



Pride of Lions Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109976
Inspection date	07 March 2007
Inspector	Helen Mary Ball
Setting Address	Connaught Road, Worthy Down, Winchester, Hampshire, SO21 2RG
Telephone number	01962 882574
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Registered person	Pride of Lions Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Pride of Lions Playgroup opened in 1977 and operates from a community centre at Worthy Down army base near Winchester. It is registered for 26 children up to five years of age. The setting is open each weekday from 08.45 to 15:15 during term times. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 18 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 15 children receive funding for early education. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and also supports five children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs three members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is one member of staff currently working towards a further qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and welfare is effectively underpinned because staff ensure that accident and medication records are consistently completed and countersigned. Children are protected from the spread of infection because staff ensure that all areas are clean, and children follow good hygiene routines.

Children develop a good range of skills during their physical play. They enjoy their outdoor time when they can access a wide range of equipment which enables them to develop skills such as climbing, pedalling and balancing. Children's fine muscle skills are developed because staff provide ample opportunities for them to use scissors and small construction equipment. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal care and can independently access the toilet and washing facilities.

Children are well nourished because they are offered choices during the café-style snack time. For example, they choose from a selection of fruits and vegetables such as pears, bananas, cherry tomatoes and cucumber. Children learn about healthy eating because staff sit with children and talk about the foods they are eating. This creates a sociable learning experience for children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are very well cared for in a safe and secure, child-centred environment. The premises are welcoming and children's work is displayed on the walls, making them feel valued. Staff are relaxed and friendly and this creates a harmonious atmosphere in which children thrive. Space is organised into designated activity areas, which means that children know where things are kept. They move and play freely without restriction, and benefit from free-flow into the enclosed outside area. Children gain from an exceptional range of accessible toys and equipment which cover all areas of learning.

Children are safe and secure because staff are vigilant and reduce the risk of accidents by carrying out daily risk assessments on the premises. They supervise children closely, without compromising their independence. Children are made aware of dangers through general conversation. For example, they know they must not run indoors. Children are safeguarded because staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures, and give priority to ensuring that children's care and welfare are of paramount importance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children show a real enthusiasm for learning and enjoy their time at the playgroup. They are provided with a wide range of activities which support learning in all areas. Children are relaxed and are building good relationships with staff, often running up for a quick cuddle before

returning to their play. Staff show a genuine love of working with children, and this shines through in their interactions. Staff encourage children's independence, but give sensitive support so that children's confidence and self-esteem is developed. Children benefit from the freedom to initiate their own learning, and staff are skilled at supporting children by providing additional resources. For example, children say that they like playing with tents. Staff immediately provide two tents and as children's play develops, staff hear them talk about hospitals and provide the children with a doctor kit and bandages. Such support empowers children to develop their own play and learning at their own pace.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, and children make sound progress towards the early learning goals. Children are motivated and keen to learn. They are secure, and confidently ask questions and request assistance when it is needed. Children form positive and caring relationships with each other and with staff. They listen and show care for others. For example, they become enthralled in a circle time when they pass around the 'beat baby' taking care to handle it gently and to whisper, reminding each other that it will be frightened if they are too loud.

Children are confident speakers. They initiate conversations with each other and with adults. They are effectively supported by staff who are interested in what they say and do. Children relish story times, when they join in with familiar stories with enthusiasm. For example, they join in with the Bear Hunt and are competent at re-telling and sequencing the story. Staff use children's name cards during daily routines, and children become adept at recognising their own name card when it is held up. Children count confidently to 10, and develop an understanding of adding and subtraction during everyday routines such as at snack time and at registration.

Children show a natural curiosity about technology. They are fascinated by the electronic dog, and show great interest in the inspector's laptop computer. However, the playgroup computer is broken and this does mean that children are not able to develop their IT skills, such as completing a simple program and using the mouse. Children talk about the environment, and show interest in comparing different animal homes during their current topic. Children relish experimenting with paint, and enjoy using sponges to print animal masks. They enjoy the freedom of designing and making art work at the creative table, where children make flowers and other creations using the range of materials available, such as wool, shiny paper, scissors and sellotape.

Curriculum planning ensures that all areas of learning are sufficiently included, and practitioners provide a wide range of activities for children to choose independently. However, some children do not choose to access all activities which means that they do not always take advantage of the whole curriculum. Staff are aware of this, and are currently developing ways to monitor and track children although this has not yet impacted on the quality of learning. Effective systems are in place to observe and record children's starting points and progress towards the early learning goals. However, these are not consistently used to plan children's next steps in learning. This means that planning is not always influenced by children's assessments. During the last term, staff have been proactive in accessing training in the foundation stage, and this

is now influencing their planning and assessment. This means that staff are more confident in supporting children's progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are fully included in the life of the setting. Staff ensure that all resources are accessible to the children, and they are encouraged to make independent choices. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported, and staff provide an environment that makes each child feel welcome. For example, staff display the Nepalese alphabet alongside the English alphabet, so that children can refer to either in their free writing. As a result, children display high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Staff understand the needs of children whose parents are relocated on a regular basis. They work consistently to meet children's individual needs and to provide consistency of care and education. For example, a child who is awaiting transfer to a school and is already five years old is effectively prepared, as the keyworker introduces early reading books and the characters Biff, Chip and Kipper. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are welcome at the setting. The supervisor has attended initial training in supporting children with special needs, and one member of staff is experienced in working with children who have additional needs.

Children are very well behaved. They cooperate with each other, and learn to share and take turns. Staff are good role models, and children follow their excellent example. Children are kind and enjoy helping each other. For example, a child shows another how to type her name on a keyboard, offering praise and encouragement. Children show respect for the environment, and willingly help to tidy toys at the end of the session. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good and this has an important influence on children's wellbeing. Good communication via notice boards and newsletters ensure that parents are continually updated about planning and routines. Parents feel that staff are very approachable and that they gain a good insight into their child's day. Staff liaise closely with parents when children start at the setting, so that children's starting points are identified. They encourage parents to be actively involved in their child's learning, through parent's evenings and the home link book. This helps parents to fully contribute to their child's learning and to provide continuity of care for children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are effectively safeguarded because the setting has robust recruitment and vetting procedures. Children benefit from a dedicated and enthusiastic staff who are committed to continuing with their professional development. Staff plan effective routines which means that children feel secure, and staff are vigilant in supervising children without compromising their independence. Children's play space is well organised and this means that children can move and play without restriction. Staff ensure that resources are accessible to children and this helps children to make independent choices. Children benefit from the freedom to develop

their own learning, and the effective organisation enables children to be confident in choosing and mixing resources, to extend their play activities. Staff check toys and equipment, and ensure that requests are submitted for any repairs or replacements necessary.

Children's health and welfare is effectively underpinned by the careful maintenance of required documentation, and the comprehensive organisational plan.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. A management committee actively supports the newly appointed supervisor, who leads a consistent staff team who are supportive of each other. The supervisor works with her team to plan the curriculum and they have made changes to the structure of the group. This means that children now have a child-led curriculum. The supervisor is aware that this is still an area of development, and has identified that children need to be closely monitored to ensure that they access all areas of learning. Staff carry out detailed observations of children, and the supervisor is now working towards methods to help identify children's next steps in learning.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, an action was raised for the setting to devise and implement a procedure for lost or uncollected children. A policy has been written and is now included in the operational plan. This means that staff are aware of procedures to follow, so that there is a quick and successful outcome for children.

A recommendation was made to develop staff knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. The deputy manager has now attended training in child protection and is currently undergoing advanced child protection training. This means that children are safeguarded.

A recommendation was made to ensure that parents sign the record book each time a member of staff has administered medication. Systems are now in place to ensure that parents countersign the administration of medication. This protects children from the risk of overdose.

A recommendation was made to ensure that a daily risk assessment is carried out on the premises prior to the children arriving, to identify and remove hazards. Staff now carry out and record daily risk assessments. This means that children's safety is assured.

At the last nursery education inspection, a recommendation was made to ensure that children have opportunities to develop an understanding of addition and subtraction. Staff now encourage children's mathematical learning through daily routines, such as at registration time and snack time.

A recommendation was made to inform planning of activities which meet individual needs and extend children's learning related to the early learning goals. Some progress has been made, and the new supervisor has reviewed the planning systems. However, this still remains an area for further improvement.

A recommendation was made to improve information to parents about their child's progress related to the stepping stones. Regular parent meetings are now organised, and parents are invited to contribute to their child's assessment records. This helps parents to be involved in their children's learning.

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.

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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):

- develop further opportunities for children to use ICT resources in working order, to fully support their learning

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):

- develop and implement systems to monitor and evaluate the provision to ensure that children access all areas of the curriculum to enable them to make sound progress towards the early learning goals
- ensure children's assessment records reflect children's capabilities and are used to inform the planning, so that focus activities provide appropriate challenge to children to enable them to make progress through the stepping stones.

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