



Pine Pixies Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY233820
Inspection date	12 May 2005
Inspector	Lynne Naylor

Setting Address	St Lukes Church Hall, Kirklake Road, Formby, Merseyside, L37 2DF
Telephone number	01704 571 920
E-mail	reganclan@hotmail.com
Registered person	Catherine Mary Regan
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 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?

Pine Pixies Pre School (Kirklake Road) opened in 2002. It operates from a parish hall in Formby, Liverpool. A maximum of 26 children from two to under five years may attend at any one time. The group is open each weekday, term time only, from 09:00 to 13:15. There is a small enclosed grassed area for outdoor play.

There are currently 36 children from two years to four years on roll. Of these, 29 children receive funding for nursery education. The group supports children with

special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs nine staff, of which some work part-time. Four of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a recognised early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual dietary needs and preferences are carefully considered and met after consultation with their parents. They enjoy healthy snacks such as raisins and breadsticks with a choice of drinks. During the session children do not have independent access to drinking water. This hinders their ability to identify their own needs and drink when thirsty.

Children learn about personal hygiene through topic work and daily routines. They talk about germs and cleanliness as they wash the doll's clothes. Older children show a good understanding of personal hygiene practices as they visit the toilet independently and wash their hands. Staff provide good support for younger children and discreetly monitor older children as they see to their own toileting needs. This promotes children's independence well. Children are kept healthy due to hygienic nappy changing practices and clear recording systems for accidents and medicine administrations.

Children benefit from regular exercise in the fresh air. In the garden, they enjoy free play and planned activities such as an obstacle course. Children have a good awareness of space. Indoors and outdoors, they confidently negotiate space and manoeuvre wheeled toys safely.

Children have good opportunities to develop their fine motor skills. They manipulate dough well using their hands and a range of implements. They also use construction sets well. At snack time, children use small knives with increasing control to spread jam on their bread. A few children stay for lunch, they show good levels of personal independence and skill, for example, by spooning their choice of tuna or cheese on to their pasta.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move freely and safely in a secure hall where hazards are minimised. Carefully organised procedures such as the use of passwords ensures children leave with a known adult. Children are kept safe at arrival and departure times due to staff's close monitoring of the door.

Toys and equipment, which are regularly checked for safety, successfully meet the needs of the children who attend. Children play safely due to very good levels of staff

supervision. They are well aware of safety rules. Occasionally they are also gently reminded of safety rules by staff which encourages them to take responsibility for their own actions.

It is not clear in the documentation how child protection concerns are reported, if the designated person can not be contacted. This hinders staff's ability to take prompt action, however, children are protected as basic procedures relating to Child Protection are known to staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter the group happily. They confidently choose where and with whom they wish to play. Children carefully follow instructions and relate well to each other and adults. Younger children are well supported to spend their time purposefully. Children enjoy a broad range of activities which successfully promote their creative development. They draw with a wide range of coloured pencils, pens and crayons. They also enjoy free access to the painting easel and express their thoughts well. They join materials together well using glue and tape to make models. Children play together imaginatively in the role play area and with small world equipment such as a dolls house, cars and train set.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage. This is shown in the long term plans and the well thought through range of exciting activities which children enjoy on a daily basis. For example, planting, making fans, mixing paint colours. However, a lack of focus on the learning intention when delivering the activities hinders children's individual progress. There are times when the size of groups is too large for children to be fully involved in the activity. For example, they wait for their turn to complete the obstacle course and wait again when they have had a turn. Children bring items from home to talk about with the group. However, little time is allocated for the activity and the group is too large for all children to hear and take an interest. This means children do not fully engage or gain full benefit from the activity.

Useful assessment systems are used to identify and record children's steady progress through the stepping stones. The link between the assessments of children's learning and the future planning is not clear. Therefore, activities although exciting are not extending children's learning from their known starting point. Consequently best use is not made of activities to promote individual children's learning.

Children are good listeners, confident speakers and enthusiastic singers. Many children correctly name and match numerals on worksheets and count correctly when asked, for example, whilst playing or drawing. Older children are beginning to write recognisable letters. Children have less opportunity to use their knowledge of numbers to solve practical problems in every day situations.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children know and understand the rules which are consistent. They effectively negotiate with each other and take responsibility for their behaviour. They are well-behaved, polite, take turns and show concern for others.

Children learn about the wider world as they meet people from the community and take part in fundraising events. On a daily basis, children have little access to positive images of culture and disability. However, they enjoy craft activities based on their own festivals and celebrations and a few others such as Chinese New Year and Diwali.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. In addition to the interesting activities, children's eagerness to attend is due, in part, to the staff and parents friendly relationship. Children's individual care needs are well met due to good verbal exchanges of information between parents and staff. Prior to children commencing at the group parents complete an initial assessment form. The forms are well devised and the information is useful and used by staff to successfully promote children's physical needs. Parents of children who receive nursery education are less well informed about the curriculum and their child's progress. Information parents provide about their child is not formally used to promote children's learning. Parents receive newsletters which inform them about the topics being covered. They are not informed of how to extend learning at home, nor do they yet contribute to the formal assessment records.

In practice, children with identified special needs are well supported. This is due to effective systems to provide support and good links with external agencies. However, the documented policy regarding special needs is not kept updated in line with current guidance.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Every day, the dedicated staff team thoughtfully organise the hall in to welcoming work areas. Consequently, children enter happily and choose where they wish to play from a wide range of activities. At the role play and writing areas mobile storage units are used well to provide children with a choice of extra equipment. This is not extended to all areas which limits children's ability to initiate and extend their own play. Children have a good sense of belonging. They cheerfully greet each other and are warmly welcomed by staff. Some of their art work is displayed at low level which adds to the welcoming atmosphere.

Children's safety and welfare is promoted as policies and procedures are followed effectively by staff. Useful record keeping systems are in place which keep information about children and their families confidential. The lack of a regular reviewing system means policies are not kept updated so current advice and national

guidance is not always available to staff. For example in Child Protection and Special Needs. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Since the last inspection, four staff, of which one has been promoted to supervisor, have achieved appropriate child care qualifications. This means the required minimum staff qualifications are met and staff have an improved knowledge of child care which in turn benefits the children.

Management and staff have a commitment to build on the quality of the provision. Informal induction systems ensure new staff are aware of the policies and procedures required to protect children and keep them safe. An appraisal system has not been fully implemented and informal monitoring systems do not identify weaknesses in teaching. This leads to inconsistencies in children's opportunities.

Improvements since the last inspection

This is the first nursery education inspection. At the last care inspection, one action relating to meeting staff qualification requirements was agreed. Three recommendations were set relating to the staff induction and appraisal procedures; opportunities to further develop children's independence; and children's access to activities and resources that promote anti-discriminatory practice.

Since the last inspection, four staff have achieved appropriate child care qualifications. This means the required minimum staff qualifications are met and staff have an improved knowledge of child care which in turn benefits the children.

A staff recruitment procedure is included in the operational plan. Induction and appraisal procedures are currently informal and not yet included in the operational plan. A formal appraisal system is not yet fully implemented.

Children choose activities from a wide range set out. They help themselves to crockery at snack time and spread their own jam on bread. Older children are discreetly supervised by staff as they visit the toilet unaccompanied. This keeps them safe whilst enabling them to show good personal independence. Children confidently put on their own aprons for painting and coats when playing outside. Children's personal independence is being promoted through the daily routine.

On a daily basis, children still have access to a limited range of resources that reflect positive images of culture and disability. They do, however, enjoy craft activities based on their own festivals and celebrations and a few others such as Chinese New Year and Diwali. This helps to promote their awareness of the wider world.

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):

- regularly review the policies and procedures to ensure they are in line with current legislation and guidance particularly those relating to child protection and special needs.

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):

- introduce a rigorous system to monitor the consistency and delivery of the planned curriculum.
- identify, in planning, the learning intentions and adult role; and review the organisation of group activities so children can fully engage and gain full benefit of the learning experience.

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