

Pipit Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY253045
Inspection date	22 May 2007
Inspector	Michele, Karen Beasley
Setting Address	27 Finch Road, Eastney, Portsmouth, Hampshire, PO4 9LT
Telephone number	02392 296 455
E-mail	
Registered person	Naval Under Fives
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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

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?

Pipit pre-school was established over 20 years ago, and opened in these present premises in 2003.

The pre-school operates from a converted ground floor flat in the Eastney area of Portsmouth. This group is one of eight pre-school provisions which are run under the management of the Naval Under Fives. The pre-school has sole use of the premises which includes a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

The pre-school primarily serves children from the local naval community, although they also welcome children from the surrounding area. The pre-school offers appropriate support to children who have additional needs and English as an additional language.

The pre-school is open Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15 until 11:45.

There are three members of staff who work directly with the children, two of whom have a level three qualification in early years. All staff attend in service training to regularly update

their knowledge of childcare. There are currently 11 children on roll; of these eight children are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The local authority supports the pre-school and visits are made to the group, these include having quality teacher input and advice from the area special educational needs co-ordinator.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn to follow personal hygiene routines as they are reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet and before snack time. Staff encourage the children to wash and dry their hands themselves using paper towels or a low level hand dryer. Staff implement procedures to ensure hygiene levels are maintained, for example, tables are wiped with anti-bacterial spray after each use helping to prevent the possible spread of infection. Children's health is maintained because most practitioners have relevant first aid training and know how to deal with accidents and the administration of medication, which are recorded.

Children delight in opportunities to sit with their peers and socialise with each other at snack time. Children begin to learn about healthy eating as they are introduced to a range of fruits at snack time. Children are given the opportunity to count how many children are on their table. Their self care skills are mostly promoted as children are encouraged to peel their own satsumas and bananas and pour their own drinks. However, practitioners cut up apples, eggs and cheese for the children and butter crackers, which limits opportunities for them to fully develop their independence. Water is available in individually labelled bottles throughout the session.

Children enjoy daily opportunities to engage in physical activities and benefit from the use of an enclosed grassed area. This helps them to develop their understanding of the importance of taking regular exercise as part of a healthy lifestyle. Children play out in light rain and delight in catching the rain on their tongues. They participate in team games such as running and playing with a large parachute. Children plant and learn to care for radishes, french beans, peas, cress and sun flowers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a safe environment, daily informal safety checks are carried out on the provision. Appliances such as fire extinguishers and sockets are checked and certified every year by the landlord of the premises. Children are made aware of dangers through general conversation and consistent rules, for example, they know they must not run in the setting. Children learn how to keep themselves safe by practising fire drills. The front door is kept locked and visitors have to sign in and out of the building, keeping the premises and children secure and ensuring that no unvetted visitors have access to the children.

Children feel at home in a comfortable and welcoming environment. Their work is valued as it is displayed around the walls promoting children's confidence and sense of belonging. Children use a varied range of suitable and safe equipment, which they self-select from open shelving units, enabling them to be independent and make their own choices about what they play with.

Children are well protected because all staff have a clear understanding of child protection and the procedures to follow if concerns are identified, keeping the children safe. Policies and

procedures are in place and shared with parents to ensure they are aware of the settings responsibilities. All existing injuries and incidents are recorded and parents sign to acknowledge the entries, helping to keep children safe and protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children interact well with practitioners keen to share their experiences with them. They become skilful communicators as they are encouraged to talk about experiences such as what they did at the week-end and the weather. They gain in confidence because practitioners value their ideas and contributions. Children have many opportunities to make their own choices about the resources they play with and confidently choose from the selection practitioners make available as well as independently accessing jigsaws and construction equipment.

Practitioners have an understanding of the Birth to three matters framework, but have yet to implement the planning of activities around it. Presently, activities are adapted if necessary to the needs of the younger children, ensuring that their needs are being met.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. All staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage. This enables them to plan a stimulating, well-balanced programme overall, which covers the six areas of learning. Observations of children's progress are ongoing, and the systems to record children's achievements have been improved since the last inspection. This information is used satisfactorily to plan the next stage in children's individual learning. As a result, older and more able children are sufficiently challenged across all areas.

Most resources are used effectively throughout the day, children have opportunities to self-select resources for emergent writing. Children have the opportunity to write their own names on the back of their work which encourages early writing skills. Children are beginning to understand that text has meaning as they handle books independently and make good use of the book area. Children have the opportunity to take library books home with them.

Daily routines are balanced and allow opportunities for children to focus on one-to-one tasks and in small group activities. However, opportunities to promote children's understanding of sounds and letters is limited during the session. Staff have a clear understanding of the development needs of all children, they know when to stand back and let play develop naturally and when to step in, during planned activities offering guidance and support as necessary to help children reach their full potential. Children's free play is used effectively by practitioners to consolidate their knowledge and promote their learning as practitioners move around the learning environment led by the children.

Children's social skills are developing well, they are keen and eager to join in the activities, asking questions to learn more, showing curiosity such as shining torches under the table where it is darker. Children show good levels of concentration and become engrossed in the activities provided such as hiding vehicles in hard pasta, playing on the computer and drawing around animal templates. Children confidently suggest new ideas when putting together the train track and co-operate well during tidying up time.

Children have many opportunities to use and handle a good range of natural materials such as sea-weed and shells. They enjoy choosing and using everyday technology such as telephones,

binoculars, calculators, tape measures and torches. Children have a good sense of time and place, as they recall past events such as the week-end and birthdays. They use their imaginations extremely well pretending to have made and cooked a pizza during role-play.

Children count and learn about shapes and numbers through planned activities. Sufficient attention is paid to developing their understanding of the comparison of number and concepts of size, weight and measure through measuring how tall they are and weighing out the ingredients for cooking activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a positive attitude towards themselves and others and develop a sense of belonging as they form good relationships with practitioners and their peers. They negotiate, share resources and take turns as they involve themselves in their play. Children are valued as practitioners praise them continually and show good confidence and self-esteem, for example as they share their achievements such as putting on dressing up clothes correctly. Younger children who do not settle immediately on arrival are well supported by practitioners who are sensitive to their needs and value them as individuals.

Children develop an understanding of different cultures and explore the world around them as they learn about themselves and others through activities such as wearing ear plugs to discover the needs of hearing impaired people. This helps them to value other people, and increase their understanding of the differences and similarities between themselves and others. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children's behaviour is satisfactory. Practitioners help children to understand why some behaviour is not appropriate such as kicking one another, this approach is consistent when staffing levels are above the minimum legally required. However, when minimum staffing levels are in place it is extremely difficult for staff to engage and manage groups of children during structured activities due to the children's varying concentration spans.

Children benefit from positive informal relationships between practitioners and parents. Children's progress is discussed informally and formally. Opportunities to encourage parents to be fully informed and discuss children's ongoing progress and achievements have been developed since the last inspection. The partnerships with parents is satisfactory. Links with parents and outside agencies are fully secure to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities and English as an additional language to ensure achievable goals are provided to all children. Currently there are none in attendance. Parents are informed about topics and the curriculum through regular newsletters and the introduction of home link books. Developmental records are sent home every half-term, which gives parents opportunities to follow and extend their children's development at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit because practitioners work together as a team and communicate through regular meetings and daily discussions to ensure the children's care and wellbeing is promoted. The management structure is satisfactory and all practitioners have clear roles and responsibilities on a daily basis ensuring they understand what is expected of them, which promotes team work.

Practitioners are supported by management both formally and informally through daily discussions and opportunities to review staff performance and development, for example through appraisal meetings which are on a regular basis. Effective systems are in place to ensure checks are carried out on practitioners and they have relevant qualifications and experience of working with children. Procedures to recruit, appoint and induct new staff are satisfactory and ensure ongoing suitability, which maintains children's safety. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. Management recognise strengths within the provision and are aware since the last inspection to make improvements. Topics and activities are evaluated by staff, and systems to monitor the impact these have on individual children's progress towards the Early Learning Goals are being adequately developed. However, the deployment of the minimum amount of staff on several days are not always effective in consolidating children's behaviour and promoting children's learning, in particular learning opportunities to build on children's understanding of sounds and letters.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last nursery education inspection, the quality of nursery education was judged to be inadequate and four actions were raised. The setting was asked to improve the systems to monitor and record children's achievements and develop the systems to ensure the information is used to plan the next steps in their individual learning; improve partnership with parents to share information about the pre-school curriculum and children's individual progress towards the early learning goals and how they can extend learning at home; implement systems to monitor and support the pre-school staff to enable the improvement of practice and the effective delivery of the curriculum and ensure planning is in place to cover all areas of the curriculum sufficiently and to inform staff of the aims and objects for children's learning.

Improvements have been made in all areas. Observations of children's progress are ongoing, and the systems to record children's achievements have been developed. This information is used satisfactorily to plan the next stage in children's individual learning. As a result, older and more able children are sufficiently challenged across all areas. Parents are informed about topics and the curriculum through regular newsletters and the introduction of home link books. Developmental records are sent home every half-term, which gives parents opportunities to follow and extend their children's development at home. The management of the group have identified training needs as a result of the previous inadequate inspection and some training sessions have been undertaken with early years professionals supporting the group. Planning is in place to cover all the areas of the curriculum and staff have an adequate understanding of the aims and objectives of children's learning.

The setting was also recommended to improve the organisation of time, resources and staff to ensure children are provided with a balanced range of learning and play opportunities and are supervised appropriately at all times. With an extra member of staff working two days a week, the management of children's behaviour is consistent. However, whilst improvements have been made to staffing, when the member of staff is not working, staffing is to a minimum, which impacts on the way the group can operate. Therefore, another recommendation has been raised with regards to staffing levels. Children have many activities to choose from and are all busy and occupied. Children can self-select other resources and equipment freely if they want to do something else. Resources are stored in labelled large accessible storage boxes and on open shelving which enables the children to develop confidence and independence.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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):

- develop opportunities for children to prepare their own snack

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):

- improve the deployment of staff to ensure all children are fully involved, particularly with regards to managing children's behaviour and ensure effective learning takes place in all aspects of the session to build on children's understanding of sounds and letters.

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