



Cantelupe Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206738
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Inspector	Georgina Walker
Setting Address	Cantelupe Centre, Market Place, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 5HY
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Registered person	Cantelupe Playgroup
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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cantelupe Playgroup opened in 1972. It operates from three rooms in the Cantelupe Centre, in the town of Ilkeston, Derbyshire. There is a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup serves the local area and surrounding villages.

The setting opens five days a week during school term only. Sessions are from 10.00 until 12.45.

There are currently 45 children from two years two months to four years on roll. This includes nine children who receive funding for nursery education.

The pre-school playgroup employs eight part-time staff who work with the children. All the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The setting receives support from Derbyshire local authority and are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The pre-school playgroup has a parental committee, who delegate day to day responsibility to the staff.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's needs are met effectively if they have an accident as staff hold appropriate first aid certificates and maintain first aid boxes which are readily accessible in both playrooms. Accident records are generally maintained and shared with parents although injuries a child arrives with are not always recorded. The detail in recording the size of the injury is insufficient, consequently a child's needs are not met if a further accident occurs. The prevention of accidents is reduced as staff are aware of stages of children's development and present activities safely. The seeking of permission for administering medication is sought but administration is only for children who have ongoing medical conditions. All records are stored confidentially. In the event of children becoming ill staff instigate the well documented procedures and parents are contacted to ensure any distress is limited. Children's good health is promoted effectively through them learning the importance of personal hygiene. The children follow appropriate daily routines, such as washing their hands after toileting or messy play, such as printing or sand play, and before snacks. Their knowledge about germs being on hands is also shared with visitors during imaginary play, when hands must be 'washed' before a plastic biscuit is served on a plate. They become increasingly independent in their personal care and have consistent access to tissues in the playroom.

Children benefit from the healthy and nutritious snacks provided. Snacks are enjoyed, such as cereal, crackers and raisins, with milk or water to drink. Children who will only drink juice bring their own lidded beakers provided by parents, to ensure thirst needs are met. The children respond positively to the café style snack bar to meet their individual needs and the opportunities for continuous learning as they choose to visit the snack table when they have finished an activity. The children serve themselves competently when pouring drinks available on a table throughout the session and take drinks to their friends, demonstrating concern that others needs are met. The children enjoy spreading jam activities, tasting food as part of a theme and competently use tools, as seen in photographs in albums and on wall displays. Children are starting to understand why certain foods are good for them through discussion and programmed activities. Individual dietary requirements are shared by parents with the staff to ensure children remain healthy and needs are met. Children's snacks are presented well to ensure they enjoy snack times. A weekly menu, displayed for parents, ensures an extensive variety is provided as there is a five week rotation. Snacks are social times and staff provide encouragement to eat healthily and have related discussions.

The children are very happy and settled in the environment. Children are supported effectively to develop their physical skills throughout the pre-school playgroup. They move with confidence and an awareness of personal safety throughout the premises. Daily opportunities are programmed with purposeful activities to ensure children's development of all-round skills, but these are not clearly recorded on the recently changed daily planning sheet. Children are

able to negotiate around each other or resources as they move around the playrooms and resources such as the hidey hole and tunnel. The staff provide children with high levels of challenge to develop an extensive variety of skills. Children enjoy acting out stories, such as 'Going on a Bear Hunt' moving in rhythm with the range of movements required. An awareness of how their body has reacted to exercise is promoted. They laugh a lot as they use a range of balls, skittles, frisbees and frog-shaped bean bags during outdoor play as they learn new skills. Children are very enthusiastic and confident to throw and catch. Daily access to pens and pencils, scissors and paint brushes or printing aids help children develop their fine manipulative skills competently. An extensive variety of construction toys leads to good co-ordination as Stickle Bricks and Duplo pieces are transformed into Christmas trees or buildings. A trolley of mark making resources is used through the session as children spontaneously want to draw and write or cut out shapes. They sort confidently through templates to find what they want, such as transport or letters. They also have daily opportunities to manipulate dough and other malleable materials. They go out walking on occasional visits to the library, opticians or a local school, if they are due to attend that school.

The staff have a well developed understanding of how to promote the 'Birth to three matters' framework but this is not integrated into the overall curriculum. Children's developing needs are successfully met as parents provide a starting point. Under threes are gradually integrated into the group with extensive support from the well qualified and experienced staff who address children's emotional needs as they separate from their parents and carers. Once settled, children are allocated a key-worker who can progress their development, but as yet the recording of their progress does not fully reflect the aspects and components of the framework. The excellent range of resources is presented attractively and with opportunities for progress as the children choose from the extensive range of activities after register time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where the playrooms are decorated with posters and their own craft work, such as autumn leaves and a Christmas tree made of printed hands. Photographs of children happily at play engaged in an exciting variety of activities are made available to parents and used in displays such as 'welcome to our pre-school'. The children have access to an extensive range of resources which are changed to promote high levels of challenge. These are safe, age appropriate and presented at suitable levels to encourage independence and development and ensure children are fully supported to develop safely in appropriate surroundings.

Children are cared for by staff who have a sound knowledge of signs and symptoms of abuse and demonstrate an understanding of how to give utmost priority to children's welfare. An ongoing programme of training ensures some of the committee and all staff attend, which significantly enhances knowledge. The policies do not contain all information or reflect the changes to local authority procedures from April 2006 to ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the 'Local Safeguarding Children Board'. However, children's welfare is fully supported by the staff. The parents are informed of the playgroup's responsibility to protect children, in the brochure they receive on admission.

Comprehensive policies and procedures exist and the staff ensure children's safety throughout the premises. Children are secure in the environment. Very good security, with a bell system, chains on relevant doors and well implemented collection of children procedures are maintained, with staff and visitors signing themselves in and out in a daily diary. Whilst the children have a self registration system, to develop name recognition, staff call the children's register at the start of the session and then inform children of the activities on offer that day. Emergency procedure evacuations and subsequent evaluations are undertaken regularly and ensure children develop an understanding of the need for fire safety. Children are safe on walks in the area as the setting has comprehensive procedures which are implemented effectively. Written permission for seeking treatment in an emergency is immediately available should an accident occur and first aid resources and a mobile phone to contact emergency services are carried by staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly in the pre-school playgroup and have a good relationship with the staff. The children are confident and keen to access the extensive range of play activities. Children integrate successfully due to the expertise of the staff and are encouraged to separate from their parents after a number of visits. Daily activities and developmental progress is shared verbally with parents and the recording of progress for children under the 'Birth to three matters' framework is to be developed. The starting point for new children assists staff in promoting individual future progress.

The children develop appropriate socialisation skills as they join in group activities and move between the well presented resources. An excellent understanding by the staff of the 'Birth to three matters' framework ensures the children are purposefully occupied and are supported to develop potential. Great concentration is shown and an eagerness to spend extended periods in something which stimulates and interests the child are evident when drawing round templates of vehicles or pretending to be in the 'post office' and they use old computer keyboards. Children's physical development is promoted effectively during the session and they are very dexterous as they enjoy building bricks and knocking down high towers.

The access to a wide range of messy play activities linked to themes ensures children's development is fully supported across many areas of learning. Their learning experiences with dough and mathematical resources is successfully promoted by the adult who is supervising the table. The writing area has a trolley of resources which children can freely access to create their own pictures, find templates or use scissors to cut their own shapes.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals as an excellent understanding by staff of how to present an extensive range of activities and extend children's learning is demonstrated. However, the previously tried and tested comprehensive planning documents have recently been changed and no longer give clear indications of which of the aspects linked to the stepping stones are being used to identify the curriculum covered. Staff observe the children and evaluate how they have completed an activity and use this information to progress an individual. Evaluation contains purposeful

information about whether the child learnt from the activity or just been engaged in it. Children's progress is shared verbally with parents and written documents provided as they leave the setting for nursery or school. Opportunities for parents to formally contribute to an overall picture of the funded child's progress is to be instigated.

Themes are enthusiastically enjoyed by the children. The healthy living theme includes visits by an optician, school nurse and opportunities to go on visits to surgeries. Children are eager to act out their experiences on their return and play with glasses and check their sight on the alphabet board. They share information about their life outside of the playgroup, especially linked with a visit from the Mayor, who comes to switch on the playgroup Christmas tree display lights. Later in the day he will switch on the town Christmas tree lights and children are eager to share information that they will see this and go the fair. They have confident personalities which is confirmed as they include visitors in their play. Children are challenged to think by staff who use open ended questions. Children are well behaved and eager to try new experiences. They ask questions about how things work and listen to the responses from staff. They are animated when suggesting their own ideas and obvious friendship groups organise each other to play together in the role play area or on the carpet with the Duplo, demonstrating good negotiating skills. After messy play activities they go off independently to wash. Photographs of children at play and on outings such as to St. Thomas's school, are available in albums or on displays, to show how they are enjoying themselves, and the excellent range of educational activities they engage in. Those children due to attend St. Thomas's school visit the school for Mass, if the parents wish, with a member of the playgroup staff meeting them there to bring them back later to playgroup.

Children have access to a stimulating range of books and spontaneously use them from the shelves. They repeat phonic sounds and are eager to mark make. Their understanding of the accepted way to record and recognise their name is not consistently promoted by the staff. Children have an understanding of maths and spontaneously use their knowledge during play, counting bricks as they build a tower. Access to a range of battery operated resources and technology is inconsistent to enhance learning as currently the computer is broken and other resources are not presented instead. Children are developing awareness of the needs of others and the world around them as they enjoy the varied topics planned by staff. Topics which introduce them to the diversities in society are included and photographs show children dressed up and trying food from around the world as part of everyday activities. Children's physical development is promoted effectively through the use of an extensive range of small resources and a well balanced programme of activities both in and outdoors. A small area is designated for outdoor play, for which funding has been obtained to upgrade and make more welcoming and stimulating for the children.

Children engage in activities which introduces them to an exciting range of texture, and photographs show them responding to their experiences, such as a mix of spaghetti and shaving foam, with wide smiles on their faces. Children make reference to the wall displays and proudly point out their work, demonstrating good recall of previous activities and pride in their work. They develop their creative experiences as they have access to an extensive range of craft, role play and musical activities. Children eagerly join and demonstrate a good imagination in the role play area. They produce free choice painting or prepared crafts for displays, with a degree of age-appropriate expertise and co-operation working with other children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Verbal information is given daily to parents of all children, and staff have tried a number of ways to share details, which demonstrates the commitment to being fully supportive and working with parents to give an overall picture of each individual child's progress. Information about the curriculum and nursery grant funding is provided and children's development records are available at any time for parents to read. However, documents are not formally shared with parents to discuss their child's progress or information shared regarding what children can do at home. The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. A report is produced and given to parents, or the school the child is to move to, when the child leaves.

Children are respected and treated as individuals, they are welcomed and valued in the playgroup. Most are confident in the setting and show a sense of belonging to the group. They may cry when parents leave but parents can be assured they quickly settle and enjoy the range of activities. Staff use their expertise, have ongoing discussions and use information sheets completed by parents to ensure children's individual needs are met. New documents include the ethnic origin, any religion followed and languages spoken to ensure appropriate care can be given. Information is shared daily and parents specifically like the key-worker system so they know who is specifically caring for and educating their child. Co-operation between parents, staff and outside agencies ensures children's specific needs are met.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are well behaved as they learn to accept the four playgroup rules and respond to the firm and consistent expectations of the staff. Children develop a strong sense of independence and self-worth as they are encouraged to share, take turns, always walk to keep themselves safe and prevent accidents. Any minor incidents regarding sharing are calmly dealt with by the staff to ensure the children are fully supported. Any incidents are to be recorded and signed by parents to confirm they have been provided with the detail.

Children are developing an understanding of how everyone positively contributes in society. Resources which promote positive images are consistently available daily in the range of resources presented. Members of staff consistently use appropriate language to assist children's learning. Their knowledge and experiences are successfully extended as craft activities linked to culture and festivals are included. Equality of opportunity is promoted consistently as activities are adapted to ensure children's developmental needs are met. Children's understanding of the needs of others are promoted successfully through discussion and inclusion in the pre-school playgroup.

Parents are provided with a welcome brochure and reminder to read the full range of policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision. These assist in promoting the welfare care and learning of the children. Notice boards and verbal information keeps them fully informed of the menu, how to contact the regulator and business issues relating to the group. Albums and displays show the children happily at play. Parents are invited to join the committee to become more involved in the running of the pre-school playgroup. They make very positive comments about the provision and the good relationships shared between children, staff, parents and carers.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The welfare care and learning of the children is generally promoted through the maintenance of records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision. The committee leave all day to day running of the playgroup to the staff. Changes to the committee are to be made known to the regulator. Revisions to regulations have not been included in the documents as the commitment by staff to ensure they provide children with relevant care and education takes priority. The committee and staff are to make cross references to all five regulation documents when making amendments to their policies and procedures. They are to ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the 'Local Safeguarding Children Board', introduced April 2006. A number of documents require minor amendment such as the detail in recording accidents to ensure children's health and safety. Overall the range of children's needs are met.

Children are in the care of qualified and experienced staff who ensure they are happy and settled in the pre-school playgroup. The ratios are maintained to a high level as many children under three attend, ensuring they settle quickly in the setting and the children's learning opportunities are significantly enhanced. Good organisation of effectively planned, developmentally appropriate activities, ensures children's time in the pre-school playgroup is worthwhile and provides high levels of challenge, although current documentation does not reflect this. The children are eager to engage in the exciting range of activities presented. Many activities, such as dough and the mark making table, are presented in an adapted format each day to provide stability for the children. Resources are constantly being updated to ensure the facilities are welcoming and stimulating for the children, with items such as a replacement computer on the list when funds allow. The routine is evaluated to ensure children are consistently purposefully occupied. The leadership and management of the pre-school playgroup in relation to the funded education is good. A member of staff from the local authority visits the setting and training provided by them is attended. The representative of the registered person encourages staff to update qualifications and the commitment by staff to develop knowledge contributes to the progress made by children in all areas of learning. Assessment for an NVQ4 in management is being undertaken by the dedicated leader of the provision. Staff are beginning to share the roles and take responsibility for overseeing some sessions and areas, such as becoming an additional special educational needs co-ordinator.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection the setting agreed to ensure children's hygiene practices are monitored; ensure that children have privacy and dignity whilst using the toilet ; ensure that the premises are maintained at a suitable level of decoration and repair. A new hand basin in the 'art room' gives children greater independence to wash their hands after messy play and before snacks. As the snack table is in the 'art room' staff successfully monitor this. Children are well aware of the routines to do this and why they should wash their hands. This extends to their use of the toilet facilities, where the staff have erected a shower curtain in the toilet directly off the playroom to provide privacy, and dignity is maintained. New flooring has brightened the playrooms, as shown in the photographs taken over the past two years of children at play, and an ongoing programme of refurbishment by the owners of the premises

will address the decoration of the walls. The children's craft work and other displays ensure a welcoming environment is created in which the children play and learn.

At the previous nursery education inspection the setting agreed to the following actions: provide more opportunities for the more able children to recognise their own name and for personal independence at snack time; evaluate and improve the organisation of story and group time to meet the needs of the more able children; provide formal opportunities for parents to share what they know about their child and to be kept well informed about their child's achievement and progress.

An action plan was written and implemented initially in 2003, with some re-evaluation over the past three years. A self-registration system now introduces all children to begin to recognise their own name in text. They find their name card on the table, with their parent or carer, and post it in the letterbox. Lots of praise and encouragement is given, including the use of phonics by staff. Children are heard to say the initial letter of their name on other children's cards and recognise the rest of the letters are not theirs. These cards have been used later in the sessions for snack time and on the writing table but this practice is not currently in operation. This leads to missed opportunities to develop the recognition of letters and children's purposeful mark making progress by copying and writing their own name.

Snack times were adapted to give children the opportunity to pour their own drinks and serve the other children with the biscuits. As a more healthy regime of snacks has been developed children no longer serve the food or drink. They can make choices regarding which snack they wish to eat and pour their own drinks at any time, from the jug on the table at the side of the 'art room' to develop personal independence.

The staff evaluated the story routine and as the age group in the pre-school playgroup has decreased spontaneous stories throughout the session take place in the cosy book corner and small story groups are taken into the side room. Whilst the routine displayed for parents includes 'story time' for the last ten minutes of the session it is actually used as singing, action rhymes and giving out craft-work time so all children can be involved. This ensures older children can experience age-appropriate stories in small groups and engage in a two-way learning experience with a staff member.

An ongoing development of children's record keeping and the limited terms most children spend in the setting has led to inconsistent sharing of information for parents. Most are happy to receive the overall report when their child leaves, often after one and a half terms. Staff continually discuss the children's progress in the short time parents are in the premises, at the start or end of the session. They are to extend this by showing the records which provide the evidence the child is progressing along the stepping stones and to discuss any aspect the staff cannot observe. This will build upon the starting point records the parents complete as their child joins the pre-school playgroup and assist the staff to plan for future educational development.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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, significant injuries occurring when the child is not in the care of the setting, and incident records contain sufficient detail to meet a child's needs, should a further injury or incident occur, and that parents sign all entries
- ensure the 'Birth to three matters' framework is integrated into the curriculum and development and assessment records relate to children's progress within the aspects and indicate the next steps for learning
- continue to develop formal sharing of development and assessment records with parents of all children
- ensure staff are made aware of, and policies and procedures reflect changes and include reference to, the 'Local Safeguarding Children Board' procedures when they are available
- ensure all policies and procedures contain reference to current legislation, national standards and guidance.

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):

- consolidate the planning to clearly show the learning intentions, record purposeful information regarding children's participation and identify individual future learning needs

- ensure children have consistent opportunities to recognise their own name in the accepted format and have planned activities to mark make with a purpose and learn letter formation
- continue to increase children's access to information technology and battery operated resources.

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