



## Belton Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 226194  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 26 February 2007  |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Dianne Lynn Sadler  |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | School Lane, Belton, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE12 9TU |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 01530 222570  |
| <b>E-mail</b>                  | additional telephone number 01530 223771                    |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | Belton Pre-School Playgroup                                 |
| <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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Belton Playgroup opened in 1984. It operates from the Village Hall in Belton, which is situated in the north of Leicestershire. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open Monday to Thursday from 08:45 to 12:15 term time only. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 21 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, eight children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area.

The playgroup employs five members of staff. Of these, one holds an appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for appropriately in a clean, tidy environment. They stay healthy and thrive because staff follow effective policies and procedures which reflect current environmental health and hygiene guidelines. Procedures, such as staff wearing gloves when dealing with bodily fluids and using anti-bacterial spray on tables help reduce the risk of infection. Children are encouraged to learn about personal hygiene through the daily routine. For example, children collect a tissue, wipe their own noses and put the tissues in a bin. Children receive appropriate care when they have an accident or become ill to maintain their good health. The playgroup has obtained all necessary permissions from parents for its practice.

All children benefit from a varied range of healthy, nutritious snacks. They decide when to have a snack at the snack-bar which is open for most of the session. They enjoy eating apples, oranges and grapes and a choice of drinks. This ensures children are well nourished. Children can also help themselves to a drink throughout the session from a water dispenser. The dietary needs of children are discussed and recorded well, ensuring that children have their needs met appropriately.

All children are learning about the importance of a healthy lifestyle. They benefit from accessing fresh air and well planned physical play experiences, both indoors and outdoors at every session. Children enjoy playing in a stimulating outdoor play area where they access a sandpit, bikes and wheeled toys. Children are able to rest and be active according to their needs. For example, they can rest on cushions in the book corner and quietly read a book or select a puzzle.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for appropriately in a welcoming and safe indoor and outdoor environment, which helps them feel secure and comfortable. Children move around with ease which helps them to settle and feel confident. A clear and concise risk assessment is carried out on the premises and equipment on a regular basis by senior staff and adequately recorded. All hazards have been identified and minimised, protecting children from the risk of accidental injury. Effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure children are kept safe. For instance, children are well supervised at all times and if a different adult is to collect a child, some parents use a password to identify the person.

Children use good quality, suitable and safe equipment and play resources, appropriate to meet their different needs. Resources are easily accessed by children, for instance books are displayed on a low-level table, therefore developing their independence. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe. They practise the emergency evacuation procedure every half term and help to tidy away the toys and resources.

Children are sufficiently protected from harm because staff have a satisfactory understanding of their role in child protection. Staff are aware of what action they are required to take if they

had a child protection concern about any of the children. However, children's welfare is compromised as the written child protection policy is insufficient. It does not include a procedure to be followed if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well and are confident in the setting due to the sufficient support from caring staff. Children enjoy their time in the playgroup and benefit from positive relationships with both adults and each other. They benefit from a stimulating and interesting environment in which they are happy, content and secure. Children benefit from seeing some of their work displayed and proudly take their work home to their parents, which successfully promotes their self-esteem and confidence. Children are involved in a wide range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development and learning. They enjoy making boats out of sponges and cardboard and play imaginatively in the role play area pretending to have a picnic and watering plastic flowers. Children are encouraged to choose what they want to do and confidently move from activity to activity. As a result their independence is being sufficiently promoted.

#### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and a clear understanding of how young children learn and progress. Consequently, all children are included and make sufficient progress towards the early learning goals. Staff plan a wide range of activities under each area of learning. Planning links clearly to the stepping stones, gives sufficient guidance to the staff and meets the individual needs of children. Staff have a clear idea of the learning intentions for children, which matches the programme of activities. Therefore children extend their learning and are provided with sufficient challenge. However, although there are plans to evaluate activities, focusing on learning outcomes for children, this is not effective in practice, which may compromise children's learning and progress they make.

The assessment procedure is sufficient. Staff record observations they make on children's development and transfer this information to assessment records. These are completed every half term and used at planning meetings to assess children development and plan their next steps in learning. Staff know the children well and have a good understanding of their development needs and provide sufficient challenge to help them progress. However, assessment records are not effective in practice, none are completed, which may compromise the progress children are making. The assessment records are available to parents.

Staff use a good range of teaching methods to maintain children's interest. Staff know that the children learn better when they are happy and relaxed, they ensure children are well settled before they concentrate on their learning. Staff sit with children, ask questions and offer support when needed. Staff effectively help raise children's awareness of the community and the wider world and there are a good range of resources to promote this. Children are motivated and keen to learn. They receive appropriate challenges from staff who understand their needs and ensure they make sufficient progress.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet staff on arrival. Children are interested and engaged in their play as they select and carry out activities. They assume responsibility for their personal care. Their independence is being developed by choosing when to access the snack-bar, pouring their own drinks and clearing away afterwards. Children behave well, responding positively to the boundaries set. Children can speak clearly and confidently, sharing their experiences, while others are able to make themselves understood through their actions. Children benefit from seeing print in the environment and show a good interest in books. They handle them appropriately and enjoy exploring story-sacks with the staff, which contain resources and cards relating to nursery rhymes such as 'Jack and Jill'. Children recognise their names and are able to link sounds to letters. For instance, they identify letters of their name when playing with the play-doh. Children are developing good writing skills and know how to form letters correctly, for instance, they label the flags on their boats with their names. However, there are limited opportunities for children to write for a purpose.

Children benefit from seeing numbers displayed in the environment, however there are limited opportunities for children to use numbers for counting. Children demonstrate that they have a good understanding of shape, size and measure. Children explore 'big' and 'small' when making boats out of sponges and discuss concepts of heavy and light when they place them in water. Children recreate simple patterns when playing in the sand-tray. However, children are not using calculation in planned activities or spontaneous situations on a regular basis, which compromises their learning in this area. Children develop an initial sense of time and place. They discuss what activities they are going to select tomorrow and the pancakes they made last Tuesday. Children observe and identify features in the place they live and the natural world when they go on a nature walk and visit the local school. Children are learning about everyday technology, for instance they develop their skills using children's laptops and use everyday items such as scales and magnifying glasses. However access to these resources are limited.

Effective use of the indoor and outdoor space, helps children develop their physical skills. Children move confidently, when negotiating their way around the main room and when playing outdoors. Children develop their skills when riding wheeled toys outdoors and balancing on beams and using the climbing apparatus indoors. Children use one-handed tools competently as they paint their pictures and use scissors for cutting. Children take part in action songs and enjoy exploring different musical instruments. They play instruments fast, slow, loud and quietly, linked to stories, which shows good control. Children are able to express themselves freely through creative activities. They make boats made out of sponges and play imaginatively with the play-doh. Children are able to explore the textures of different media such as corn flour, sand and water and create three dimensional shapes, such as a Chinese dragon made of boxes and sheets. Children respond to what they taste when eating foods linked to Chinese New Year and when exploring dry sand.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Effective relationships with parents ensure the staff know the children well. Children receive appropriate care relevant to their individual needs. Parents share information about children's

care needs, preferences and cultural and religious needs, by completing a registration form on admission and using a parents information book. This ensures children receive care consistent with home and are fully included in the setting. Parents receive an informative information pack and regular newsletters. This includes information about all policies in place. However, the complaints policy has not been updated in line with new regulations, which compromises children's welfare.

Clear, concise policies work effectively in practice to promote equal opportunities for all children. They enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other, and feel a sense of belonging, which helps them settle and feel confident. Children are warmly welcomed in the setting and all children are valued and respected as individuals. There are appropriate plans to support children with disabilities and learning difficulties. Staff foster close relationships with parents and other professionals to ensure children's needs are understood and met adequately.

Children are being made aware of the wider society. Staff ensure that the resources positively represent the children who attend as well as the wider world. Children benefit from making a Chinese dragon out of boxes and materials such as sheets to celebrate Chinese New Year. Children also join in celebrations for Pancake Day and Mothers Day.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is being developed well by staff with the use of praise and encouragement throughout the day. This is further promoted by children's work being valued. For instance, when they complete a piece of work they place it in their own individual trays to take home. Children are learning to understand responsible behaviour. They take turns, share play resources and show respect for others. This helps to ensure children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The behaviour policy is well written, understood by staff and effective in practice. Therefore, children understand the rules and boundaries and their behaviour is managed appropriately, promoting their welfare and development.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They are actively encouraged to become involved in their child's learning in meaningful ways which helps children progress and enables them to make a positive contribution. For example, parents receive written activity sheets detailing how they can continue the themes at home and children bring into the setting different coloured vegetables from home for the theme of 'vegetables'. Parents are adequately informed about their children's progress and achievements both verbally and by being encouraged to look at the assessment records. Parents are able to verbally share information with staff about their child's development observed at home. However, assessment records do not show this contribution. Therefore the next steps planned for children may not be appropriate. Parents receive comprehensive information about the educational programme provided and the six areas of learning. They know of the themes planned for children and activities offered each day. Therefore children's development in all six areas of learning is fully supported at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Children are cared for by staff who are experienced and committed to their well-being. Staff provide a stimulating and interesting environment conducive to care, teaching and learning. However, the recruitment and vetting procedures are not sufficient. They do not include the

checking of staff's medical status and there is no system to check that staff remain suitable to care for children. The level of qualified staff working with children is also inadequate. This compromises children's welfare. Appropriate induction procedures ensures staff are fully aware of nursery policies and procedures and aim for a good standard of care for children. Records and documentation in place are available for inspection and shared with staff and parents.

There is a commitment to improving staff's knowledge and practice, and training courses are being attended. This helps to broaden children's experiences and contributes to the quality of care provided. The leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff are motivated and have developed a supportive team approach, aiming for good quality education for all children. The manager offers sufficient guidance to less experienced staff and is committed to improving nursery education. The monitoring and evaluation of the nursery education provision and quality of teaching is adequate. There are systems in place for the manager to observe and improve practice and monitor children's learning. However, not all strengths and weaknesses have been identified and not all systems in place are effective in the absence of the manager.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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

#### **Care.**

At the last inspection the playgroup agreed to develop an action plan that sets out how staff training and qualification requirements will be met with regard to babies and children aged under two years. Also to meet any recommendations made by the Environmental Health Officer with regards to nappy changing facilities and baby feeding arrangements. Significant improvement has been made. Babies and children under two years are no longer cared for in the setting and there are separate nappy changing facilities, inspected by the environmental health department for children still wearing nappies. This ensures the good health and well-being of all children.

The playgroup also agreed to identify a nominated contact person from the committee and ensure that all adults providing day care are suitable to do so and have submitted to a vetting procedure, including a criminal records check. Limited improvement has been made. There is now a named contact person from the committee, but the vetting procedures are still inadequate. Criminal record checks have been completed for all staff and committee members, but the staff's medical status is not checked and there is no system to check that staff remain suitable to care for children. This compromises children's safety and welfare.

The playgroup agreed to make sure that the daily record includes the hours of attendance and keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children. Significant improvement has been made with all these records now in place and effective in practice, which ensures the safety and well-being of children.

#### **Nursery Education.**

At the last inspection the playgroup agreed to provide more opportunities for older, more able children to write their names and learn how to form letters correctly. Good progress has been

made. Children now practice forming letters and writing their names at every session and write their names to label their work. This ensures children make good progress in this area of learning.

The playgroup also agreed to extend the range of multi-cultural, maths, role play and information and communication technology resources. Significant improvement has been made. Resources in all these areas have been developed and there are plans to develop them further. This helps to ensure children make sufficient progress in these areas of learning.

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

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received two complaints relating to National Standard :1 Suitable person, National Standard :2 Organisation and National Standard :14 documentation. This involved allegations about the care of babies and young children, staff ratios and qualifications and the suitability of committee members. Ofsted carried out an investigation on 17 February 2004 and an action was raised to ensure space and resources met the needs of babies and young children. The provider took appropriate action to address the concern.

A second investigation was carried out by Ofsted on 8 May 2006 and two actions were raised to ensure all adults are suitable to care for children and to ensure Ofsted is notified of changes to the registered body. The provider took action and remains qualified for registration.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- review and update the child protection policy and ensure it includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff
- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that staff are suitable to work with children
- make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint in line with new regulations



- provide an action plan that details how at least half of all childcare staff hold a level 2 qualification.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

### **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):

- ensure assessment records are complete and show contribution from parents
- further improve planning to include evaluation of activities focusing on learning outcomes for children
- improve opportunities for children to write for a purpose and access information and communication technology resources
- further improve opportunities for children to use numbers for counting and to further develop an understanding of calculation.

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)