



## **Pebbles Pre-School and Daycare**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY317098
<b>Inspection date</b>	04 October 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Susan Cox
<b>Setting Address</b>	Trunch Road, Mundesley, Norfolk, NR11 8LE
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<b>Registered person</b>	Pebbles Childrens and Family Services Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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*

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 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?

Pebbles Pre-School is a well established group. The committee became a company limited by guarantee with charity status pending. Pebbles Pre-School and Daycare were registered in these premises in April 2006. It is run by a voluntary committee and is part of a Sure Start Children's Centre. It operates from purpose built premises on the school site in Mundesley. Children over the age of two are cared for in a large room and there is a separate room for babies. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 52 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. Out of school care is provided for children up to the age of eight.

There are currently 84 children aged from five months to under eight years on roll. Of these, 37 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from local villages and the

surrounding area. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 11 members of staff to work with the children. Of these, eight hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The nursery has been awarded the Norfolk Quality Kite Mark.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted as there are effective procedures in place to gather and exchange information with their parents. This ensures individual medical needs are met and staff can respond appropriately in an emergency. All staff hold current first aid certificates and training is regularly repeated to ensure they may give children prompt and appropriate care in the event of an accident. Sensitive care is provided for children who become unwell and parents are informed to be able to take any further action required. Good hygiene practices are in place which include helping children learn how to stay well. For example, children understand the need to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating to 'get rid of the germs.' They routinely wipe their nose and dispose of the tissue appropriately to avoid spreading germs. Little ones are starting to learn similar practices and are sensitively supported by staff.

Children benefit from a good range of fresh fruit and snacks that encourage healthy eating. They sit together and watch staff prepare the fruit, giving opportunities to discuss what they are going to have and why it is good for them. They eat enthusiastically with plenty provided for all but sometimes snacks are rather late in the morning and there is little time before they sit down to eat their lunch. Children sit with friends and staff to eat their packed lunch or meal ordered from the school kitchen. This is a sociable time and staff are vigilant to children with allergies to ensure they only have what is appropriate for them. All children are encouraged to drink frequently and the older ones love taking a cup from the dispenser and using the water cooler to pour a drink when they wish. Older children are beginning to notice the effects that exercise has on their body and how to meet their own needs. For example, a child explains 'I needed a drink as I got all hot running around in the garden.' Babies are cuddled to be fed bottles, supplied by parents, to ensure their emotional needs are met and safety promoted. As they learn to feed themselves they are appropriately supported by staff. Opportunities for toddlers to drink regularly are provided as their beakers or bottles are readily available on the table within their reach. Staff are considering how to continue to make drinks available to the children but minimise the sharing of drinks and the risk of passing on infections.

All children enjoy being active and are learning a good range of physical skills and how their body works. Children usually play in the fresh air several times each day. Older children practise climbing on the frame, use the scramble net with confidence and slide safely. They climb on and through the tunnel set into the grass, balance on the tyres and use the tree trunks as stepping stones and seats in the quiet area. They manoeuvre bikes over the ramp, between skittles and make up their own track around the garden. Children use a range of tools and equipment to help with manual dexterity and hand-eye coordination. For example, they dig in

the garden using trowels, use a range of scissors to cut, pens and crayons to make marks and a variety of construction sets and puzzles. Little ones enjoy playing frequently in the outdoor area. They toddle, crawl, push toys, ride bikes and learn to climb safely being well supported by staff. Consequently, they are developing a good range of physical skills. When children are tired they rest comfortably in a cot, buggy or on individual mattresses set out on the floor with staff supervising their safety.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the exceptionally bright and attractive premises which have been sensitively designed to give them safe and stimulating areas for play. Easy access to the toilets enables older children to be independent with their personal hygiene and younger ones are sensitively supported by the staff. Babies safely explore their own room and can easily access a good range of toys that are appropriately stored for them to make many of their own choices. Staff make sure their choices are safe and that the little ones have access to a stimulating range within their reach. Excellent use is made of the outside play area with children of all ages. Due to the design, children play outside in all weathers and throughout the year. They thrive from using such a stimulating space and the extensive range of activities encourages them to explore all areas of learning in the fresh air if they wish. Babies and toddlers make good use of this area and staff supervise them for safety. However, staff have not fully assessed the risks associated with using the whole garden with little children who do not understand boundaries or the safe use of equipment.

Children are relaxed and happy in this child-centred environment. The storage of resources has been carefully considered to enable children to organise their own activities often with the minimum of adult support needed. Consequently, they are becoming very confident and independent. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe. They talk about and practice road safety when out on walks, meet the local policeman and find out how he helps people and get very excited as they watch the fire engine go out on an emergency. Fire drills help them learn how to leave the premises quickly in an emergency and meeting the firefighters and exploring their fire engine helps reinforce the importance of fire safety.

Children's safety and welfare is promoted as all staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues. The written policy is shared with parents and all staff are trained so they understand the appropriate action to take to ensure that children are protected.

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

The provision is good.

Children of all ages arrive happily and quickly settle to play; they are greeted warmly by staff who are well organised to respond to their needs. Children are confident to organise their own play based on their interests. Staff follow children's lead and develop spontaneous learning opportunities well. For example, an interest in flying kites led children to make their own, considering the best designs to make them fly, then testing them out in the garden. Children's learning is enhanced by easy access to a wealth of good quality resources which complement

all areas of learning enabling children to explore and discover spontaneously. They benefit from a good balance of activities that effectively promotes their development and they have first hand experiences to develop curiosity as learners. Outside play is as important as inside and children thrive due to learning in the fresh air.

Children are building positive relationships; they are comfortable in the care of the staff who work positively to meet their needs. They ask for and accept support and comfort happily. For example, a child who hurt a knee is comforted, shares a lap and is given encouragement to get on with activities being reminded that the 'magic plaster' will help it get better. New children are introduced and observed to ensure they receive the support required with plenty of cuddles and company as they join in activities. Children often join with friends in tasks such as working together to build a ramp in the garden or to sort out the pile of wooden bricks to make them safe to climb on. They are learning to work together and cooperate well with sensitive support being given to help resolve issues appropriately whilst maintaining self-esteem. Consequently, children's behaviour is good.

Babies are contented and secure in the care of their key staff. They settle quickly and play happily. Staff supervise them well to make sure all remain actively engaged in play that aids their development in all areas. For example, they share books, explore sounds with musical instruments, sing nursery rhymes, take part in a range of messy play and play 'peek-a-boo' when hiding in the tunnel. Children are sensitively supported as they start to toddle with staff supervising them closely as they learn how to climb, slide and walk up a gentle slope. Praise and encouragement is used well to promote positive behaviour and gentle explanations with distraction and early intervention helps the children learn about acceptable standards of behaviour.

Children are helped to build on their existing skills by a stable and experienced staff team who have a good understanding of 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. A home visit helps staff get to know the children and family. Working with parents they assess the children's stage of development then work together to help all make good progress. The Learning Story records children's achievements with photos and samples of work and parents make valuable contributions as partners in their children's education.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a clear understanding of the way children learn during free play and use this to develop their learning around particular interests. For example, they understand some children learn best in the outdoor environment. They develop this with a range of activities in the water tray, at the blackboard and by encouraging imaginative play in the play house whilst helping with language development and behaviour management. Staff listen to children and have high expectations of what they can do. For example, older children effectively clear fruit peelings and put them in the correct bin understanding they will then be composted. When children ask where to find the gloves and trowels they are told to look in the red box in the blue shed. The children find what they need showing that clear instructions help them to be independent. However, when all the children are grouped together the older ones are not always able to benefit fully from the activity as they are distracted by the younger children.

Children benefit from the commitment to make the transition from the nursery into school as easy as possible. This is enhanced by the positive relationship which has been developed with a teacher from the school who works with the staff one day a week. Teaching methods and assessment are being shared and developed to ensure all children are fully supported as they work towards the Foundation Stage and move into school.

Children are eager and active learners; they are very confident, happy and settled. They are making good progress across all the areas of learning. Children listen to reminders that they need to share and be kind to each other and follow this well resulting in good behaviour. They understand the routine of the day, help to tidy up when asked and cooperate with staff well. However the organisation of snack time does not give children opportunities to be independent and help to serve themselves. Children show excitement at new discoveries, for example, listening to how to fire the cannon balls, trying this out, and then showing friends how to do it with great pleasure. Older children take pride in explaining what they have been doing as they share their Learning Story, look at the pictures and talk about their work. Learning about the wider world is brought alive as they sometimes meet people from abroad and listen to a favourite book being read in a different language. Children are learning to communicate very well. Staff help them remember and recount experiences effectively to consolidate their learning. Most children express their wishes clearly to staff and follow instructions well. Children value books; some books are familiar and they retell the story taking pride in this. They find books to help with craft designs and for information, for example, to find out about bugs. They sometimes enjoy group story time and listen intently following the pictures which are well displayed in the large books. Children frequently make marks with older ones writing their names, they understand writing conveys messages and take 'notes' when on the phone. They enjoy signing favourite songs and most do this very well with staff helping them understand this form of communication.

Children frequently count the number present at the table, then how many boys and girls and how many all together. They count and calculate in games moving forward and back and use dice to relate movement to number. They count flower pots when potting plants and think about how much compost they will need. They make pictograms of their sunflowers and compare height. Children explore capacity as they pour and fill containers in the water and sand trays and estimate and weigh ingredients for cookery. They weigh and measure babies and build and construct thinking about size and shape. Consequently they are learning a good variety of mathematical concepts. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is progressing very well. They look for bugs in the garden, know that toads may be found under the tree trunks and have learnt how to care for a visiting rabbit. Children look after the plants and flowers they have grown making sure they are watered and enjoy picking and eating the tomatoes when ripe. The local community is explored on walks where they look at buildings, meet local people, practise road safety, visit the library or walk in the woods.

Children love being active and are developing a good range of physical skills whilst learning how their body works. They are becoming confident with using a wide range of tools to promote their fine motor skills receiving appropriate support from the staff. Children's creative development is progressing very well. For example, a child decides to make a fairy garden, dresses up and finds a box of construction to use in the garden with friends. They listen to the wind chimes, watch the ribbons fluttering and make up a story around the fairies using their

imaginations well. Children paint freely at easels exploring large movements and mixing colours. They model and make items sometimes looking in books for ideas. A local artist visited and showed the children how she works; they then created their own pictures. A trip to the theatre was enjoyed and the children loved playing with the large boxes with a wealth of learning experiences being developed from the activity.

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

The provision is good.

Children receive a warm welcome and staff know them well. They are treated with equal concern and staff adapt their approach to reflect the children's level of understanding and help them make progress. Staff work closely with parents and carers to ensure that children's needs are able to be met regardless of their ability or culture. Children with a disability or learning difficulty receive sensitive and appropriate support. Staff welcome the help of other professionals involved in the child's care to make sure they can adapt to individual needs and help all children make good progress. Children are learning to manage their own behaviour because they are well supported by the staff and they understand what is expected of them. All staff are positive role models; they are caring and consistently use praise and encouragement freely to promote self-esteem and support the children. Consequently, children's behaviour is good. This positive approach ensures children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are provided with information to help them understand how their child will be looked after and the education that is provided. Children benefit from the flexible settling in procedure, with a home visit, which enables, staff and parents to get to know each other well and helps to establish secure working relationships. Children take a pride in their Learning Story and this is supported as parents take them home to read and contribute their comments and further information. This helps them keep up to date with their children's learning and progress. Staff are readily available to chatter with parents at the start of the day. At lunch time the older children are collected from the nursery door so parents do not routinely meet key workers at this time for an informal feedback on what the children have been doing. Parents comment that they are very happy with the nursery and feel that their children are making very good progress.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's safety and welfare is promoted as they are cared for by staff who have been appropriately vetted and who enjoy their work. They work very effectively as a team. Several staff hold qualifications well above the minimum level and show a commitment to continuing to develop the service they provide by attending courses to keep up to date with current practice. Children are well supported as staff are organised to be ready to greet them and help them engage in rewarding play. Children use the space in the nursery to spread out and play appropriately with older children understanding that the outside area is often available for them to use if they wish. When they are tired there is space for them to rest appropriately. Children are generally grouped well. However, at snack and story time in the large room the younger children are often grouped with the older ones. Sometimes the group is too large and

the age span too great for all the children to benefit fully from the activity and some children lose interest and become restless. This also impacts on the provision of their nursery education. All legally required documentation is in place to support children's health, safety and well-being. However, some policies do not fully guide staff in certain procedures and the operational plan is not available to parents.

The leadership and management is good. The manager is very effective using her skill and understanding to develop and direct the staff team effectively to support the children in all areas of their learning. She attends local and national training events to keep up to date with current practice and uses this well to develop the service for the children and parents. The appraisal system and peer reviews ensure all staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and enables the committee to monitor the effectiveness of the setting. The nursery has been awarded the Norfolk Quality Kite Mark showing their dedication to reviewing and developing their service.

Overall children's needs are met.

#### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable as this is the first inspection since registration.

#### **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.

### **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):

- reconsider the grouping of the children in the large playroom to ensure learning opportunities are appropriate and children's needs are met; this particularly refers to snack and story times (also applies to nursery education)



- review the use of the outside play area for the youngest children and minimise any risks identified
- update policies and procedures to ensure they effectively inform staff and parents of current practice and make the operational plan available to parents.

### **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):

- make improvements as indicated in the care section above.

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)