangements, which helps children, parent and staff to get to know one another. Children benefit from effective information sharing with parents through newsletters, posters and notice board as well as daily

communication. Parents and carers have access to the playgroups policies and procedures so they are fully informed about the playgroups commitment. There is a system in place for the recording of complaints and parents are aware of these procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most areas of the playgroup environment are attractive and provide plenty of space for children to move freely, safely and independently. There is a good routine in place which enables the children, parents, carers and staff to help the children feel settled and secure. However some attention is required to ensure some play areas are made more attractive and interesting to children.

The staff team is very committed to offering good child care and are motivated to attend short courses such as child protection and first aid, to keep themselves up-to-date with relevant child care practices. They are waiting to go on a 'Birth to three matters' framework training, so they can offer more play and learning opportunities to the younger children in their care.

Although the majority of relevant documentation is in place, there is some further improvement required in the recording of details such as the accident book, permission for emergency medical advice and any discussion with parents in relation to significant incidents . Not having these in place could potentially put a child's care at risk.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted 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.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.
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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):

- ensure all accidents forms have all relevant information documented (children's addresses)
- ensure written parental permission is requested to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment
- ensure resources enable opportunities for children's play and learning, to be inviting and stimulating (especially the book corner)
- ensure all details in the significant event book are clearly documented.

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