

# Battle Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109386
<b>Inspection date</b>	09 May 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Liz Margaret Caluori
<b>Setting Address</b>	Asten Fields, Battle, East Sussex, TN33 0HP
<b>Telephone number</b>	01424 774057
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Battle Pre-School Playgroup
<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?

Battle Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1967. It operates from two rooms in purpose-built accommodation in a residential area in the village of Battle, East Sussex. The pre-school serves the local area.

The group is registered to care for 30 children under five years at any one time and there are currently 43 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 19 in receipt of funding for their nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as well as those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days per week during school term times. Morning sessions are from 09:15 to 11:45 and there is a lunch club which runs until 12:15. There is also an afternoon session which runs from 12:15 until 14:45.

There are eight staff working with the children, over half of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Battle Under Fives Association.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a hygienic, comfortable environment. This is maintained by staff who ensure that all areas are clean before children arrive and frequently check the toilets and wipe tables with anti-bacterial spray. Children are extremely well supported to develop good personal hygiene routines. They learn about the risk of germs and routinely wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Children also take part in well presented activities aimed at teaching them about the importance of good dental hygiene. They speak with confidence about the best foods to eat in order to support healthy teeth.

Snack and meal times are extremely relaxed and sociable occasions; children sit at tables and chat happily with their friends and with staff. Packed lunches are brought in from home and parents are generally very supportive of the group's commitment to promoting healthy eating. Children also enjoy a nutritious range of snacks throughout the day. These include toast, chopped cheese, salad and a wide variety of fruit. Children also take part in regular cooking activities and are well supported to understand the importance of food hygiene.

Staff with first aid qualifications are present at all times which ensures that children are appropriately cared for in case of an accident. Similarly procedures relating to the care of sick children and the administration of medicines are appropriate. However, there are minor weaknesses in the maintenance of written records.

Children enjoy very regular opportunities for physical play. When weather permits they have use of a fully enclosed garden. They make good use of this area to take part in running games and to play on the equipment provided. In poor weather physical games are organised in the group rooms. Furniture is moved to make a large space for children to use ride-on toys or to take part in parachute games. They show great enjoyment in their play and are developing very good co-ordination, spatial awareness and confidence.

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

The provision is good.

Children are protected by a range of effective safety precautions in place around the setting including the use of a safety gate to restrict access to the kitchen. In addition, risk assessments are undertaken and regularly reviewed to ensure they remain relevant. Staff are vigilant in their supervision which allows children a very good level of independence. Children move very sensibly around the setting and listen well to any instructions or advice given by staff. They also take part in a range of activities aimed at teaching them about specific issues in order to keep themselves safe such as fire safety.

Children play with a very good range of toys and resources. These are well maintained and suitable for the ages and stages of development of the children attending.

Appropriate procedures are in place to protect children from the risk of fire. Fire fighting equipment is fitted and emergency exits are clearly identified. Emergency evacuations are practised regularly and written records are maintained.

The manager is responsible for co-ordinating child protection issues and is very clear on her responsibilities in this role. All staff attended training and the manager is confident in identifying

any potential signs and symptoms of abuse. She has all the relevant contact details to enable her to make a referral; as a result, children are effectively safeguarded.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very warmly welcomed into the nursery; they enter happily and settle easily. They form very good relationships with staff and with their peers. As a result there is a friendly, warm atmosphere throughout the whole setting.

There are clear but flexible routines in place and these are very well understood by the children. They enjoy a balanced mix of free play and more structured activities. There is a key worker system in place and, at times, children are grouped according to age and developmental ability for activities. However, for much of the day they have the freedom to move around the setting and take part in whichever activities they choose.

Activities are well resourced, attractively presented and appropriately adapted to be accessible to children of all ages. On a typical day they choose from free play activities including puzzles, role play, physical games, construction, and small world play. Children are extremely comfortable in their environment and confidently explore and experiment for themselves.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage and competently assess and monitor children's progress through observations and written records. They competently identify the next step for each child and this information is shared during the weekly staff meetings. This ensures that children's individual needs are clearly understood by all staff and are consistently addressed.

Children are making good progress in all areas of learning. They benefit from good opportunities to learn about a variety of interesting and stimulating subjects. They are keen to take part in activities and ask a lot of interesting questions.

Children are developing a love of books and listen very enthusiastically to the extremely well read stories. They often choose to look at books in their freely chosen play and confidently use story telling language as they look at the pictures and turn the pages. They are constantly involved in a wide range of interesting conversations and are developing very good vocabularies. They are also learning sign language and are able to sign and interpret several words. Children also make good use of the resources available to support their writing and many are able to form recognisable letters.

All children are also making good progress in their mathematical development. They confidently count in excess of 20 and are developing an understanding of mathematical concepts such as addition and subtraction. They regularly practise skills such as sequencing, sorting, matching and counting and use these in everyday situations.

Children are very well supported to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They have regular access to a computer and confidently use simple programs with the support and encouragement of staff. They are also learning about the wider world through a range of interesting topics such as mini-beasts and outer space. They also enthusiastically take part in scientific activities such as planting and growing.

Creatively children are also developing extremely well. They play wonderfully imaginative and complex role play games both in the home corner and using the small world toys. They also enjoy taking part in adult focused drama activities and confidently narrate and act out roles. They have a large repertoire of songs committed to memory and sing very enthusiastically.

There are regular opportunities for children to enjoy arts and crafts. They are provided with a very wide range of materials, although these are stored in boxes and children are restricted to selecting from the items set out by staff. However, they are very well supported by staff to experiment and produce very expressive and individual pieces of art. These are attractively displayed around the setting. Children respond with pride to the praise and recognition they receive.

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

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Their individual personalities and needs are clearly identified and respected within the setting. They are provided with a range of activities and resources aimed at promoting positive images of people from different cultures and religions. These include posters, books and toys. In addition, children make good use of resources such as child-sized crutches, a wheelchair and glasses. These activities are sensitively and appropriately delivered to help children develop and understanding an empathy for people with disabilities.

Children's behaviour is extremely good. They are polite, well mannered and caring. They show a very good understanding of right and wrong and employ a range of strategies to manage their own behaviour. They are becoming skilful negotiators and, as a result, are developing very good social skills. Adults act as very good role models and are good-humoured, calm and consistent when dealing with the children.

The setting has good arrangements in place to care for children with English as an additional language as well as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The staff team have a very positive attitude to meeting the needs of all children.

Partnership with parents is good. They are given very detailed information to help them understand the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum. Those whose children receive funding for their nursery education are kept informed of their child's progress against the Foundation Stage. They attend regular meetings during which they are shown their child's individual profile records. They are also encouraged to inform staff of any achievements their child makes at home so that this progress can also be recorded. The parents of all other children are also invited to attend termly parents evenings although these are less formal. In addition, parents are given a good range of written information about the nursery and have access to all policies and procedures. They are all greeted warmly by staff. Children benefit greatly from these positive relationships.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the setting is generally effective. There is a comprehensive range of written policies and procedures in place although one or two need updating. Similarly, whilst all required records are maintained, there are a few minor inconsistencies in their quality.

Staff ratios are high which results in each child receiving a good amount of adult attention. There are eight members of staff who work with the children of whom five either hold, or are working towards, appropriate childcare qualifications.

Children thrive in the setting as a result of the careful organisation to meet their care, learning and play needs. Space is very well used allowing a large number of activities to take place at the same time. There are two group rooms divided by large double doors. These remain open for most of the day, allowing the children to move around freely. The children also make very good use of the outdoor play area.

Leadership and management is good. The chairperson of the management committee and the manager work closely together and are supported by an extremely strong staff team. This creates a very positive, effective and harmonious environment for children. The procedures in place to recruit staff are entirely appropriate. They are vetted to ensure their suitability and are inducted in all policies and procedures. The setting also has appropriate procedures in place to support volunteers and students on placement.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

Following the last inspection a recommendation was made that the setting increase the information given to parents regarding the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum and the topics being studied. This issue has been very successfully addressed and, as a result, parents are well supported to understand the work that is taking place and the intended benefits to the children. This allows them to support the staff and creates a strong and valuable link between the pre-school and home.

The group were also asked to make repairs to the garden fence, and these have been completed. The recommendation to review risk assessments to include the outdoor area has also been successfully completed. As a result, children are more effectively safe guarded when playing outdoors.

### **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**

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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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):

- review the systems in place to maintain written records to improve consistency and ensure that all policies are up to date

### **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):

- consider storing art and craft materials so that they can be accessed easily by children, allowing them even greater freedom to experiment and express themselves.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)