



Little Eaton Playschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206808
Inspection date	19 January 2007
Inspector	Justine Ellaway
Setting Address	United Reformed Chapel, Alfreton Road, Little Eaton, Derby, Derbyshire, DE21 5DF
Telephone number	07887 990783
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Registered person	The Little Eaton Playschool
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Little Eaton Playschool opened in 1969. It operates from the United Reformed Chapel in Little Eaton, Derbyshire. A maximum of 18 children may attend the playschool at any one time. The playschool is open during term time from 09:30 to 12:00 Monday, 09:00 to 11:30 Tuesday to Friday and 12:30 to 15:00 Wednesday and Thursday. The setting also runs a lunch club during term time on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday between 11:30 and 12:30.

There are currently thirty-five children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, eighteen children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local community.

The playgroup employs six members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy daily opportunities to be active and engage in physical play. If it is dry they go outside and play on the sit and ride toys and the slide in the outdoor play area. There is lots of free space for them to run around. Large equipment is set up inside if it is raining. Children are beginning to develop control and co-ordination and are learning to climb the steps on the slide. They participate in activities that encourage them to move in different ways, and encourage other skills such as balance. A fortnightly visit from a dance teacher means that children develop different skills as they use actions to music. Children ably use small equipment and have regular access to cutlery, pencils and scissors. As a result they develop their small muscle skills. Children sometimes benefit from interaction from staff when playing outside. However, more able children are not always challenged during physical play.

Children are well nourished. Healthy eating is promoted and children enjoy a varied snack including fruit, bread sticks and cheese and crackers. Children participate in the preparation of the snack which promotes a sense of ownership. They discuss healthy foods and participate in activities looking at foods that are good for you. Children's independence is not always encouraged at snack times. Although they choose where they sit and sometimes assist in giving out the bowls, staff give out cups and pour drinks.

There are appropriate procedures in place to promote children's good health with relation to hygiene. Staff use anti-bacterial spray to clean down the tables before snack and after messy play. They wash the cups after snack and also use sterilising fluid. Children are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times and understand why they are doing this, they state that they might have germs on their hands. Children receive appropriate care when they have an accident as all staff have an up to date first aid qualification. Children's independence is not fully encouraged in terms of blowing their own nose. On occasion the floor mats are not clean and as a result children do not play on them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy to enter the playschool. They feel secure as staff greet them when they arrive. The room is fairly well laid out with separate areas, for example, a home corner and a book corner. On occasion the layout of the tables and chairs does not fully maximise children's ability to extend their games. For example, two empty tables in the room leave a small area for children to dress up and engage in role play. The corridor is used effectively to provide a separate space for children to play and fully engage in messy play.

The playschool has a varied range of toys and resources with a satisfactory range available during the session. Staff plan what resources will be put out each day to ensure they are varied. Children have a choice about what they play with which promotes their decision-making skills, although on occasion they wait for toys to be brought out. Toys and equipment are checked

by staff as they lay them out and put them away, to ensure that they are safe for children to use.

Children are cared for in a secure and safe indoor environment. Staff carry out a daily visual check of the premises as they arrive. The main door has a high bolt to prevent children escaping. A stair gate is used to prevent children leaving during the time when parents are dropping them off. Staff are very vigilant about other users of the shared building to promote children's safety and ensure that children do not have contact with any adults who have not had appropriate checks. A list has been devised of all cleaning products so that staff have information to hand in the event of an emergency.

Children's safety is promoted when they are outdoors. Although the playschool has not yet established written procedures for outings, a risk assessment is undertaken prior to any outings and high ratios are followed. The gate from the outdoor area to the road is padlocked when children play outside, a staff member supervises this area at all times.

Children have some opportunities to learn to keep themselves safe. An activity on road safety included a visit from the local lollipop person. There is a 'Keeping Safe' box which contains things such as a cycle helmet for discussion with children. Staff sometimes remind children of the rules inside to promote their safety.

Children are protected because staff clearly understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Staff are proactive in recording any concerns and discussing with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter the setting happily and enjoy coming to the playschool. They are given good support to settle and separate from their carer. Children's self-esteem is encouraged because staff talk to children in a friendly manner. They are comfortable in approaching and talking to staff. Children are involved in a satisfactory range of activities. The daily routine includes a craft and physical activity along with free play, a story and singing. Children do baking each week as part of their snack preparation, along with regular painting activities. Staff have been on training on the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this is starting to be implemented in the setting.

Children move freely and easily around the setting. They are comfortable in joining activities and choosing what they play with.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff know how children progress through the Foundation Stage. They are not as familiar with some of the areas of learning, for example, knowledge and understanding of the world. Staff recognise this and have recently attended a workshop on one of the areas of learning to improve their knowledge. The effectiveness of planning for all children is satisfactory. The planning covers all areas of learning and is clear

and easy to understand. All staff know where it is and regularly refer to it during the session. They take it in turns to do the planning developing ownership and understanding. The long term planning shows at a glance how many times aspects are covered during the year and that there is equal coverage of all aspects. Differentiation is usually shown in the planning for the early stages of the Foundation Stage. Challenge is not always identified in the planning for more able and older children and it relies on staff to present challenge through their questioning, which they sometimes do.

There are suitable systems in place to monitor children's progress and identify their next steps. All staff have organised files for their key children. Staff make regular observations on children. Children's files are not fully effective as they are not currently up to date, with gaps in children's progress. However, staff are able to say where children are at in terms of their development. Staff employ suitable methods to help children progress, with appropriate questions to stimulate their learning and development. The introduction to activities and routines can sometimes inhibit children's ability to participate fully, for example, expectations are not always made clear and as a result children sometimes become restless or interrupt a discussion.

The use of time and resources is satisfactory. There are a varied range of resources available and staff plan what they will need on the weekly plan to meet each activity and area of learning. Resources are not always laid out prior to the start of the session and staff are getting them out as the children wait after circle time. As a result it sometimes takes a while to engage children in an activity.

Children follow instructions when given and show an interest in activities. Children show concern for others, one child tells a staff member that another child is crying as she has bumped her head and shows concern for her whilst she is upset. A three year old moves chairs without request when another younger child becomes upset because he wanted that particular chair.

Children are confident to approach staff and ask them for things. For example, a child reminds a staff member that he did a picture, when she has given them out and not given him his. Children play together during the session, several children play in the home corner, sharing the toys. Children understand the values and codes of behaviour when they are consistently reminded. For example, on hearing a particular piece of music they begin tidying away and remind others 'it is time to tidy away'. Children ably get changed into dressing-up clothes. They choose toys and resources throughout the session and go to the toilet independently. Children have opportunities to learn about other cultures and beliefs through activities looking at different festivals.

Children talk frequently to others and are keen to contribute to discussions. They are beginning to take turns in speaking. They readily use language in the home corner when making up their own games. Children are beginning to recognise certain letters, some children recognise the letter their name begins with. Activities present some opportunities for children to develop an understanding of this. Children enjoy listening to stories and are beginning to maintain their attention so they can listen to the whole story. Books are attractively displayed in a permanent place in the corner of the room, however they are not always used independently by children. There is a regular mark making area available, however not many children use it independently.

Children do not frequently have opportunities to mark make in other areas, for example, the home corner.

Children ably count by rote, more able children can count beyond ten. Although lots of counting occurs during the daily routine, more able children are not sufficiently challenged. Children have opportunities to learn about calculation as they regularly sing songs such as 'three little men in a flying saucer'. Opportunities are not always captured during the daily routine, for example, at snack time. Children have sufficient opportunities to learn about shape, space and measure. Staff regularly discuss mathematical language with the children, for example, equal, higher, lower, heavier, lighter. Children have opportunities to learn about basic shapes.

Children have regular opportunities to investigate different textures in the messy tray and look at living objects during planting activities and looking at insects. Children enjoy building with blocks and have some opportunities to use junk modelling materials. However there are limited opportunities for children to do free designing and making. Staff talk to children about different places, for example, a staff member asks children where they would like to travel to on a plane. Children regularly play on the computer, very ably control the mouse and understand how to use the programme. They do not have lots of opportunities to use other programmable toys. Children talk about things in their own lives, for example, what they did at the weekend, when they went on holiday. As a result they begin to develop an understanding of a sense of time. Children get involved in things happening in the local community, staff work with the children to do a float for the carnival. They visit places of local interest and community facilities, including a farm and the library bus.

Children have lots of opportunities to look at colours and colour mixing, they recognise common colours. Children enjoy musical instruments and are able to play them quietly and loudly. Children enjoy dressing-up and playing in the home corner. They pretend to be different characters. On occasion musical activities do not achieve the intended outcome, because the music choice does not fully support children playing instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are comfortable in the setting. Staff greet children as they arrive and talk to them to make them feel welcome and a part of the group. A staff member greets a child and says 'look at your bobbles, aren't they lovely'. There is a useful written settling-in policy which is available to parents. Staff spend time getting to know the children. A younger child states that she has been crying previously at playschool, Person in Charge says 'you weren't crying today, I think that deserves a sticker'. Staff have regular discussions with parents and are proactive in talking to parents about any issues. Staff have a motto that they say regularly to children when they are upset, that 'nothing is a problem at playgroup, we can sort it out'. As a result children are soon comforted.

Children with special needs receive appropriate support as there is a designated member of staff who is knowledgeable about special needs issues. However, the written policy is brief and does not detail what assistance will be given to children.

Children understand responsible behaviour. Staff use appropriate methods to manage behaviour. They are calm and effective role models, going over to talk to the children and remind them when something is not appropriate. Staff usually use praise and encouragement to promote good behaviour and use stickers to reward good behaviour. Children are aware of the rules. Staff play a music tape to signify it is tidying away time and the children help to tidy away. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children become aware of wider society through a satisfactory range of resources and the celebration of different festivals. All children are encouraged to play with all resources, boys and girls dress up in the various outfits. However, a broad range of resources are sometimes not available during sessions.

Children receive consistent and appropriate care. There is a useful information brochure for parents including a summary of relevant policies. Parents receive regular newsletters. Staff sometimes write comments in children's books about what they have been doing during the session which parents can look at any time. Parents are encouraged to get involved in the playgroup. Staff hold events for parents to join their children, for example, an open day with pancake race. There is a regular verbal exchange of information with parents, staff talk to them daily and are always available at the end of the session to talk to them. Children take home library books that they can read with their parents.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive useful information about the foundation stage in the welcome brochure which is clear and easy to understand. Staff have provided an opportunity for parents to meet and discuss children's progress, they have yet to develop other ways to engage parents and involve them in identifying children's starting points.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting demonstrates a commitment to improve to benefit the children who attend. The Manager keeps a note of any areas she notes for review or change. The staff are very receptive to feedback and generate suggestions for change during a discussion on how certain elements of the routine are working.

The staff team are committed, caring and friendly. They are very supportive of each other during the session, which positively impacts on the care provided for children. Staff deployment and organisation mostly contribute to children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Staff are usually sitting and playing with the children during the session although on occasion there is no staff member in the messy play area and children do not fully engage in play. When there is a staff member present children engage, are calm and play purposefully. Staff are always involved in tasks or working with children during the session. Sometimes the organisation of staff and resources means that children wait whilst things are set up and during the transition between activities.

Most of the relevant policies and procedures in place. They are clear, although there are a few minor things that do not reflect practice. All of the appropriate information is gathered on the

children who attend to ensure their needs are met. There are appropriate procedures in place for ensuring adults are suitable to work with children. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of funded nursery education is satisfactory. There is clear leadership of the setting and the Person in Charge involves the staff and empowers them. As a result staff are keen to get involved. Regular assessment takes place of the setting's strengths and weaknesses, specifically in relation to the care. This is not yet fully developed for the Nursery Education along with systems for monitoring the effectiveness of it. However, the Person in Charge demonstrates a positive commitment to improvement and seeks support from the Local Authority.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to ensure that the operational plan contains the relevant information and is available to parents; request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment; also, to ensure that the complaints procedure gives contact details for Ofsted.

The operational plan has been updated and contains most of the relevant information required to run the setting effectively and positively impact on the care provided for children. Written permission has been requested from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment to ensure children's health needs are met in the event of an emergency. The complaints procedure has been updated to give contact details for Ofsted, to promote consistency of care.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to improve the amount of detail in short term planning so that all staff are clear about exactly what children are intended to learn from the activities; to raise expectations of what the older and more-able children can achieve and improve understanding of how to challenge and extend children's learning through the use of age-appropriate activities and skilful questioning; also to provide daily activities related to mathematics, language and literacy in particular which will support the progressive development of maths skills related to simple addition and subtraction and problem solving, and in literacy of reading and writing skills appropriate to the children's ability.

The short term planning has been developed and includes relevant detail about the activities. Staff refer to this regularly during the session and are usually clear about what the learning intention is. Appropriate challenge is sometimes provided for older and more able children through activities and questioning by staff. Regular activities are provided to promote children's learning in relation to mathematics, language and literacy. As a result children make satisfactory progress through the Foundation Stage.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 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 the policies and procedures reflect practice within the setting and current guidance
- ensure that the deployment and organisation of staff fully supports children's care, learning and play
- expand on ways to encourage children's independence during the session, for example, during snack time

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 that children's development records are fully up to date and reflect what children can do
- develop current planning systems to ensure that all activities are differentiated and that more able children are provided with sufficient challenge
- develop ways to provide parents with information about children's progress and involve them in children's learning

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