

Boulton Lane Park Pre-school Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206124
Inspection date	22 May 2007
Inspector	Justine Ellaway
Setting Address	Boulton Lane Community Centre, Boulton Lane, Derby, Derbyshire, DE24 0BD
Telephone number	01332 573 858
E-mail	
Registered person	Derby City Council
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

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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Boulton Lane Pre-school Playgroup opened in May 1982 and operates from Boulton Lane Community Centre, Alvaston, Derby. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 09.15 to 11.45 and Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 12.30 to 15.00 during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 26 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 20 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local community. The pre-school supports children with learning disabilities and/or difficulties.

The pre-school employs five members of staff and one volunteer. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted in the setting. Staff follow appropriate hygiene procedures, for example, they tidy up after each messy activity and wipe the tables before snack. Children wash their hands at appropriate times during the session. Regular discussions take place so that children understand why they need to wash their hands so that they wash off the invisible germs. A clear sick policy is in place which is shared with parents and children usually access liquid soap to minimise the risk of cross-infection.

Children receive appropriate care when they are ill. There is a clear medication policy and appropriate recording of accidents which are signed by parents. Written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment has been requested to ensure children's health needs are met in the event of an emergency. The setting seeks permission from parents to use non-standard first aid items to ensure that children do not have any allergies. A member of staff has an appropriate first aid qualification, however on the odd occasion she is not present during a session. The risk to children is significantly minimised because other staff members have first aid knowledge gained through qualifications that have recently lapsed.

Children have frequent and varied opportunities to be active and enjoy physical exercise. Child sized gym equipment is set out in the main hall each day which children thoroughly enjoy playing with. There is a daily exercise session where children are encouraged to move in different ways such as bending, stretching and doing star jumps. Children join in enthusiastically and show good control. They are effective at finding their own space and moving around the setting without interrupting others. They regularly use different tools such as scissors, paintbrushes and pencils and show good control of their small muscle development, for example, children carefully cut uncooked spaghetti with scissors.

Children learn about healthy living through activities and discussion. They look at healthy foods and make sandwiches with healthy fillings. They talk about how exercise affects your body before and after their exercise session and look at the changes to their cheeks and how hot they feel.

Children are well nourished. They enjoy a healthy snack of different fresh or dried fruits, vegetables or toast. They have milk to drink at snack time and can help themselves to a drink any time from the water cooler to ensure they do not become thirsty. Children's independence is well promoted at snack time. All children, including those who are two years old, get a cup and then pour their own drink and help themselves to the food.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The pre-school is based in a welcoming and bright environment. There are colourful displays of the children's work, along with a display of the children's birthdays to promote a sense of belonging. There is a good amount of space which is well organised. The large main hall has separate areas for different types of activities which means that children can play without interruption. The separate book corner at the side offers a quiet space for children. Children move freely and safely between the main hall and the side room promoting their independence. There are a good range of toys and resources and a varied range is laid out each session. Free

play areas are well resourced such as the role play area which has a variety of items including a kitchen, food, crockery, cutlery, dolls, a notepad and a phone. Children enjoy playing with the toys and resources and engage in play for long periods of time. They move happily around the setting choosing what they play with.

Children's safety is well promoted. There are clear written procedures for a lost or uncollected child. Checks are undertaken at the beginning of the session to ensure the rooms are safe for children. Effective procedures ensure that children are safe when they are dropped off or collected. Regular fire drill practices are carried out to ensure children know to keep calm in the event of an emergency evacuation. Children's safety is promoted outdoors as staff check the outside before children play. When the children go on any outings high staff ratios are maintained. The setting has sole use of the premises during opening hours and the safety policy discourages visitors when children are present.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe through activities, discussion and reminders. Staff carefully explain why something is unsafe, for example, when a child runs inside. Any expected visitors, are introduced to the children at the beginning of the session as they have learnt about the importance of not talking to strangers.

Children's welfare is fully promoted in the event of issues relating to child protection. The designated person is very clear on possible signs and symptoms and procedures for reporting. There is a clear written statement which includes the procedure to follow if there is an allegation against a member of staff. A log sheet is available to record any concerns and the setting has information from external agencies for reference.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy attending the pre-school. Staff greet them when they arrive and comfort and distract them until they are settled. As a result children separate well from their carers. A very calm atmosphere has been developed by staff and as a result children feel secure. They are unafraid to talk to staff, to approach them or tell them of their needs such as telling a staff member when they have finished a painting. Children's independence is well promoted as they can move around the activities and choose what they want to do and when.

Children engage in a varied range of activities and play opportunities to support their learning and development. During a session they enjoy free play, a creative activity, story, singing, circle time discussion and physical play. Staff engage and interact well with the children. As children play staff join in with their games and effectively support children to learn whilst enjoying what they do. Several children pick up some musical instruments and a staff member joins them. They establish how you play each instrument and then sing a song and play their instruments at the same time. The children thoroughly enjoy this activity.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Planning is clear and links between the long, medium and short term planning are easy to identify. Although written planning does not show differentiation, staff are mostly able to describe how they would differentiate an activity and provide appropriate challenge. A staff member clearly describes how she makes an activity easier or harder when using compare bears with children of differing abilities. However, on the odd occasion staff

are not fully clear of how an activity can be differentiated and appropriate challenge provided. Evaluation of activities helps the staff who plan to identify if an activity needs to be repeated or if it should be done differently in the future. Appropriate systems are in place to monitor children's progress, these are regularly updated and reflect where children are at in terms of their stage of development. Staff use them to plan for children's next steps. Staff are very effective in encouraging children to try things for themselves and asking them questions to stimulate their thinking and learning. The use of time and resources is good. A varied session provides lots of different stimulation for children. A good range of toys and resources are laid out during free play, with good consideration given to the range particularly in the role play area. On occasion, resources in the creative area are not as varied.

Children are very independent, interested and motivated to learn. They play for long periods of time at activities that interest them. They are confident in moving around the setting, in their interaction with staff and others. They manage tasks independently, such as pouring their own drink at snack time or getting changed in the dressing-up area. They recognise the codes of behaviour and will come to the carpet at circle time or wash their hands for snack without any fuss.

Children are confident communicators who regularly converse with staff and other children. They make relevant comments in discussions. A child tells a staff member that in the cold weather she would need a hat as well as gloves to keep her warm. They use lots of imaginative talk in the role play area, pretending to be characters, negotiating their roles and explaining what they are doing to others. There are good opportunities to develop mark making and subsequently writing skills. Children frequently write both at the writing table and at other areas such as the role play area where a child writes a list of jobs to do. Children are frequently encouraged to write their own name on their art work. Children know how to use books and enjoy listening to stories, although they do not regularly visit the book corner on their own. They have good opportunities to recognise letters and familiar words as they select their name cards at different times during the session and furniture and other items are labelled. Children are beginning to recognise letter sounds as they learn these each day at circle time.

Children have lots of opportunities to learn to count as this is introduced frequently during the session. They count the number of children at circle time and then the number of boys and girls. They talk about which group has more or less to develop an understanding of calculating. Children recognise simple shapes.

Children are curious and interested. A child looks at a photo and notices that the person's hair has changed since the photograph was taken. Children have appropriate opportunities to look at living things. They are growing flowers in the outdoor area and a pictorial record helps them to identify the changes as the plants grow. They regularly explore textures of things as the messy area has a tray with different things in. Children play with cooked and uncooked pasta and talk about how they feel different. Children have some opportunities to design and make, although they are not regularly available. They enjoy playing with the different equipment that promotes an understanding of information communication technology. Opportunities to learn about a sense of time are regularly promoted at circle time as children talk about the day, month, the season and things that have happened previously. A sense of place is well promoted through using photographs of houses and landmarks in the area and then asking the children to find them as they go on a walk. Children enjoy some opportunities to learn about cultures and beliefs through activities such as looking at the food from different countries.

Children have daily opportunities to be creative and enjoy creative activities where they can do free drawing and painting as well as other planned activities such as marble painting. On occasion the layout of this area restricts children's participation. Children have good opportunities to explore sounds using musical instruments both through free play and planned activities. They enjoy playing with the instruments and recognise repeated sounds and patterns as they play along to songs. Children use their imagination well, particularly in the role play area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are met to ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of the children they care for. Information about the children is gathered at the time of placement such as what they are able to do, to ensure appropriate and consistent care is provided.

There is a clear equal opportunities policy, with a focus on children having access to all things as well as how diversity will be promoted. Children enjoy visits from people in the local community such as a police officer and dental hygienist as well as a visit from a disabled person with their helping dog. Children develop an understanding of the wider world through a satisfactory range of activities such as tasting food from different countries.

Children behave very well in the calm and comfortable atmosphere. They receive lots of praise and encouragement as they play. Children receive rewards for helping, for example, a child helps to tidy away the spilt sand and a staff member gives him a sticker. They play well with others and older children will show concern and consideration for other children, as an older child holds the hand of a younger child and takes her to an activity. Staff use appropriate methods to manage inappropriate behaviour to help children learn about right and wrong. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children with additional needs receive appropriate support, as staff are very committed to supporting children who attend. Information is recorded when external agencies provide information, advice or support, although currently the setting does not keep a log of work undertaken and any developments made to ensure consistency of information to all parties. A clear written policy outlines what support is given.

Parents receive useful information at the time of placement and through newsletters on the different topics and activities. Information on a child's progress is shared verbally with parents at the end of the session. A written record is in place for each child and additional permissions are gathered to promote consistency of care.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are provided with suitable information about the areas of learning within the Foundation Stage. They receive information about the activities and topics that the children will be doing, although this is not currently extended to include information specifically about what they can do at home with their child. Parents are able to access their child's development folders, although most of them do not see them until the child leaves the setting. Systems to gather information from parents on what they know about their child have not been developed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children receive a high level of support and care from staff who are qualified and experienced in childcare. Good staff ratios and staff deployment positively support children's care, learning and play. Staff position themselves carefully during the session so that children get interaction and support and at other times are able to play independently. The well established staff team, effectively support each other to provide good care for children. They arrive early so they can discuss the session before the children arrive and communicate constantly with others during the session.

A commitment to improving knowledge and skills through training positively impacts on the care provided for children. A training log is completed for each member of staff to list training undertaken and identify any future needs. Staff have attended a range of relevant training courses since the last inspection.

Good use is made of space, time and resources to provide a positive environment for children to play and learn. Children's welfare is protected as there are suitable procedures in place for checking all staff. Effective induction procedures ensure that new staff receive information that is relevant to their post. Policies and procedures are well organised and work in practice to promote children's health, safety and enjoyment, and staff demonstrate an understanding of them.

The leadership and management of funded nursery education is good. There is a clear focus and commitment to improve the quality of care for all children. Staff are receptive to feedback and regularly assess the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Evaluation forms are regularly updated when any changes have been tried and implemented. Monitoring and evaluation systems are successful in identifying whether there is a broad and balanced curriculum and if there are any gaps in children's learning. However, systems to monitor the delivery of activities have not been fully established.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Nursery Education inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure children have consistent opportunities to develop personal and fine motor skills; to continue to develop planning documentation and to ensure children's development and assessment records are shared with parents.

Children have lots of opportunities to develop their personal and fine motor skills through the daily routine and activities. They regularly use small tools such as paintbrushes and as a result are developing well in their fine motor skills. Planning has been developed so that it ensures children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Parents are able to access children's development records whenever they want to, although in practice this does not usually happen until the child leaves the setting.

At the last care inspection the pre-school was asked to consistently record sufficient detail of injuries, for example, location and size in the accident and incident books; ensure parents sign all records kept on their child and are aware they are kept in a confidential manner; implement the system devised of sharing development assessment records with parents, and include in

documentation a record when children arrive late or leave early and to obtain written permission for the taking of photographs of children at play.

Accident records contain sufficient detail to promote children's good health when they have an accident. Parents sign all records kept on their children, which are stored in locked filing cabinets. Parents are aware they can access them if they request to ensure consistency of care. Parents are informed they can access their child's development records if they want to see them so that they are informed about their child's progress. Registration records show when children arrive late or leave early. Written permission has been obtained to take photographs of the children. As a result children's safety is promoted.

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 to 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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 information regarding children with additional needs is consistently recorded and shared with appropriate parties
- ensure that there is a qualified first aider on the premises at all times.

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):

- ensure that all activities are clearly differentiated and that children are consistently challenged
- expand the partnership with parents so that they are given opportunities to contribute what they know about their child and provided with regular information about their child's progress.

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