



Scampton Playmates

Inspection report for early years provision

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Registered person Scampton Playmates

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?

Scampton Playmates is committee run and opened in 1999. It operates from self-contained premises situated on the RAF base at Scampton, Lincoln. The nursery offers full day care to children from the local area and surrounding villages. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 48 children on roll aged from birth to 8 years. This includes 20 funded three and four year olds. The setting can support children with special

educational needs and there are no children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week, all year round. Sessions are from 07.30 to 17.30 hours and children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 12 staff working with the children. Three of the staff including the manager hold an appropriate early years qualification and 6 staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Practitioners follow clear procedures for maintaining hygiene which ensures that the children are cared for in a clean and healthy environment, for example, tables are wiped with anti-bacterial spray prior to being used for food. Children are encouraged to become independent in promoting their own good health such as routine hand washing before food and children show confidence in using this ability. Children's health is promoted by health and medication records. Staff hold current first aid certificates which helps maintain children's health.

Children are offered a choice of snacks which include a variety of fruit to ensure healthy eating choices are promoted. These are also regularly discussed so that children are aware it is part of maintaining health. Practitioners provide healthy meals and snacks and ensure that children always have access to drinks throughout the session to ensure they are well nourished.

Children enjoy opportunities for physical activities and are skilled at using a range of small equipment to promote co-ordination skills. Children make some use of the outdoor area to run and play in the fresh air but not on a daily basis. There is provision for children to use equipment such as a climbing frame and slide to develop their large body skills. Staff discuss how fresh air is good for you and link to healthy life styles.

Children are able to rest and sleep according to their needs and the wishes of their parents. Staff provide suitable sleeping facilities for babies and young children and comfortable furniture, scatter cushions and a carpeted area for older children to rest and relax.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a rich, warm and welcoming environment which is well maintained and safe. Staff ensure that safety procedures such as regular fire drills are completed and recorded to ensure the safety of the children. Risk assessments are completed to help staff minimise hazards which may harm children.

Children use appropriate equipment such as low level tables and chairs to sit, eat and play safely. They also use a suitable range of developmentally appropriate resources which are regularly checked for safety. Staff use explanations about safety so that children are able to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe. Staff help to create an exceptional stimulating environment for children by providing furniture, toys and equipment to meet the varying needs of children, such as the equipment and furniture in the baby room. The building is kept properly secure so that unwanted visitors do not gain access to the setting or present a risk to the children. However, the doors into each of the play rooms are not totally safe and close very loudly which could pose a risk to children.

Children are well protected because staff have a good understanding of their role in protecting children and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Staff are aware of main signs such as injuries in odd places, inappropriate explanations and changes to behaviour. They are aware of the need to record this in the incident book and to report to their manager. Children are protected by staff's awareness of child protection guidelines and detailed procedures support the manager in protecting children from abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The care and play experiences for children in the nursery are good. Children are content and settled and enjoy close relationships with their carers. Discussions with parents ensure that young children benefit from and experience familiar home routines helping them to feel safe and secure. Children show interest in what they do such as making dough and are often intrigued by resources such as the programmable toys. They are beginning to experiment with sticking activities and like to dress up and use the home corner. Children make choices from a broad range of resources provided each day but they are not always fully absorbed throughout the session due to staff deployment. Staff provide some worthwhile activities to observe and use assessments to ensure children are generally moving towards the next step. Staff include younger children in activities to develop their skills but are not yet making full use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

The quality of teaching and learning for three and four-year-olds is satisfactory. Staff offer support to children and are enthusiastic in their role. While staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage is growing, other than the manager they lack a comprehensive understanding. This affects their ability to make full use of the planning and provide sufficient challenge for children to learn and develop. Staff are attending training courses and have experience of caring for children, they gently guide children and use questioning techniques which extends their language and thinking. Staff meet with parents initially to discuss children's starting points to ensure they are aware of observing progress. The assessment of children's progress towards the early learning goals generally identifies what they need to learn next and clearly show and link to how all aspects of the stepping stones are covered. However, planning for children's curriculum is not always evaluated fully to ensure it is effective and balanced in all areas of learning

Children are confident and keen to get involved in activities. They form sound relationships with staff and other children, willingly helping younger ones with tasks such as construction. However, some staff miss opportunities particularly at snack and meal times to help children develop independence skills. Children are aware of the expectations of staff and behave very well.

Children are able speakers using clear sentences to explain and recall past events. They listen carefully and talk confidently during activities. Children enjoy making marks and can form some recognisable images; some can also recognise some letters and their sounds. However, there are limited opportunities for children to write for a variety of purposes. Children enjoy books and participate in story telling. Children count by rote well with more able children eager to count well beyond 10. They know the names of common shapes and use some size language in their play such as big and little. However, staff miss opportunities to introduce children to simple calculating and problem solving during activities such as baking.

Children are able to join construction pieces together with some purpose. They have a growing awareness of other cultures as they celebrate some festivals and use a wide range of resources to enhance children's ability to explore and learn. Children's knowledge of the natural world is developed through activities such as observing and discussing the weather and growing plants from bulbs. Children enjoy moving in different ways such as running and jumping, but their ability to make progress and continue to develop their large body movements is impeded by too few challenging activities. Children know most colours and have opportunities to create and design for themselves. They know a balanced repertoire of songs and rhymes and really enjoy involving others in imaginative games when playing in the home corner.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet individual needs and ensure all children are fully included. All children and parents receive a warm welcome from staff who are sensitive to each family's circumstances. Each child is known as an individual and time is spent making sure their needs are met and continuity of care is offered. Parents views about their child's needs are actively sought before the child starts at the setting, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Parents receive good information about the Foundation Stage and are fully involved in their children's learning. Staff ensure that parents know how their child is progressing and developing by regular verbal contact and meetings.

Staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and through acting as good role models and using appropriate methods, such as consistent and gentle reinforcement of rules, children learn good manners and to care for others. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from staff, building their confidence and self esteem.

Children are beginning to understand and respect differing needs and cultures through planned activities and practitioners provide a broad range of resources to support children's learning. Children's knowledge of the local community is promoted

through discussion and regular outings. They regularly share news about their own lives and their thoughts. Children's opinions and achievements are recognised and praised by everyone in the group. All of this contributes to fostering children's social, moral, cultural and spiritual development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for and protected by a caring staff team. Staff maintain suitable ratios to keep children safe and support their care and play but are not always deployed effectively to fully meet the needs of the children. Most policies and procedures are known by the staff and are in the main effective in promoting children's health and well-being. Children are cared for in a secure environment and staff are effective in supervising children. The needs of the range of children for whom the setting provides are met. Some staff are attending training courses to enhance their knowledge and understanding and have experience of caring for children in a variety of roles.

Leadership and management for nursery education is satisfactory. The manager's commitment to training is bringing about some improvements in the nursery. The manager is able to identify strengths and weaknesses of the educational provision and is committed to improving staff's knowledge to ensure they have a sound focus for future improvements for children's learning and development.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection in June 2004 the nursery was asked to make a number of improvements to its provision for children. They were asked to: ensure that the outside play area is made safe; develop an effective induction process for new staff and improve the information given to volunteers; ensure space is used effectively to meet the needs of children; improve staff's consistency when managing children's behaviour; plan a range of creative activities on a daily basis that are age/stage appropriate and ensure that this includes an appropriate range of activities and resources that promote equality of opportunity and reflects positive images of culture, ethnicity and disability.

At the last nursery education inspection in March 2005 they were asked to: develop staff's knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum and their understanding of the learning intentions for focused activities to ensure children's learning and development is extended and challenged; improve staff's knowledge of managing a wide range of children's behaviour; formalise procedures for including parents in their children's learning.

Since the last inspection the setting has made some progress in addressing these issues.

With regard to the care inspection the improvements are good. The outside area is now safe and secure and regular risk assessments are undertaken and recorded.

The induction process for new staff is effective and all committee members are issued with information about their roles and responsibilities. Space is used effectively by staff, they move around the room to ensure the needs of all children are met. Staff have attended behaviour management training and take a lead role from the manager. Children's behaviour is much improved since last inspection and staff display a positive attitude to managing children's behaviour. They are also aware of the setting's policy and the procedures to follow. Resources that reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, disability and gender have been purchased and are of good quality and age/ stage appropriate. Planning also reflects to ensure children are learning about the wider world.

With regard to the nursery education inspection the improvements are sound. Staff are attending relevant training courses to enhance their knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum and are involved and contribute to the planning of the pre-school curriculum. The manager is very knowledgeable and enhances all aspects of the setting's nursery education by supporting staff and acting as a good role model. However, not all staff have a clear understanding and do not always offer sufficient challenge to more able children to develop their learning. Staff have developed their understanding of managing children's behaviour and this is greatly improved since the last inspection. Parents are now fully included in their children's learning. An 'All about me book' has been developed which parents receive on enrolling their child at nursery. This is used as an initial assessment and built on by regular key worker contact, discussion and records. Parents evenings are held twice a year to discuss children's progress and records are readily available at the request of parents.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- ensure that the doors into each play area are made safe and quiet
- ensure that the 'Birth to three matters' framework is used effectively and develop planning to ensure younger children are included

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 staff's knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum to ensure sufficient challenge is provided for children to help them progress
- evaluate and improve planning for children's curriculum to ensure it is effective and balanced in all areas of learning
- ensure all staff are employed effectively to improve opportunities for children to learn and develop.

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