



Smalley Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206856
Inspection date	07 February 2007
Inspector	Jennifer Getty
Setting Address	Church Hall, Main Road, Smalley, Ilkeston, Derbyshire, DE7 6EF
Telephone number	01332 781283
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Registered person	Smalley Pre-School Playgroup
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 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?

Smalley Pre-school Playgroup operates from the church hall in the village of Smalley in Derbyshire. There is a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school serves the local area and surrounding villages.

The setting opens five days a week during school term only. Sessions are from 09:00 until 11:45.

There are currently 40 children from two-and-a-half to four-and-a-half years on roll. This includes 15 children who receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The setting employs four full-time staff and one part-time member of staff who work with the children. All of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The setting receives support from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The pre-school is managed by a parental committee, who delegate day to day responsibility to the staff.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted as the setting takes positive steps to help children learn about healthy living. There are comprehensive systems in place to prevent the spread of infection if children become ill. Children learn good hygiene procedures such as washing hands after using the toilet, before eating and after messy play, however, the systems are not robust as children use the same soapy water in a bowl which is not changed frequently. There are sufficient staff who hold first aid qualifications and there are good systems in place to protect children if they require emergency treatment.

Children are well nourished. They enjoy a healthy range of snacks, for example, fruit and yoghurts. Staff encourage children to develop their independence at snack time because children choose their drink and can access food themselves. Older children are able to pour their own drinks. The setting is able to meet children's individual dietary needs because they receive appropriate information from parents about allergies and food preferences. There are regular opportunities for children to learn about healthy lifestyles and their bodily needs, for example, they learn about how their bodies need sleep through discussion arising from the bedroom home corner activity. The dentist area allows children to learn about dental hygiene and staff talk with children about their hearts beating faster after physical exercise. Younger children are learning to be independent and access activities themselves. They are developing a good awareness of their own needs, for example, recognising when they need to go to the toilet and putting hats and coats on to go outside.

Children have frequent opportunities to enjoy physical exercise. The setting provides a substantial range of activities which promote children's physical development. They are gaining good independence skills and confidence as they choose from the vast range of equipment and resources outside. Planning for outdoor play covers all areas of learning in the Foundation Stage as well as meeting the needs of the younger children. Older children demonstrate a good awareness of space and the needs of others as they move quickly on the large cars and tractors. They ask politely if they need to pass someone. Children enjoy the construction area outside. They put on the goggles and hard hat as they take the toolkit to the gate and pretend to fix it. There is appropriate equipment such as tents, tunnels and an obstacle course which enable children to develop important skills, for example, balancing, control and coordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The setting provides a warm and welcoming environment in which children can feel safe and secure. The space is well-organised to promote children's safety and learning. There are many activities available to children as they arrive and there is space for children to relax in the book

corner. Equipment and resources are suitable for all ages and stages in development and checked on a daily basis. Children's safety is further promoted because the doors are locked and the organisation of the rooms ensures that children are always supervised. There are excellent risk assessments carried out on a daily basis which include the checking of the premises, fire equipment and toys. Staff practise the emergency evacuation procedure regularly to ensure children are aware of how to protect themselves in case of emergency. There are suitable policies in place to protect children if they are lost or uncollected which include contacting the appropriate authorities. Children learn about safety rules on outings as well as learning how to use small equipment safely indoors. There is a detailed child protection policy in place which includes the current procedures. The coordinator has a secure knowledge of signs of abuse and procedures to be followed and all staff are made aware of their responsibilities. This ensures that children are well protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are enthusiastic and self-assured in the welcoming environment. All children are developing a strong sense of belonging as they find their name labels when they arrive so they can mark their presence on the register. They then enjoy putting their name in the post box. Children are forming good relationships with staff and each other. Staff promote children's self-esteem through lots of encouragement and praise and children respond well. They proudly show others their achievements, for example, younger children show staff and their peers the cakes they have made with dough. Resources and activities are easily accessible to children allowing them to develop good independence and decision-making skills. Children are involved in a wide range of planned activities which support their development. Play opportunities are carefully planned and set out to maximise children's learning. There are opportunities for children to lead activities enabling them to use their imagination to explore and experiment. For example, toy animals are set out with different materials such as sand and dry spaghetti. Children enjoy exploring the different textures and using their imagination to create interesting play. Younger children's learning is promoted through activities in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff have a sound understanding of younger children's needs and stages of development and are constantly developing their knowledge and skills in this area.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching is rooted in a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and staff use the stepping stones effectively in the planning of activities. Realistic expectations of children and good individual knowledge help them to consolidate children's learning before moving on to the next stage. There is clear and effective planning which covers all areas of learning as well as referring to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. This ensures that children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Focused activities have clear objectives and are appropriate to all ages and stages in development, however, they are not always clearly evaluated in order to further promote children's next steps of learning. There is a good range of teaching methods to help children progress. Children's starting points are identified and recorded when they arrive at the setting and are used to further children's development. Staff use discussion time effectively and use open-ended questions to help children express their ideas. They generally offer good support during activities to ensure children are provided with appropriate challenge although this is not consistently

applied by all staff. There is an effective key worker system which offers children good support and a sense of belonging. It also enables staff to monitor and assess children's learning and progress. Purposeful observations are used well to inform planning and record progress. Assessment records are available for parents to see and scrapbooks are made to record children's achievements.

Children enjoy their time in the setting and have an excellent attitude towards learning. They are motivated and spend their time purposefully. Older children concentrate well and persevere with tasks showing high levels of confidence and self-esteem. They are building positive relationships and show respect for each other, for example, listening to what each person has to say during registration. Consistent support and praise encourages them to become increasingly independent, to learn what they can do and when to ask for help. Older children have fun listening to stories and helping staff read stories to younger children, joining in with words and actions. They have easy access to the books which encourages them to read for pleasure. There are good opportunities for children to learn about sounds and letters and they enjoy recognising the rhyming words in the story of the three little pigs. The children find their name labels in the morning and at snack time as well as checking to see if their name is on the list for using the computer. They are beginning to recognise that print carries meaning. There are suitable resources available for children to practise mark-making, for example, pens, crayons and magnetic boards with letters. Good use of mathematical language during play builds children's confidence in counting and they happily use it in daily situations such as counting the number of children at register time. Staff encourage children to develop their skills during activities. For example, when using building blocks they compare the shapes of the blocks to pictures of buildings and use mathematical language to discuss which blocks are suitable for making a tower.

Children make good use of the well-organised activities to explore and investigate different textures and material such as paint, rice, spaghetti, sand and water. Younger children enjoy exploring the textures of cones, fabric and feathers, discovering what they feel like to touch and what sounds they can make. There are opportunities for children to investigate their local environment such as looking for insects with magnifying glasses. Children are able to choose appropriate tools and resources when constructing objects. For example, when creating a junk model children decide how to join the pieces together. They carefully use the correct equipment and persevere if that does not work, investigating other methods. They are confident using equipment safely such as scissors, glue sticks and writing materials. Children are therefore developing good decision-making skills, are gaining confidence to try new things and proudly show their robot constructions to staff. There is regular access to technological equipment such as the computer, cash register and telephone. Staff support at the computer ensures children gain from the learning experience. Children enjoy talking about past experiences and most are able to express and communicate their thoughts and feelings clearly.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Information about children's culture, religion, likes and dislikes is gathered as children start at the setting ensuring their individual needs are met. A commitment to inclusion and promoting

children's positive attitudes towards equality is evident in all policies and practice, including the admissions policy. Children feel valued and secure as they are all treated with equal concern. Resources reflect diversity in society, for example, imaginative play equipment which includes multi-cultural food, dressing up clothes, dolls and books which depict people with disabilities. Children enjoy playing in the well-organised home corner which links with the celebrations of Chinese New Year. The setting work collaboratively with parents and with other agencies to support individual children and those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children are well behaved and have a good understanding of codes of behaviour. They show a respect for each other and an awareness of the difference between right and wrong. Staff demonstrate positive ways of encouraging good behaviour and children respond well to the consistent boundaries and gentle reminders. They take turns and are polite to each other and staff.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the setting's positive encouragement for parents to be involved in their learning. They receive comprehensive information about the forthcoming term's work, which includes activities that can be carried out at home, enabling parents to be fully involved in the setting and enhance children's learning. The effective key worker system allows for staff to give specific suggestions for individual children which will help them progress on to the next step of learning. There are systems in place for sharing information about children's progress with parents, however, not all parents have been able to discuss their child's achievements with a member of staff. Younger children settle well because staff work closely with parents to ensure all children feel welcomed and secure. Parents receive appropriate information about the setting and are able to see all policies and procedures, including the complaints procedure, which enables parents to express any concerns and informs them of who they should contact.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children show respect for each other and listen to each other's views and experiences. They are developing a strong sense of independence and self-worth as they are encouraged to share, take turns and follow rules. They work well with staff and each other, both in small and larger groups. They are developing an appreciation for different cultures and beliefs through a range of activities, such as visiting the local church for Harvest and accessing books about other religions.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall children's needs are met. They are cared for by staff who are vetted and well qualified which promotes their safety and learning. Effective recruitment procedures, induction programmes and appropriate policies and procedures work in practice to safeguard children's welfare. Staff are committed to their improvement and attend appropriate training courses. The premises and resources are well-organised to promote children's play opportunities. Staff are deployed appropriately to ensure that children are supported and supervised at all times. A daily register showing children's times of arrival and departure is maintained promoting children's safety in the setting. Documents are effectively organised and appropriately stored in order that confidentiality is maintained at all times.

Leadership and management is good. All staff are involved in the planning process and contribute to children's learning. The senior staff involved in nursery education monitor the provision to ensure that children make good progress towards the early learning goals and that children are developing positive attitudes towards their learning. The setting has forged strong support links with the local authority. Strengths and weaknesses of the setting are carefully assessed and identified. Action plans are implemented and are effective in promoting and improving the outcomes for children. The pre-school is committed to the improvement of care and education and benefits from a supportive committee and clear leadership.

Improvements since the last inspection

The provider was asked: to ensure that the assessment of the children's attainment and progress informs the planning procedure so that they are taught the next steps of their learning, according to their individual skills and ability, through a balance of directed and non-directed activities; to encourage children to be more interested in the books and make use of the book area; to expand opportunities for children to have more choice when using craft materials and to make available to parents a written statement that provides Ofsted contact details if they have a complaint.

Staff use purposeful observations to record children's progress and achievements and use these to identify the next steps of learning. The observations inform planning and the key worker system enables staff to provide specific opportunities for individual children. There is a wide range of activities available, both adult and child-led. Adults offer support in activities such as junk modelling, mark making and painting. Children are able to access other activities themselves such as construction and playing in sand, allowing them to explore and investigate at their own pace.

The book area is set out so that books are easily accessible and bean bags ensure children are comfortable. Children use the opportunities to choose books themselves as well as staff reading to them as part of planned and spontaneous activities.

There is a wide range of craft activities and children have easy access to the child-sized craft trolley. The trolley contains a good choice of equipment and resources such as scissors, hole punches, pens and crayons. Children take part in activities such as junk modelling which allow children to explore different materials and choose their own equipment.

There is a clear written complaints procedure made available to parents which includes details of who to contact if they wish to raise a concern.

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:

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 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 staff are informed and aware of the importance of good hygiene practice with regard to hand washing.

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):

- further implement systems to ensure all parents are informed about their child's progress and achievements (also applies to care)
- ensure staff consistently offer challenge through interaction in activities.

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