



## **Manthorpe Pre-School Playgroup**

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	253484
<b>Inspection date</b>	06 December 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Janice Broddle / Katherine Powell
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Village Hall, Low Road, Manthorpe, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 8NQ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01476 573893
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Manthorpe Pre-School Playgroup Committee
<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 inadequate - notice of action to improve.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Manthorpe Pre-School playgroup is a committee run provision. It opened in 1967, and operates from the playgroup hall in the village of Manthorpe, on the outskirts of Grantham. The areas used by the children consist of two rooms, toilet facilities and two enclosed outdoor play areas one of which has safety surfacing. The pre-school is

open each weekday term time only, from 09.00 to 11.45 and on Monday and Tuesday afternoons from 12.30 to 15.00.

A maximum of 32 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 55 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for nursery education. The group supports a number of children with special educational needs and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 9 staff, 6 of whom, including the supervisor, hold an appropriate early years qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and hygienic environment and appropriate health and hygiene procedures are in place. Children are developing their awareness of good hygiene practices, such as washing their hands after the toilet and before eating but they do not have easy access to tissues to wipe their noses. As a result, children are not fully protected from the spread of infection. A high proportion of staff have completed first aid training which enables them to deal with children's health needs appropriately. However, effective systems are not in place to ensure the contents of the first aid box are appropriate or replaced as and when necessary. There are procedures in place to record any accidents and support the administration of medication, although these are not always adhered to.

Children are provided with a drink at snack time and some have access to drink bottles throughout the session. Children are developing their awareness of the benefits of healthy eating through the provision of healthy snacks, such as fresh fruit. Good written records are in place ensuring children's health and dietary requirements are met. All children have access to comfortable seating if they wish to rest or relax.

Some children benefit from opportunities to engage in physical activities both indoors and outdoors, although outdoor activities are not routinely planned or provided for at every session. Children use the large equipment, such as the balancing beams, with confidence and good co-ordination. Children are developing their small hand skills through the regular use of tools and resources such as scissors, threading activities, construction toys and jigsaws. However, nursery education plans do not clearly show how all aspects of the curriculum for physical development are covered and older children do not have access to appropriate equipment to promote and extend their climbing skills.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and well-maintained setting. Play equipment and toys conform to safety standards and the environment is secure and well organised to enable children to move around freely and safely. Although staff routinely carry out and record risk assessments and safety checks these are not always effective in identifying and minimising potential hazards to children, such as children gaining access to hazardous substances in the kitchen and leaving low level heaters unguarded in play areas.

Children benefit from a range of safety measures which are in place, such as socket covers and a secure outdoor play area. They develop a good awareness of fire safety issues through regularly practising emergency evacuation procedures. Staff ensure children's safety is maintained on outings as clear written procedures for the safe conduct of outings are in place. Access to the building is carefully monitored and there are good procedures in place to ensure children are collected by named adults.

Staff have a sound awareness of child protection procedures and the manager has undertaken appropriate training to develop her knowledge and understanding of issues. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns and know the relevant agencies to contact, although systems are not in place to record any existing injuries children may arrive with. Overall, children are protected from possible abuse or neglect and their welfare is safeguarded.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children are generally happy and settled at the provision and some children have formed strong friendship groups with their peers. Staff have developed warm relationships with the children, enabling them to feel secure, however, some children are often not engaged in activities and wander aimlessly around the setting. Staff do not fully encourage all children to join in and participate effectively in play activities, in particular children who speak English as an additional language. As a result, not all children are making sufficient progress. Staff do not have a sound knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and therefore do not always plan an appropriate range of activities for the younger children. Consequently, some adult led activities are not always well matched to the ages and individual needs of the child. Children are developing their confidence and have access to some activities to develop their creativity and use of imagination, such as the role play area and free painting. The organisation and delivery of some group activities, such as story time, is not effective in ensuring all children are engaged and able to sustain their concentration.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Staff lack a secure knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. They do not plan activities, therefore, all six areas of learning are not sufficiently covered and activities and learning intentions are not linked to children's individual needs. For some children, the range of activities provided is limited and rarely provides opportunities for children to develop their creativity and their larger physical skills. Staff do not effectively plan

the grouping of children, resulting in insufficient challenges for older and more able children, and inadequate systems for identifying children with special needs. Staff have developed good relationships with most of the children who are developing a good understanding of right and wrong. The consistent methods for managing behaviour are mainly effective. There is a good range of resources to promote most areas of learning although a lack of challenging climbing equipment for more able children, limits their ability to progress in this area. Additionally, the lack of planning means that not all resources are used regularly or to their fullest effect. Staff do not monitor the progress of all children, and observations are not linked to the stepping stones, therefore, systems are not effective in planning the next steps in learning to help children progress further.

Some children are interested in the range of activities provided and are able to freely move around these and make choices in their play. They are beginning to learn some self-help skills; they independently go to the toilet and wash their hands and at times are able to initiate their own activities. However, staff do not fully promote this throughout all sessions and through daily routines. For example, at snack times children do not pour their own drinks, and when coming in from outdoors they leave their coats on the floor for staff to put away. Children are mainly confident and sociable, engaging in conversation with each other and with adults. They are beginning to learn right from wrong and understand concepts of being kind to each other and older children are learning to share and take turns. Children begin to develop a sense of community, however, they lack opportunities to increase their understanding of the cultures and beliefs of others within society. Most children confidently talk to each other and adults, engaging in detailed conversations and seeking support when necessary. Older children are developing good listening skills as they participate in adult-led large group activities. There is a limited range of books, which are not freely accessible to children. This limits opportunities for them to develop an awareness of reading conventions and an enjoyment of books. Children that are more able, hear and say initial sounds in words and attempt writing. However, mark-making opportunities are mainly adult-directed and children do not explore and practice writing for different purposes, for example, in the role-play area.

Children develop good counting skills through routines, for example, when counting children present at registration time. Older children recognise some numerals and are learning early calculation skills through songs and number rhymes. However, those who are more able, do not have sufficient opportunities to compare numbers and apply their developing mathematical skills to solve simple problems. Consequently, children are not given appropriate challenge to promote their knowledge and understanding. Children show awareness of similarities and difference in size and shape. Children have some opportunities to find out about the natural world, for example, they plant seeds and bulbs and watch the changes as they grow. They begin to develop a sense of time and place as they talk about what day it is and what the weather is at circle time. They are beginning to develop a basic awareness of the use of information, communication technology in everyday life through operating simple equipment such as calculators and a typewriter. Children talk with interest about their own lives and those of people they know. Some children have good opportunities to develop their awareness of the local community as they go on regular walks around their local environment. Most children use a variety of mediums

to express themselves including paints, recyclable materials, construction toys, music and the home corner. However, for some children opportunities are more limited due to the rigid timetable and restricted range of activities.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children's sense of belonging is encouraged through staff warmly greeting children and parents on arrival. There is an equal opportunities policy in place, however, staff have an insufficient understanding of issues relating to equality and anti-discriminatory practice to enable them to promote children's awareness effectively and to ensure all children are equally supported and included. Children do not have access to a wide range of resources or activities to develop their awareness of diversity and the wider world. Overall, the provision does not foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

There are systems in place to identify children with additional needs and the manager has developed her knowledge and awareness of issues through appropriate training. However, effective systems are not in place for all children, particularly those who speak English as an additional language, to ensure that they are appropriately supported and fully included in the life of the setting. Staff do not work sufficiently well with parents and other professionals to ensure children's individual needs are met and that they receive sufficient support to enable them to make progress.

Most children form positive relationships with each other and with adults and play co-operatively together. Staff are good role models and generally use effective strategies to manage children's behaviour, although children are not always given clear explanations as to why their behaviour is unacceptable. On the whole, children are well supported by staff and learn to take turns and share toys. Staff use praise and encouragement to promote children's self-esteem.

The partnership with parents and carers is inadequate. Parents receive some useful information about the group through the brochure and notice boards, however, they receive limited information about the Foundation Stage. There is insufficient information shared with regard to the range of activities children will be covering and their learning focus. Systems have not been established to enable parents to share what they know about their child at the outset, nor to contribute to their assessment records on an ongoing basis. As a result, parents are not supported effectively to be involved in their child's learning.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

There is a comprehensive range of policies and procedures in place. However, staff do not always have a thorough knowledge and understanding of all policies, such as the equal opportunities policy, which means they are unable to implement them effectively and promote children's positive contribution sufficiently. Required records

are mainly in place, however, details of medication administered to children are not completed by staff and records of accidents do not always contain sufficient detail. As a result, children's health may be adversely affected.

The committee is supportive of the provision and regularly organise fundraising events. However, members of the committee are not provided with full information and guidance on their roles and responsibilities and, as a result, lack a sound awareness of the National Standards and regulations. In addition, Ofsted is not kept informed of changes to committee members and consequently required vetting procedures are not always undertaken to ensure the suitability of adults providing day care.

Sufficient staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications and are well deployed within the setting. However, effective recruitment and selection procedures are not in place to ensure equal opportunities are promoted with regard to employment and that staff are both physically and mentally suitable to work with children. Although staff have opportunities to meet as a team, systems are not in place to monitor the provision effectively and identify areas for improvement. Staff have access to opportunities for further training but these are not always well matched to the needs of the children attending. For example, staff have not developed their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to enable them to develop the learning outcomes for younger children, and children who speak English as an additional language are not well supported as staff have had insufficient training to enable them to do this effectively.

Children do not have access to the same opportunities for learning as the sessions are not effectively organised. For example, outdoor play and physical activities are not provided for at every afternoon session. This has a detrimental affect on children's development as not all areas of learning are sufficiently promoted.

The leadership and management of nursery education are inadequate. There are currently no systems in place to evaluate the quality and effectiveness of nursery education. This means that not all areas of the curriculum are sufficiently covered and children are not set appropriate challenges to promote their learning. Although the staff team work well together and deploy themselves effectively to support the smooth running of the session, they are not fully clear of their roles and responsibilities in developing children's learning. Staff show a commitment to developing and improving the provision; they have effective links with other professionals to support them in identifying areas for development within the provision and have begun to make plans to address these. However, these have not yet been implemented and therefore do not currently influence children's progress. Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last care inspection one action and three recommendations were raised. The provider agreed to implement an action plan detailing how the deputy would achieve

a recognised qualification, develop procedures for the safe conduct of any outings, ensure good hygiene practices were in place and update child protection procedures in line with the Government booklet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused – summary'.

Since the last inspection a new deputy has been appointed who holds a recognised childcare qualification. An outings policy has been implemented and the child protection procedures are based on national guidance. This has had a positive impact on ensuring children's safety. Children have access to individual paper towels to dry their hands which minimises the risk of cross infection.

### Nursery Education

At the last inspection, it was recommended that the provision extend opportunities for children to learn about features of their local neighbourhood, and for them to develop climbing skills. In addition, they were asked to extend challenge for the more able children in the areas of mathematics, and physical development with reference to using tools with control. Staff now regularly take some children on short walks in the local community, pointing out interesting features as they go. However, ineffective planning of the curriculum means that these opportunities are not available for all children. The manager and committee discussed how to provide climbing opportunities for children. They considered purchasing larger climbing apparatus but decided against this due to safety concerns. They planned to address the issue by allowing children to climb over a near-by gate and to incorporate a climb up some steps whilst walking around the village. However, as not all children have this opportunity, this means that some children continue to lack sufficient opportunities to develop their climbing skills. Although children now regularly access opportunities to use tools with control, the lack of clear planning and learning intentions means that children who are more able remain insufficiently challenged regarding their mathematical skills.

### Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

## 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:

- improve the outcomes for children under the age of three years using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- ensure sufficient information is included when recording accidents and maintain written records of all medicines administered to children
- ensure Ofsted is informed at the earliest opportunity of any changes to committee members and ensure all members of the committee submit to a vetting procedure, which includes a criminal records check
- develop staff's understanding and awareness of good practice with regard to promoting equality of opportunity to ensure all children are treated with equal concern and appropriate steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of children with additional needs
- improve the partnership with parents and carers to enable parents to be fully involved in their children's learning. Ensure starting points for children's learning are identified to enable staff to build on children's previous knowledge and skills and parents are able to contribute to their children's assessments (also applies to nursery education).

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure systems are in place to monitor and evaluate the delivery of nursery education to identify its effectiveness for all children
- develop staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage to enable them to plan and deliver a broad and balanced curriculum which covers all areas of learning. Ensure clear learning objectives are identified and children receive appropriate support or challenge according to their individual needs
- ensure assessment systems clearly show children's progress along the stepping stones and are used to identify the next steps in children's learning.

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

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)