



Bramble Brook Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY282068
Inspection date	06 July 2005
Inspector	Esther Darling
Setting Address	St. Johns Church, Devonshire Drive, Mickleover, Derby, Derbyshire, DE3 9HD
Telephone number	07947 896235
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Registered person	Bramble Brook 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

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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?

Bramble Brook Pre-School Playgroup opened in 2004 and operates from St Johns Church Hall situated in Mickleover, and serves the local area.

The setting is registered to care for 26 children between the ages of 2 and 5. There are currently 39 children on roll, including children who have special needs. Nursery Education funded places are provided for 3 and 4 year olds, of which there are 48.

The Pre-School is open from 09:15 to 11:45 for 3 days a week during term time and holds a lunch club until 12:30. Of the 5 staff who work at the setting, 4 have early years qualifications to higher level.

The setting receives support from the Derby City Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned daily routines and activities. They enjoy washing the dolls and making sure that they are clean, discussing their home experiences. Children clearly understand how to care for themselves, as they use soap without being prompted whilst washing their hands. They are not always protected from cross infection, as many use the same hand-towel rather than the paper towels provided.

Children really enjoy daily physical activity, and use a varied range of movements such as throwing, catching, balancing, kicking, crawling, hopping and riding on wheeled toys. Many play rigorously with a good range of equipment, although more able children do not have sufficient use of climbing equipment which challenges their strength and large motor skills.

Children benefit from a healthy diet, and look forward to snacks such as a combination of cheese, raisins and bread sticks. They are able to access a drink of water throughout the session, but do not learn about choosing healthy drinks at snack time. More assertive children gain in independence by pouring their own drink and selecting their snack, whilst others miss this opportunity.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn to take responsibility for their safety and that of others, when staff talk about cleaning up the water that was spilt whilst bathing the dolls. They learn the codes of conduct in order to play safely, such as whilst on a rocking toy, although at times boisterous behaviour is not noticed by the staff. For example, children run around the large hall, which does not have any partitioned areas, and slip on the pieces of carpet.

Children are cared for in a secure, light and airy environment during the session, and staff monitor their arrival and departure carefully. They are sufficiently protected due to staff's awareness of procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child.

Children use a sufficient range of developmentally appropriate toys and equipment, which are of adequate quality and safety. What is put out for children is limited, and they are unable to choose additional resources which compromises opportunities to

extend their learning, or consolidate and initiate their own ideas.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children form trusting relationships with key staff, and this enhances their sense of confidence and security whilst at the Pre-school. They try new activities in a safe and supportive environment, for example, a child who is new to the setting experiencing corn flour-play for the first time. Consequently children are enabled to experiment at their own pace, due to adult's sensitivity towards individual needs. Younger children greatly enjoy listening to and participating in stories, such as the Three Bears Story which is told well using bears and other objects, resulting in their good concentration. Older children benefit from a separate story session, although they are not always helped to understand or see the relevance of the topic. Staff are becoming familiar with relevant guidance, such as the Birth to three Matters framework and are beginning to consider how to best use this to develop their practice with younger children.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Staff are familiar with the aspects of learning identified in the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage, and are developing their understanding of how to help children progress towards the early learning goals. This does not always extend to how relevant activities are to children's own life experiences. The person in charge uses planning to enable children to experience a relatively broad range of activities across most aspects of learning. Procedures are in place to support children with identified special needs. Most staff establish a calm and affectionate environment, helping the majority of children begin to understand what is expected of them.

Children usually settle confidently on arrival, with most being interested enough to approach the activities, learning to share and take turns. Many enjoy looking at books and handle them with care, recognising their own name-card at registration and during snack time. Children increase their knowledge of, and value both the community they come from and the wider world, through the use of equipment which reflects positive images. They are developing the skills for early writing through enjoyable and practical activities, such as writing in the sand. A few children are beginning to use some mathematical language during play and are supported by staff when developing their understanding of numbers up to ten. They enjoy developing their physical skills in imaginative ways such as moving and dancing to music. Children begin to adopt simple hygiene practices like hand washing to keep themselves healthy, and develop their hand-eye co-ordination through the use of small tools such as pencils or glue sticks. Children use imaginative language during role-play, although resources available are limited. This sometimes results in children not being stimulated enough to get fully involved in activities such as bathing the dolls. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is significantly limited due to gaps in the planning. This means that some lose focus as not enough activities are based on real-life experiences, for example learning about the local community

through trips or having visitors at the setting. Children learn about a selection of animals and where they live, using small plastic models on a sheet showing grass and trees. Such activities are not realistically or attractively presented to encourage children to extend and explain their own ideas to the full.

Overall children make satisfactory progress in the majority of the areas of learning. Staff do not gain sufficient information about children's attainment on entry, for example using information from parents about their child's learning and development. A thorough system of assessment is used, covering every stepping stone in all areas of learning. These include comments based on observations of children, although they are not yet used effectively to help move children to the next stage in their learning and independently extend their interests.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents and children are welcomed on arrival, and staff give time to discuss any concerns if needed, asking how the children are doing. A copy of the policies and procedures and a brief welcome pack introduce parents to how the setting is run. A monthly newsletter includes a small amount of information about current themes. Parents are not actively encouraged to become involved in their children's learning, due to not being well informed about their children's progress and achievements. Such information is only available to the parents of children who are due to leave.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are beginning to develop secure relationships which increases their self-esteem. For example key staff understand young children's need to be close to a familiar adult, and are sensitive when encouraging them to become more independent in their self-care skills.

Children are beginning to learn about the wider society through undertaking some planned activities reflecting cultural diversity, for example activities linked to particular festivals such as Diwali or Chinese New Year. Some resources that are in use show positive images of the wider society including dolls, books and role-play equipment. Children with special needs are included in all activities such as creative or messy play. However their independence is sometimes hindered, as this is not always at a time of the child's choosing, and is more adult-led.

Children are beginning to understand what is expected of them and behave appropriately most of the time. They are learning to play well together at organised games through adults' reinforcement of the rules. There are times when children are not involved in activities which impacts on their behaviour and they do not learn about the consequences of their actions.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children feel at home and at ease in the generally well-organised environment which helps them to settle and enjoy their play. For example the routine runs smoothly because children use signals such as the playing of music to hail tidy up time, and are then separated into two groups to meet their varying needs during story time. However children are not productively engaged at all times during free-play. Deployment of the staff is not managed to best effect to avoid aimless running around, which results in minor incidents such as the children tripping over and being rough with each other. Children's welfare, care and learning is safeguarded through the keeping of generally efficient records, policies and procedures. Some records, such as those of accidents and medication lack the necessary detail.

Children benefit from the continuity of established and regular childcare staff who are well qualified for their roles. Unqualified staff are experienced and demonstrate a commitment to personal and professional development through the attendance of relevant childcare courses. Staff continue to develop their childcare knowledge and skills in line with current accepted good practice through attendance at ongoing training. This covers care for children under three identified in the Birth to three matters framework, which they have yet to put into practice. Not all staff are involved in the medium and short-term planning, due to minimal training on this subject, which sometimes impacts on the quality of activities provided with regard to challenging more able children.

The leadership and management of the nursery education programme is satisfactory. The supervisor provides committed and consistent leadership to the staff team, with a relatively clear vision for the nursery education and focus on the personal development and achievement of all children. Staff and management recognise the value of evaluating how effectively the nursery education programme promotes children's learning, but do not yet do this sufficiently well to enable them to clearly identify areas for improvement, and effect speedy change. Overall the needs of all children who attend are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous care inspection recommended that the Pre-School developed its policies regarding child protection and the procedures to be followed in the event of a child being lost. It also recommended that arrangements for snack time should encourage social skills and reinforce learning, and that procedures for obtaining written parental permission to give medication were developed.

Staff have taken steps to develop the use of snack time to make it a more sociable occasion. Children benefit from sitting in smaller groups, rather than round one large table. This part of the routine has yet to be developed to full effectiveness, in order to more closely acknowledge children's home experiences. Parents now give written permission for staff to administer medication, ensuring clearer and safer procedures.

The development of written procedures regarding child protection and lost children are still underway. However the person in charge has a very clear understanding of her role in such situations. She is aware of exactly what action should be taken to safeguard children, and inform parents and relevant agencies.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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 records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, are maintained. This is with regard to accident and medication records, lost child procedures and child protection procedures in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff
- review the organisation of staff during the session to ensure that they are deployed in such a manner as to allow a good overall view of the children in order to be aware of and address inappropriate behaviour in a manner which promotes their welfare, care and development

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):

- increase staffs awareness of the foundation stage and the principles of early years education to ensure that all aspects of the curriculum are covered on a more frequent basis, with particular reference to knowledge and understanding of the world
- ensure that all activities are stimulating and build on what children already know, understand and can do, are well resourced and offer sufficient challenge for more able children
- ensure that all parents are well informed about their children's progress and achievements and that their views about their children's learning are actively sought out.

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