

# Manthorpe Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	253484
<b>Inspection date</b>	02 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Ann Keen
<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 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?

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, Lincolnshire. The areas used by the children consist of two rooms, toilet facilities and two enclosed outdoor play areas one of which has safety surfacing.

A maximum of 32 children may attend the group at any one time. There are currently 42 children on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for nursery education. The group currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are currently no children with English as an additional language on roll. The group opens Monday to Friday 09:00 to 11:45, and Monday 12:30 to 15:00, term time only.

In total, eight members of staff work with the children throughout the week, five of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards a degree. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children are protected against infection well because staff follow suitable hygiene routines. When changing nappies they use aprons and gloves to minimise the risk of infection. Children are competent at washing their hands so they are learning appropriate hygiene practices and use individual paper towels to avoid the spread of germs. Children are cared for in a clean and well-maintained environment, therefore promoting good health care. Children are supplied with healthy snacks such as tomatoes, toast and the apples they eat are often picked from their own tree. Children are taught about food through growing their own potatoes which they harvest and use to make their own soup. The pre-school provides water which children can access at any time and milk is also given to children at snack time ensuring they do not go thirsty. Staff hold current first-aid certificates, they record accidents and keep a suitably equipped first aid box enabling them to react to emergencies appropriately.

Children have a suitable range of resources to support their physical development. They have good opportunities to have fresh air and exercise. They play on wheeled toys and younger children enjoy using the small climbing frames. Children enjoy physical activities and children are able to choose to practise their skills in the outside area and inside in the spacious hall. Children develop their balancing abilities well through using balance beams, helped by adults. Activities like mark making and painting are used well to develop control and manipulative skills.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment. Children are suitably protected as doors are locked preventing intruders entering and the fences are high and securely locked. Children play in a spacious, well-planned room with an adequate amount of space in which to move and play. The equipment and resources are child height and accessible, developing their independence well and enabling them easy access to resources, reducing the risk of accidents. All equipment is fit for purpose and children have access to good quality resources. This ensures that children are well protected from hazards. Fire safety procedures are in place and staff undertake evacuation practices with the children at regular intervals. The kitchen is gated and children are not normally allowed in there so they are well protected from danger. The under threes are helped suitably to understand boundaries to ensure their safety.

A high level of supervision also promotes children's safety as staff monitor their activities. Staff ensure positive steps are taken to promote all aspects of safety both inside and outside. However, staff are not so vigilant about ensuring parents always give permission for walks in the village. Children are appropriately safeguarded from harm as the facilities are regularly checked and informal risk assessments are carried out on a daily basis such checking the car park for litter. There is a suitable child protection policy and staff are generally knowledgeable about their roles.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and relaxed as a consequence of good relationships with staff. They enjoy their time at the playgroup and younger children are making good progress in their leisure and personal development. Group times are well organised so children are involved and have a good variety of activities. Younger children are delighted at being given their own 'bun' when singing songs such as 'Five currant buns'.

Children are building confidence and self-esteem as the staff pay attention to them, constantly helping them and staff are attentive to children's preferences. Children are gently helped to learn to take turns when going on the climbing frame. Children's care and play is well supported through a variety of play opportunities like creating harvest pictures, painting and investigating toys in the sand. They are helped to realise the social skills required to be part of a group and reminded not to throw toys, for example. Children are supported in getting used to the routines through patient guidance and sensitive attention. They benefit from staff's knowledge of the 'Birth to three framework', ensuring children receive a well-planned programme of activities. The under threes are learning to be skilful communicators through staff's helpful guidance; they engage them in conversation and listen to their replies.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff use their knowledge of the Foundation Stage to provide a wide range of activities to help children learn. Plans relate to the six areas of learning and show clear learning intentions so staff are aware of what they want children to learn. The teaching methods show a sound understanding of how children learn and progress, for example, children are given props when telling a story to help them understand. Generally, the levels of challenge hold children's interest and provide them with new experiences such as growing vegetables, making their own playdough and decorating the village pump house. Staff know the children in their care well and assess their development regularly. They are becoming adept at identifying children's progress. Staff use their observations of children to record that progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. However, they do not always use that information accurately to ensure children's progress to the next step of their learning, when they are ready. Staff work hard to manage children's behaviour. They are kind and praise them to promote good behaviour. Consequently staff create a pleasant and welcoming environment in which children are happy. Staff generally make effective use of time and resources so they provide an interesting and varied programme of activities on a daily basis. They organise the room to provide specific zones for areas of learning. The accommodation is used appropriately to ensure children have space to move, times for vigorous physical activity and quiet times so children are able to decide what they want to do.

Children confidently make their own constructions using commercially produced materials, supporting their imaginations and co-ordination. Through using small world scenarios such as the doll's house, children learn to develop their imaginations effectively. Children engage in activities that help them to express their ideas and develop their creative skills, like creating scenarios at the 'estate agents' and role play at the 'flat'. They produce a variety of creative work such as using papers to make 'fruit', creating shapes with playdough and their own paintings. Children are generally interested in the activities on offer, they thread ribbons along a trellis outside, which helps to develop their co-ordination well. Children play outside regularly although the sessions are not planned with funded children in mind to develop their individual skills sufficiently well, specifically in developing movement. They participate and become

involved, slowly developing their confidence. Children's positive self-esteem is evident in their ability to react to visitors confidently. Children learn that the letter of the week is 'i' and identify the sounds that letters start with by singing songs such as 'Incy, wincy, spider'. They participate in suitable activities to learn to make marks and 'write' in the 'estate agents'. Children are learning to form the shapes of the letters of their names. Children are generally well behaved and are learning to work together with others co-operatively. They are interested in group activities and listen to 'Ten in a bed', successfully helping to develop their ideas of numbers and how they decrease. They learn that mathematics is everywhere around them by counting how many children are present and putting trikes in numbered bays. Children experience a range of musical activities like singing action songs, such as 'If you're happy and you know it clap your hands'. This supports their creative skills suitably. Children learn to play musical instruments and are supported by visiting musicians. Children are lucky to have a staff member who plays the piano to which they can sing nursery rhymes.

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

The provision is good.

The staff are aware that some children have learning difficulties and /or disabilities and take appropriate action. They welcome children with special needs and they are committed to liaising with parents to provide for children's needs and promote equality of opportunity. Children are well supported through individual play plans and good liaison with the local authority. Children are learning to play alongside each other well and under threes are developing good social skills. Children are learning to understand responsible behaviour, helped by the staff to appreciate what is acceptable and what is not acceptable. Children are treated kindly and with care so they learn to feel valued and self-assured. The children have good sense of belonging and they clearly feel confident and happy whilst in the care of the staff at the playgroup. Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered.

Staff are aware of the requirements to have a complaints procedure and that should the need arise any complaints must be shared with parents. Parents receive regular newsletters informing them about events and there is sufficient exchange of information to support the children's care. Parents fill in forms on entry ensuring staff have contact information and essential information to make children's stay safe and enjoyable, such as finding out about allergies.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents are provided with information about the Foundation Stage. Children benefit from a two-way exchange of information as parents are well informed about their children's progress and are able to discuss children's records with staff. Opportunities for discussion are provided through events such as parents' evenings when parents can talk to keyworkers about their individual children. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their children's learning by taking sheets of ideas for activities home with them.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is enhanced by appropriately organised procedures. Documentation reflects the practice well and suitable policies are in place to provide for children's safety and well-being. These include health and safety, behaviour management and a fire evacuation plan. Overall children's needs are met. Children's records and registers are well maintained so children are well protected. This helps to safeguard children. Children are supervised appropriately at all

times and systems are in place to maintain good ratios of staff to children. They have staff meetings every Friday to plan for the children's activities so all staff are informed and aware of children's needs. The rooms are well organised to provide children with a broad and balanced programme of activities.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. Children are helped by appropriately trained staff, providing a sound basis for children's achievement. However, staff are only just starting to develop systems for staff appraisal to help improve the children's education, so they are not identifying where improvements need to be made sufficiently well. Therefore, they have yet to develop their own systems to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the setting adequately. However, the pre-school playgroup does use the expertise from the local authority which helps to improve the provision for children's education.

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

At the last education inspection the pre-school playgroup was required to improve the assessments and develop planning, particularly with regard to more able children. In addition they were required to develop systems to effectively monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education and ensure that staff are deployed effectively. Staff have been on many training courses and the setting has received significant support to improve their practice. They record observations and assessments regularly and use those assessments to identify children's stage of development. However, they are still developing accuracy in planning the next step in children's learning in all areas of learning. The setting has received help from the local authority to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. However, they are yet to create their own systems to ensure they are able to self-evaluate effectively. Staff are now deployed effectively so resources are used to help children's learning progress.

At the last care inspection actions to improve were required. The pre-school playgroup was required to ensure that the person left in charge in the event of an emergency has the appropriate experience, skills and ability for the role. New staff have been appointed and sufficient qualified staff are available to cover emergencies. They had to ensure Ofsted are informed of all significant changes or events and staff are now well aware of this need and have Ofsted telephone numbers readily available so they are able to make contact if needed. Staff are now deployed effectively to provide for children's care.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection 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 by Ofsted.

## **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 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):

- take positive steps to promote safety on all outings.

### **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 systems to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education
- plan effectively for the next step in children's learning
- develop planning for the outside play area to ensure children's progress.

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