

Pixieland Mannamead

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	117141
Inspection date	06 June 2007
Inspector	Anne-Marie Moyse
Setting Address	162 Mannamead Road, Mannamead, Plymouth, Devon, PL3 5QL
Telephone number	01752 770550
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Registered person	Pixieland South West Ltd
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 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?

Pixieland at Mannamead is part of a chain of four privately owned nurseries in Plymouth. The nursery is situated in a large building on a main road into Plymouth, in a well established residential suburb of the city. The nursery has sole use of the premises.

Pixieland offers care for children under eight years old. It is open from 07.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. There are currently 100 children on roll; of these, 45 children receive funding for their nursery education. The nursery is currently supporting children who have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs a total of 17 staff who work directly with the children. Of these four staff are trained to level three in childcare, six nursery assistants who hold a level two qualification, and seven trainees working towards a childcare qualification. There are two managers, both qualified to level three, on site. A group manager and the owner supervise each of the four nurseries within the chain.

Pixieland is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association. They receive support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Children's health and well-being is compromised by the poor standards and procedures in place regarding health and food at the nursery. Children are placed at risk by the inconsistent and lax attitude to administering medication to children. Prescribed medication has not been given to children to ensure that their medical needs are met. Un-prescribed medication is stored at the setting, which has not been authorised, named or complies with the requirements. The nursery employs a routine procedure to obtain 'blanket' permission from parents to administer non-prescription medication, such as 'Calpol', to children. This is poor practice and not acceptable as it places children in a vulnerable position. Although staff have attended training in first aid, the procedures employed at the setting do not ensure that children are well cared for if they have an accident. Staff use un-sterile paper towels to mop up any cuts and grazes. There are no sterile resources available to limit infection and cover an open wound to prevent contamination. Records made following accidents are not always consistent or fully completed.

The nursery premises and resources are generally clean and tidy. However, there is a poor standard of hygiene at the setting. Some equipment, such as the food probe is dirty and not cleaned in between uses. Bins containing foods are damaged, uncovered and over-flowing. Staff are not rigorous in ensuring hands are washed before serving food and that all children are washing their hands before eating. In some areas the facilities and organisation of hand washing is poor. Pre-school children do not have access to warm water to wash their hands thoroughly, and at times toddlers visit the toilet unaccompanied and do not wash their hands afterwards. At nappy changing, staff wear protective gloves and aprons but do not wash their hands between nappy changes to prevent cross contamination. Nappy changing is part of the routine of the nursery and the procedures employed do not always meet the children's needs. Toilet areas are adequately clean, however the cleaning of potties after use is not always rigorous. The arrangement of the toilets and lack of doors do not allow children to have privacy or dignity when they go to the toilet.

Children's meals are provided by an outside caterer and delivered to the setting. There is a four-week menu, which is varied and includes some vegetables. However, there is a weak procedure at the setting to ensure that this food is suitable and safe to give to children. Staff do not always check the temperature or the taste of the food before it is served to children to ensure it is hot and appetising. Staff have limited information on the ingredients of the meals to ensure they are suitable for all children's dietary and religious needs, putting children at risk. The food is not attractively served, and there are limited quantities. Meal times are not well organised, especially in the pre-school room, where children sit and wait for a long time, in crowded conditions, for their meals to be served to them. This results in children becoming disruptive, playing with their knives and forks and spilling drinks. Babies and toddlers are better organised and children are fed according to their differing needs. Staff encourage children to develop their skills and feed themselves. Babies' bottles are adequately stored in the refrigerator and warmed according to individual feeding patterns. However, some foods are stored in the refrigerator uncovered. There is a lack of resources for babies to be held comfortably, by staff, when bottle feeding. All children have access to additional drinks during the day to keep them well hydrated.

All children get access to fresh air and exercise during the day. They are able to use the secure outside play area according to a rota. If there are sufficient staff available babies are taken out

in the buggies for a short walk and fresh air. Children have opportunity to rest and sleep as well as be active. Babies sleep according to their individual routines. However, the procedure for checking sleeping babies is not rigorous. Older children take turns at accessing the well-resourced play area where they climb, swing, run or play with the bikes and small equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in bright, attractive and appealing rooms. The rooms are designated for different ages of children, with the youngest children cared for on the ground floor and the pre-school age children on the first floor. Each room has its own allocated toilet or nappy changing facilities. The play rooms have good natural light and are adequately ventilated. The staff monitor the temperatures of the rooms to ensure children are comfortable, although one of the rooms becomes very warm due to its south facing aspect. The nursery places a high regard for security and has keypad and finger print entry system for parents to use. The managers also monitor each room using close circuit television monitors.

The nursery have a good range of toys and equipment available for the children which is checked and appropriate for the ages of the children. Children all have access to the sensory room and the enclosed outdoor play areas. The staff in each of the rooms conduct basic checks on the environment to ensure it is safe for children to use, and inform the manager if there are any issues. However this is not comprehensive and some hazards are not immediately resolved. At times there are socket covers missing from electrical outlets, storage cupboards are not securely locked, leads trailing across the floor and spilt water is not mopped up to prevent anyone slipping.

All the electrical and gas appliances are checked regularly to ensure they are safe. The evacuation procedure is displayed in all rooms, and is practised every month, and a record maintained. However, there is no clear procedure for who is responsible for assisting the staff in the evacuation of the babies, especially when they are visiting the sensory room on the first floor.

The staff have a generally clear understanding of child protection procedures and the prompt reporting of any concerns. Most staff are confident to recognise the signs and symptoms and report this to their line manager. However, some staff are not clear on what to do if this concern is not taken seriously, and their individual responsibility to ensure children's well-being is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well and are generally happy and content. The younger children are cared for by consistent staff who plan a range of sensory activities suitable to the children's stage of development. Children regularly access other areas of the nursery, for variety and interest. They all visit the sensory room, which contains an excellent range of equipment to stimulate children's visual and auditory senses and equipment for them to relax and watch the moving colours. The outdoor area is well equipped with climbing frames, slides, swings and tunnels to explore. Additional resources are taken out into this area, such as a large tray of shredded paper, which children relish throwing over themselves. There is a strong emphasis on sensory play for the youngest children, as they play with sand and dried rice, glop and jelly stimulating their senses. Toddlers enjoy making jam tarts feeling the texture of the pastry and the taste of the jam. The

nursery bases their planning on the Birth to three matters framework to enhance children's experiences, although not all staff are confident in using this framework.

Nursery Education

The quality of the teaching and learning is inadequate. The poor organisation of the provision for the pre-school age children and the lack of consistent staff affects the quality of education for this age group. The new member of staff responsible for this area has recently been employed and has yet to establish clear routines and appropriate organisation of this age group. The group size exceeds the maximum, and is difficult to manage considering the varying needs of the children attending. At times, children become restless as they sit together for circle and story time. This is a long and extended time for some children to listen and concentrate while waiting for their turn. The staff have a limited understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn best. The planning only provides an outline of the weekly activities offered to children, with no guidance to staff or parents on what it is intended children will learn from any of the activities. There is no link between the planning and children's interests, ability and stage of learning, as staff do not make regular assessments or observations of the children to record this information. This is due to the lack of any key worker system or consistent staff in this area for staff to develop their own understanding of children's preferred style of learning, differing needs and abilities. Children have free access to a range of toys, resources, and activities which they enjoy playing together with their friends. A friendship group put on role play clothes and use their musical instruments to sing and dance around the playroom independently. Other children paint or play with the sand, but have limited support from staff to develop their play and extend their learning from these activities. Resources such as magnifying glasses and mirrors are laid out for children to explore, but there is a lack of interesting objects in the playroom available for children to use them for a purpose. However, when outside children find an interesting insect and express their need for a magnifying glass to look more closely at it, the staff do not respond to this and provide the equipment to further develop children's interest and learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally well behaved and are forming some close friendships with others. When guided by the staff they respond well, they develop their independence and work together to help tidy away. Staff encourage and use positive methods to promote good behaviour in children. Children are beginning to attend to their personal care, for example in toileting and pouring their own drinks at meal times. Children are introduced to the wider world and the diverse society in which they live. They look at books and resources which reflect positive images of different cultures, religions and disabilities. Overall, younger children's needs are known by the staff. However, the setting only provide basic support for children's individual needs. For example, some children are learning English as a second language. Although some staff endeavour to learn a few words of children's home language, children are not well supported if that staff member is absent. There are limited resources to help specific children feel included and valued in the setting.

There are basic systems in place at the setting to offer appropriate care and support for children with disabilities or learning difficulties. However, staff do not have sufficient opportunity to be able to make regular observations of all the children in the setting if there are any concerns. Additional staff are now taking on the responsibility to monitor children's development and

individual progress in the different age groups. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered.

Parents are welcomed to the setting and receive some useful written details and some useful information displayed on notice boards in each area. However, some of this information is not clear, for example the four weekly menu is displayed but there is no indication to parents which is the current week. Parents with children in the baby room have written information on their child's food intake and general well-being, and consistent staff ensure that clear verbal feedback is given. Parents with children in the older rooms can request written records of their child's day but this is not a regular occurrence. Staff exchange information on the children when parents collect them. Staff keep observation records on the children under three years, which is shared with parents at meetings.

The partnership with parents and carers for nursery education is inadequate. The recent change in staff in the pre-school room has resulted in a lack of consistency for this age group. Consequently children are not known well by the various staff. Observations on children's progress have not been maintained resulting in staff with insufficient knowledge of the children's progress and achievements. Therefore parents do not receive adequate information on their children's development. Planning is displayed for the parents but this is limited to the activities which the children will be participating in. There is no link to develop children's learning between the setting and the home.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

There have been some significant changes in the staff employed at the setting, which has impacted on the organisation of the nursery. At present, the minimal staffing levels are maintained, but the nursery are using unqualified and unskilled staff to meet the required ratios. This has a detrimental effect on the quality of care offered to children. The qualified staff are spending time in instructing and organising the other students and trainees in the rooms. This has a great impact on the quality of care and attention given to children. The untrained staff are unfamiliar with the routines and procedures. Some staff are poorly deployed and are brought in from other nurseries in the chain, or agencies, at short notice, by the Pixieland Head Office. The area and nursery manager's role is to oversee the running of the provision, however they have no control over the staff used at the setting. The registered person is not supporting the line managers' roles to enable them to develop the organisation, routines, decision making and promoting good practice in the setting.

The youngest children are cared for by regular, consistent staff, which benefits their development. However, the large group of children in the pre-school rooms have very inconsistent staff, who are poorly organised and does not promote good standards of care or education. As the staff in the pre-school are inconsistent there is no key worker system in place, to help ensure that children are well supported and information clearly shared between the setting and the parents. At times, the size of this group exceeds the maximum of 26, and there is no system in place to split the children into smaller groups to ensure they are well cared for and suitably supported.

Documentation is generally in place and stored confidentially. However, there are some records, such as the accident records and the complaints log, which are poorly maintained and disorganised. The provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is inadequate. The poor organisation of the staff and the provision for the Foundations Stage children impacts greatly on the standard of education offered to children. The inconsistency of the staff used to support this very large group of children is ineffective in providing adequate standards of teaching. There is no monitoring or assessment of the provision to enable the provision to identify their own strengths and weaknesses. Staff are not encouraged or motivated to develop their understanding of the Foundation Stage or to improve their own practice.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the group was requested to keep a record of children's hours of attendance; improve the range of activities for children under three years to support their sensory, creativity and understanding of equal opportunities; and to ensure that children were provided with some nutritious food. The times of children's attendance is now maintained, giving a clear record of who is in the nursery at any given time. The nursery have developed the range of activities for the under threes and children now have regular opportunities to explore using their senses. Resources and materials in the setting reflect positive images of equal opportunities and anti-discriminatory practice. The nursery now employ the services of an outside caterer to bring in the children's hot meals, which are varied over a four-week period, and includes meat, vegetables, and a pudding. Snack offered to children is fresh fruits and vegetables, which is a healthy option for children.

At the previous nursery education inspection the group were requested to use the information from the children's assessments to influence planning of the educational programme; to monitor the provision to ensure that all six areas of learning received sufficient coverage; and develop the programme for creative development.

The setting have not made improvements in these areas. There are no assessments of children's learning so information is not gained and used to influence the planned activities for children. There is no monitoring of the educational provision to ensure that the nursery education is provided and meets children's needs. Children can access a range of creative materials and resources, such as musical instruments and role-play equipment, to express their ideas and imagination; although, there are limited resources, such as glue, tape or string, for children to be able to freely design and make their creative ideas.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been two complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards.

The first complaint related to National Standard 1: Suitable Person, National Standard 11: Behaviour Management and National Standard 12: Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers. Concerns were regarding the suitability of a member of staff; the behaviour management techniques used and concerns that confidentiality had been breached. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit, following which the registered person was required to take steps to comply with the National Standard 11 and National Standard 12. The setting took appropriate action and Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider met the National Standards. The provider remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

The second complaint related to National Standard 1: Suitable Person, National Standard 3: Care, Learning and Play, National Standard 7: Health and National Standard 8: Food and Drink. Concerns were raised about the attitude of staff members; the lack of interaction between staff

and children; the supervision of children; hygiene procedures and the procedures followed at mealtimes. Ofsted conducted an unannounced visit to the premises and found evidence that the National Standards were not being met. The provider was given actions under National Standard 2 and National Standard 7. A response to these actions was received from the provider. The provider remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed.

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

- ensure staff deployment and supervision by senior management promotes the welfare, safety and development of all children.
- ensure that children over three years are cared for in groups not exceeding 26, are allocated a consistent key worker, and have appropriately trained and suitable staff who are well organised (also applies to nursery education)
- ensure all procedures to maintain children's personal hygiene and health are in place and appropriate.

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:

- develop the programme for the provision of nursery education to include regular observation and assessments of children's learning, using the information on children's current interests and abilities to influence the planning of the curriculum helping children to move onto the next step in their learning across all areas
- ensure that parents are involved in the assessment process, children's progress and learning
- develop systems to monitor and improve the education provision, and ensure that staff are appropriately supported to develop their understanding of the Foundation Stage.

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 *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