



The Play Pad

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY337172
Inspection date	29 January 2007
Inspector	Lynn Dent
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Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	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.

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?

The Play Pad Out Of School Care opened in 2003 and moved to the current premises in 2006. It operates from the community hall within the community area of Stafford Leys Community Primary School. It is situated on the outskirts of Leicester. A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time. The club is open each weekday from 7:45 to 9:00 and 15:15 to 17:30 during term time. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 54 children from four to under eight years on roll. Children come from the local catchment area, as most of the children attend the school. The club currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties. The Play Pad employs four staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Practitioners and children wash their hands before preparing meals and cooking. Consequently, this helps to prevent the risks of germs spreading. Children develop the skills to be independent in their personal care and understand the reasons for good hygiene. They explain that by washing away germs this stops them becoming ill. Children are protected well from the risk of infections as a clear policy regarding the exclusion of sick children is shared with parents. As a result parents understand that children must not attend the club for a period of time after they have had an infection. Clear procedures are in place to manage and record accidents. An example of this is a child whose face is caught with a toy while playing. Practitioners check the scratch he receives and records this accurately. This information is reported to parents on their arrival. Consequently, they are kept fully aware of their child's welfare.

Children enjoy their meals as they receive a varied diet that includes a range of foods from different cultures, for example bagels, chapatti and croissants. They explain that they eat fruit and salad which is good for them. The menu is changed daily and children are encouraged to help themselves. Consequently, they learn to manage their diet which is balanced and nutritious. Meal times are used as a social occasion to develop good table manners. Consequently, children show this. Discussions at meal times and during activities ensure children understand how to maintain their good health. Children remain hydrated as they can access a diluted juice or water throughout the session and this is provided outside in hot weather. Information about children's individual dietary needs is readily accessible as a list is available at all times.

Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle because practitioners promote the benefits of exercise. Children have daily opportunities to participate in a range of activities that enhance their physical development. They play ball games, for example dodge ball and have opportunities to run around. By playing a range of games they learn to coordinate their movements, for example they play Twister, moving around others to balance on different parts of their body. They competently use construction sets, computer games, junk modelling and other activities to develop their finer motor skills. As a result their overall physical development is enhanced.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children clearly understand why action is taken and rules are in force to help keep them safe. They clearly explain the fire evacuation procedure and that spilt drinks are mopped up immediately to prevent them slipping. Practitioners are vigilant when children arrive and collected from the club. Entry to the club is by a secure entrance. Children are kept in the room until the parents or visitors are identified. Consequently, children do not leave the premises unsupervised or with an unknown adult. A record of children, the adults caring for them and visitors to the club is rigorously maintained. Therefore, practitioners are aware of who is on the premises at all times.

Children's safety is maintained when they use the toilet as practitioners stand by the door to the setting to ensure they are safe. Practitioners implement very good procedures daily to ensure the premises and resources are safe for children to use. Thorough risk assessments are carried out regularly. Consequently, potential dangers are identified and timely action taken to manage this. Records of this are comprehensive. As a result children are able to explore the environment and resources safely. Toys and equipment are in good condition and comply with safety regulations. Therefore, children can access these to support their play. Children's welfare is well protected as practitioners understand the signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect. They have a clear understanding of recording incidents. For example information about injuries children receive outside the club hours are recorded and discussed with parents. Practitioners can explain the internal and external requirements to report potential child protection issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely happy and settled within their environment. Practitioners are forward-thinking and work closely with the children to plan and deliver a balanced and extensive range of stimulating activities and experiences. This is shown as practitioners spend time talking to children in groups to find out what they would like to do, eat and play with at the club. As a result the planning is adapted to take account of their wishes. For example, children's desire to cook and make models is now included in the planning and readily available. On the day of inspection a child made a memory box with effective support from the practitioners who provided a range of materials and advice about how to tie a ribbon around the finished item. Activities are monitored, assessed and adapted to ensure that children are enjoying themselves. This is shown in the daily evaluation of the session as children do not wish to participate in a prepared activity, they are given the opportunity to organise a talent show using instruments instead.

Children have an exceptional understanding of the outcomes for their care as practitioners involve them in discussions and make displays with the children to show this. Consequently, children can clearly explain what the outcomes are and how practitioners help them to achieve these. Children are actively involved in an extensive range of stimulating child initiated and adult-led activities which ensure good use of the indoor and outdoor environment. As a result children are constantly engaged and stimulated by their appealing experiences provided for them. During the afternoon session the activities are changed to provide additional experiences. On the day of the inspection this included television games and dancing. Practitioners are dedicated to providing the best care for the children and radiate a very caring, warm and loving atmosphere. Consequently, children are very confident. They flourish as practitioners provide excellent care, are focussed and enthusiastically involved in the children's play. Consequently, children have exceptionally good self-esteem and a high respect for the adults caring for them.

Children engage in meaningful activities and experiences for sustained periods of time. An example of this is the travel agent role play area. Children are very imaginative as they give the inspector tickets for a holiday in the sun and take her to another part of the room where a helicopter is waiting to take her on holiday. Children share resources and take turns when playing games. For example a group of children play with a spinning top game and help each other to learn the rules of the game and how the spinning tops work. As a result they play

harmoniously for sustained lengths of time and show kindness to their friends. Practitioners are skilled and effective in knowing when to direct and support play and when to allow children time, space and resources to develop planned activities and to initiate their own play and learning. Consequently, children become independent and confident in their own abilities. Very effective organisation means that children have time and space to relax with their friends. The care needs of the children are effectively met as detailed records are in place to identify their individual needs. Practitioners know the children well as they develop very good partnerships working with parents.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy mutually respectful relationships with practitioners and their peers. Practitioners are good role models for behaviour and use developmentally appropriate behaviour management techniques. They use praise and encouragement to promote good behaviour. Consequently, children show good behaviour and demonstrate high self-esteem. They take turns in conversation, share toys and show good manners by using please and thank you. Children develop a clear understanding of the differences in the society in which they live as they celebrate a range of festivals and events throughout the year. Displays about diversity and how this is met are clearly explained by the children. They state that they are all treated equally by the practitioners and have the same opportunities to play and participate in the activities provided. This shows they have a clear understanding of the needs of others in society and those who may be different to themselves. An excellent range of books help children to understand about differences in families and situations they may face in their lives. For example, living with a step family, coping with dyslexia.

Children are made to feel valued because practitioners provide a warm and welcoming environment. Children take an active part in the club and can clearly explain the expectations placed upon them. For example, they can explain the club rules and why these are in place, tidy up during the session and older children make lists of children who wish to be involved in the cooking activity. Therefore, they have clear sense of belonging and develop some responsibility for their environment. Practitioners understand and value the importance of promoting good partnerships with parents and carers. Parents receive a clear prospectus at induction and good two-way communication means that daily discussions ensure that the parents are kept well informed of their child's day. Consequently, all parties are fully informed of the children's individual needs which are effectively met and their welfare is promoted. Parent's opinions about the club are sought annually. Documentation shows that parents are happy and this is confirmed in discussions with parents who state they are very happy with the care and the range of activities and experiences their children receive. They often comment that the children are reluctant to leave.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Good organisation of the environment and activities means children have time and space to play and complete activities. Practitioners are deployed well and show effective interaction

with the children. Practitioners work well as a team. They are committed to ensuring children receive good care in a caring and stimulating environment. Planning is adapted to meet the needs of the children currently attending the club. Consequently, they enjoy the experience and are engaged for sustained periods of time in the activities provided. The operational plan works effectively as good policies and procedures are implemented well to underpin the work of the setting. As a result the outcomes for children are enhanced.

The management show a commitment to improving the service they provide by updating policies and procedures regularly. However, the child protection policy has not been fully updated to meet recent legislation. Consequently, the information regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board and relevant contact details are inaccurate. Parents have access to a policy which details how to make complaints to the Office for Standards in Education (Ofsted). However, the current address and the telephone number have not been updated. Therefore, parents may not be fully aware of how to contact Ofsted. Appropriate communication with parents and carers ensures all parties are kept fully informed of the children's needs. Information about the children is readily available as detailed records are easily accessible and regularly updated to support their individual needs.

Procedures for the recruitment and checking of applicants ensure children are cared for by suitably qualified practitioners. An induction process for new practitioners means they successfully implement the clubs policies and procedures. Children's welfare is protected as there is always a minimum of two adults caring for them and they are never left unsupervised with unknown or un-cleared adults. Children's safety is maintained as risk assessments are completed daily to ensure the premises are safe for children to use. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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.

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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):

- update policies in line with the latest regulations. This is with reference to the child protection and complaints policy.

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