



## Parkstone Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	508215
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 September 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Marian Bvumburai
<b>Setting Address</b>	Riverside Community Centre, Parkstone Road, Hull, HU6 7DE
<b>Telephone number</b>	804312
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<b>Registered person</b>	Parkstone Pre-School Management Committee
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Parkstone Pre-School opened in 1983 and operates from two rooms in Riverside Community Centre. It is situated about three miles from Hull city centre. A maximum of 35 children may attend at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.15 to 12.15 term-time only. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 39 children aged under five years on roll. Of these, 30 children receive funding for early education. Most of the children come from the local area. The playgroup currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs 10 members of staff, eight of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a recognised qualification. The group receive support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health and well-being is nurtured appropriately, which helps to keep them in good health. All children enjoy regular physical exercise through daily routines. For example, a climbing frame is set up on one end of the spacious hall as part of the daily activities and older children were observed to enjoy playing on it. They have daily access to outdoor activities, such as playing ball games and running races on the grass field. The playgroup provides a variety of clean and well-maintained toys, resources and equipment to facilitate children's play. For example, they have a climbing frame, different sized balls, and a sand and water tray, which all encourage children to use their muscles.

Children are introduced to healthy eating and staff work closely with parents to provide children with healthy snacks and drinks. For example, each child arrives at the playgroup with a bottle of water from home. This is kept on a tray, within children's easy reach. The older children freely go and have a drink from their own bottle as and when they wish, and staff encourage the younger ones to drink regularly. Parents make a weekly contribution towards the cost of snacks and all children, including those with special dietary requirements, are catered for. For example, children were observed having a variety of fruit, including chopped bananas, currants, and grapes served in separate bowls, from which they selected. They had a choice of milk or water for a drink, which they all enjoyed. However, staff do not routinely talk to children about the benefits of exercise and eating healthily to help them understand the importance.

Children are cared for in a clean environment and most of the policies and practice promote hygiene and children's welfare successfully. Children are becoming aware of the importance of practising good personal hygiene. For example, they understand that washing their hands after using the toilet gets rid of germs and prevents them from being ill. They also routinely and independently wash their hands in a bowl of water provided in the room after using paints, after gluing and sticking, and before sitting down to have snacks and drinks. Babies are changed in the toilet area, and staff use disposable gloves and aprons. Policies for excluding sick children are understood by parents, and children who are ill with infectious illnesses do not attend. This helps to minimise the spread of infection and maintains children in good health. However, some of the practice by staff limits children's learning and understanding about personal hygiene and puts them at risk of cross-infection. For example, they provide a bowl of soapy water placed in the main room, which is used by all the children to wash their hands throughout the session without changing it.

Written prior consent is sought and any medication administered to children is recorded. However, the system is not consistently followed as parents' signatures to acknowledge the record of medication administered are not always obtained.

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

The provision is good.

Children's safety is paramount. They are kept safe at all times and are cared for in a child-friendly and suitably safe environment. Security into the building is vigilantly monitored, with effective measures in place. For example, as the session is about to start, doors are opened and a member of staff stands in the reception area. She welcomes children and their parents as well as checking who is coming into the building, after which all doors are securely shut. Staff answer the door in person to any visitors, satisfying themselves of the caller's identity before granting them access into the building. They have attended training on safeguarding children and have good knowledge and understanding of reporting procedures to use if concerned that a child is being harmed. Parents are made aware, through policies, that staff have a duty to act upon any such concerns.

The hall and additional room are spacious and well laid out and potential hazards are effectively addressed. Outdoor play is successfully monitored. For example, during outdoor play staff keep the children on one side of the field. They keep the children in sight and remain outside with them throughout. Children's understanding and responsibility for their own safety is extended by staff through ground rules, discussions, explanations of consequences, and helping them to assess risks for themselves. For example, at the end of registration time staff remind children of the rules by asking what they are allowed and not allowed to do. Children responded by saying they are not allowed to go on the climbing frame in dressing-up clothes because they might fall over and hurt themselves. They routinely queue up and walk out of the hall calmly to access outdoor play, which helps to minimise accidents to them.

Staff are experienced and able to support a mixed group of children, including some who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. They are able to manage a range of behaviours and they provide age-appropriate activities which interest all the children. This keeps children engrossed and contributes to a safe and happy environment.

Children enjoy playing with a wide range of resources and equipment, all of which are safe and maintained in good condition and are of good quality. For example, there are dolls, a sand and water tray, a range of jugs, funnels, cups, aprons, a climbing frame, balls, books, a music machine, puzzles and magnifying glasses.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an environment which is welcoming to them and their parents. For example, the two rooms used are spacious and laid out appropriately for children to move about and engage in activities of their own choosing easily and independently. All children enjoy participating in the varied range of age-appropriate activities provided. For example, younger children as well as the older ones enjoy experimenting with water play and painting using different techniques. Children's work is pinned up on the noticeboards and walls, which makes them feel valued.

Most of the staff are qualified, experienced and have sound understanding of child development and how they learn. The provision operates a key-worker system and written developmental observations are kept about each child. This information is generally used as a planning tool to ensure that individual children's needs are met. Staff have attended some training regarding the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this is used well as a guide for planning activities for the younger children. All the staff contribute to the planning and it is apparent that some have sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and curriculum planning. However, the short-term planning is not always recorded to provide a guide for staff who have weak knowledge to follow. As a result, many learning opportunities for children are missed.

#### Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff provide a range of age-appropriate activities and play opportunities for all children. Adult-led activities are clearly introduced and some staff appropriately challenge children, asking open-ended questions to make sure that they have understood the intended new learning. However, systems for monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning do not always identify areas of weakness. There are many missed opportunities to incorporate other areas of learning in planned activities and daily routines, as well as naturally occurring opportunities. For example, during outdoor play, after running races, staff do not talk to children about how they feel to help them understand the changes in their bodies. Another example is, during snack time, staff do not talk to children about the benefits of eating fruit or encourage them to pour their own drinks and exercise their muscles. As a result, this limits children's progress and achievement in some areas of learning.

Children's personal, social and emotional development are particularly nurtured. They are confident, happy, play well together and are accepting of others. For example, during the 'pretend bus' play, they welcomed children on the bus, readily welcomed others, and made space to accommodate each other.

Communication, language and literacy are promoted. Children freely access books from the book shelf and enjoy looking at them, turning pages correctly and creatively making up their own stories about the pictures. They listen to stories, such as Big Red Book, with enthusiasm and make contributions. Mark making is suitably encouraged; for example, an office is set out with paper and pencils readily available to encourage children to practice writing.

Staff are knowledgeable and ensure that there are activities for all six areas of learning each day. However, the organisation of resources for some of the areas does not encourage children's curiosity as learners. For example, more children do not independently choose to spend time in the mathematical development area. The mathematics skills and vocabulary of more able children are extended through focused activities. There are missed opportunities for all staff to include and extend children's learning in all areas from any activity.

Children enjoy varied activities which promote their physical development whilst having fun. For example, the play ball games on the grass field, and they regularly have access to a climbing frame. They are able to run as group without bumping into each other, controlling their own bodies effectively and ensuring they have enough space for themselves.

Children use their imaginations well. For example, they creatively make up stories as they look at pictures in books or play in the water tray, talking about what they are doing. They are familiar with their community, family and friends. For example, they know the names of their carers and other children in the group. They have many opportunities to learn about the cultures and beliefs of other people, and the provision is attended by a small percentage of children from the ethnic minorities. On a daily basis, there are opportunities for children to experience a variety of medias. For example, they were observed enjoying painting using sponges, marbles, brushes and fruit, some of which was cut in half to demonstrate the different effects.

They are developing sound knowledge and understanding of the world through resources and activities provided, which include a good quantity of those that reflect positive images of other cultures, different races, disability and gender. For example, the welcome poster on the wall reflects many different languages, and other posters show different families of the world. These are sometimes used to inspire discussions; for example, staff talk to children about the country in which the language is spoken and look on the map to see where it is and how far away it is.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff provide a warm and welcoming environment for children and their parents. For example, they welcome children individually and help them to settle into the group. As a result, children quickly develop a sense of belonging and happily separate from their parents. Children are treated as individuals. Staff respect them and promote equality of opportunity. For example, staff ensure that all children are able to participate in any activities of their choice, and adapt these to suit where necessary. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are monitored closely and appropriate help is sought from outside agencies. Staff work closely with the relevant external bodies to promote the needs of all children, learning from other professionals and extending their own knowledge and skills. For example, staff work closely with the Speech Therapist and the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator to put together Individual Learning Plans for identified children. A well-documented file is kept of the children's progress, which is reviewed regularly to ensure the children's changing needs are reflected and addressed.

Children are confident, happy, well behaved and learn to form relationships. They take turns, share and play co-operatively. For example, during snack time children socialise together, enjoying the cafeteria style snack and drink arrangement. They sit down at the table, take some fruit and leave some for others, and pass the bowl to the next person, talking with their friends while eating. Their self-esteem is encouraged through validation and acknowledgement, such as praise and being called by their correct name. They are able to make decisions and confidently adapt play to their own needs. For example, older children playing in the office corner decided to use it as a bus, and a lot of laughter was heard as the children pretended that the bus was running fast around corners and causing them to lose balance. Other children were attracted and quickly decided to go over and join in. The others welcomed them in and made space for each other. Some younger children were observed playing independently, showing interest in the water tray, using different utensils to pour water in to jugs and talking about what they were doing.

Resources and activities provided include a good quantity of those that reflect positive images of other cultures, different races, disability and gender. For example, the welcome poster on the wall reflects many different languages, and other posters show different families of the world. All children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities feel included and positive steps are taken to meet their individual needs. Written policies and procedures are in place and are followed by staff. Good behaviour is encouraged and the staff are good role models.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Staff undertake home visits to meet children who are due to start attending the provision. They meet the parents and children in their own environment and give them written as well as verbal information about the provision. This forms the basis for building a secure relationship and helps children to settle quickly because they find a familiar face on their first day. Thereafter, newsletters keep parents updated and staff make themselves available to discuss issues regularly. However, there is little evidence to show that staff make use of the initial information gathered to build upon as the child progresses. For example, the file which holds this written information about what the child can do or likes is kept in the office, locked in a filing cabinet, away from staff working with the children who need to refer to it. A separate system is set up to record the children's progress, which is not linked to the initial information gathered. As a result, individual progress is unnecessarily delayed for some children while staff assess the children's stage of development over the first few weeks.

Parents are encouraged to contribute to their children's learning by bringing items to support the theme topics. However, insufficient information is provided to parents of funded children about the Foundation Stage and stepping stones. Therefore, children do not benefit from extending their learning into the home. Parents can see their own children's file on request and are informed verbally of changes or incidents that may affect their child's welfare.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff work as team to create a suitable environment for children to learn, play and enjoy themselves. For example, they work together carrying in resources and equipment to set up the room before the children arrive every morning, and visa versa at the end of the session, as the building is used by other users. They undertake planning of activities together and discuss the themes and resources to best deliver the intended learning effectively to children.

Staff demonstrate interest in extending their knowledge by accessing further training. For example, they have all attended child protection, basic food hygiene and relevant first aid training.

The leadership and management are satisfactory. The manager provides sound leadership, supported by policies and procedures. For example, all staff are vetted and she explains their roles and responsibilities to them and a contract is signed. However, although all staff have been vetted, a record of this evidence is not maintained. The other relevant records are

maintained and stored securely and confidentiality is ensured. For example, the system for attendance registration is robust, showing exact times of children's arrival and departure. The children's personal details are stored securely in a locked metal filing cabinet. There is a key-worker system in place, staff know the children well as individuals, and staffing ratios are maintained, which contributes to their well-being. The manager is due to attend training so that she can start to undertake staff appraisals.

Staff work as a team to provide planned activities for all children and to offer them quality experiences which help them to develop in all areas of learning. They meet once a term and have weekly discussions about children's progress and the planning of activities. However, the systems for monitoring and evaluating the teaching and learning do not always identify the areas of weakness. There are many missed opportunities to incorporate other areas of learning in planned activities as well as daily routines.

Parents are notified of planned activities and invited to participate and make contributions. For example, parents and children brought in something red in line with the current colour topic. However, insufficient information is provided regarding Foundation Stage and stepping stones, and there is little evidence to show that they make use of initial information obtained from parents about the child's stage of development. Parents interviewed expressed positive comments about the care of their children and the service they receive. The provision receives support from the local authority.

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

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

At the last inspection, recommendations and actions were issued regarding organisation, safety, positive contribution and being healthy.

These have all been addressed and as a result improved children's safety. There are systems in place for staff to record times of arrival and departure, and record medication administered. Policies and procedures are in place to deal with allegations of abuse against about a member of staff, the complaints procedure includes the regulator's contact details, and an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice are in place. At least 80% of the staff, including the manager, hold relevant qualifications. The playgroup has obtained a copy of the code of practice for special needs for guidance and reference.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection 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

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The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### 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 that hygiene practices are effective, understood by all practitioners and do not put children at cross-infection risk
- ensure that parents' signatures are obtained consistently in acknowledgement of being informed about medication administered to their child.

#### 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 sure that children are effectively taught about the importance of exercise and healthy eating through daily routine and naturally occurring opportunities (also applies to care)
- ensure that information obtained from parents regarding children's attainment on entry is effectively used by all practitioners (also applies to care)
- ensure that systems which monitor the quality of teaching and learning are rigorous and effective
- ensure that parents are provided with sufficient information regarding the Foundation Stage and stepping stones.

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