

# Home Farm Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	226893
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 June 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Patricia Bowler
<b>Setting Address</b>	Home Farm Neighbourhood Centre, Home Farm Close, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE4 0SU
<b>Telephone number</b>	0116 2358511
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Leicester City Council (Lifelong Learning)
<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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Home Farm Playgroup opened in 1989. It operates from three rooms in a grade II listed building owned by the Local Authority in Beaumont Leys, Leicester. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. The playgroup opens each week day during term time and for two weeks during the summer holiday from 09.30 to 12.00. All children share access to a fully enclosed outside area.

There are currently 22 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup supports a number of children with learning difficulties and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs four full time members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children are protected from infection through diligent daily routines. These are effectively implemented by staff who have considerable knowledge of health and hygiene issues, which are supported through excellent policies to maintain children's health. Robust routines ensure all areas accessed by children are clean and well maintained. Children are extremely able and demonstrate a real desire to become independent in their personal care. They know to wear protective caps in the sand play area to prevent getting this into their hair and they play carefully to avoid getting sand in their eyes. They wash their hands before snack time and before engaging in the bread making activity where spontaneous discussions about food hygiene evolve as children talk about 'not spreading germs in the foods we eat'.

Parents are kept informed about health issues, sickness and accidents through meticulous recording systems, and regularly updated information ensures they can be contacted in an emergency. Staff are trained in first aid and a fully stocked first aid kit ensures children receive appropriate care.

Positive attitudes to exercise are encouraged as children benefit from proactive opportunities to take part in physical activities. They have weekly use of a large indoor hall where they enthusiastically partake in very well planned sessions including riding wheeled toys and ring games to improve skills in running, hopping and skipping. A fully enclosed area is available for outside play and children develop skills in climbing and balancing on a range of fixed equipment. Children enjoy a broad spectrum of music in organised music and movement activities. They excitedly dance to popular music and gain appreciation of classical music as they relax quietly at the end of the session.

Children benefit from a nutritious diet as they enjoy various fruits at snack time. Interesting conversations develop as they discuss where various fruits grow, talking about different climatic conditions and the need for rain and sun to make them grow. They learn about the nutritional content of foods through meaningful activities, such as bread making. They listen intently as staff explain about yeast as a raising agent and delight when their individual bread rolls are baked and are now 'huge' compared to the smaller balls of dough they formed. They make active choices about what to spread on their bread rolls as they enjoy these at snack time. Children's dietary needs are met effectively as these are discussed and recorded in detail with parents. A diluted juice alternative is provided to milk which is actively encouraged as children develop an awareness of vitamins to help with physical growth.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Diligent assessments, where risks are substantially minimised, ensure children play in a safe and secure environment. Significant attention is shown to the structure and presentation of activities to ensure children can move around freely and independently within the three rooms. Core activities, such as sand and water are presented in the messy room. Children sweep up spilt sand without adult direction as they learn to keep themselves safe and prevent accidents. The messy area doubles as the snack area and staff adopt successful strategies to ensure children access the steps to the area in small groups. They know to walk carefully as a staff member supervises them.

Children use high quality equipment which is systematically checked to ensure it is safe for purpose, age and developmentally appropriate. Resources are stored in low level units to be accessible to children as when required. They independently obtain envelopes in the mark making area, from a nearby drawer unit to support their play. Staff have acute understanding of encouraging children to be independent whilst setting safe limits, to maintain their safety. For example, they assist children accessing the water dispenser to prevent spilt water becoming a slip hazard.

Strong emphasis is given to helping children to understand how to keep themselves safe and they remind each other about taking care as they walk instead of running within the setting. They take part in regular emergency evacuation practices and walk carefully down the fire escape to meet at the designated meeting point. Clear arrangements are established if they are unable to return to the premises so that children can be cared for safely until collected by parents. Imaginative activities, including a visit from the local fire brigade, alert children to community safety services. They refer to photographs and quote advice about not accessing matches and 'getting outside straight away'. A recent activity about keeping safe when out and about includes a wall display about road safety. Children know about pedestrian crossings and seeking assistance from adults, such as the 'lollipop lady' when crossing roads.

Staff have an excellent, professional understanding of child protection issues, including the referral process which is detailed in the written policy. The policy is comprehensive and clear and is shared with parents to ensure they are fully informed about staff roles and responsibilities to protect children from harm. Excellent recruitment and employment procedures ensure children are cared for by qualified and experienced staff suitable for their role. Robust procedures are carried out to ensure children are protected from non-vetted persons, as visitors are not left alone with children and new staff are supervised during the vetting procedure.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children's progress is effectively planned, making excellent use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework incorporated into the Foundation Stage planning. Close and caring relationships are established with staff to increase children's sense of trust and self-worth. They benefit from the visually stimulating environment, with pictures, posters and displays to extend and support their development. Children develop positive interaction with peers as they are supported in acquiring skills to negotiate and take turns as they play.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. An excellent knowledge and implementation of the Foundation Stage ensures children are highly motivated and challenged to make rapid progress in their development. The rich and varied activities meet the needs of individual children exceedingly well, in a stimulating and welcoming environment which reflects their backgrounds and the wider community. Children's behaviour is managed extremely well as staff skilfully implement a positive behaviour policy to create a harmonious environment. Innovative teaching methods and rigorous assessment support children's development and the information gained is used extremely effectively to guide the planning. An excellent use of time and resources and diligent monitoring procedures enable staff to maintain the high standards of teaching.

Children make excellent progress because they are recognised as unique individuals. Time at registration is made to welcome children as they respond to an individual greeting. They count how many children are present and gain an awareness of early calculation as they decide if there are more boys or girls.

An extensive range of rich and stimulating activities which captivate children's imagination and challenge their thoughts are provided in three separate rooms. A messy area incorporates core activities, such as sand, water and a painting easel which are available at all times. Children at the water tray enact transporting pineapple tops on boats to extend their knowledge and understanding of imported goods. A discussion includes reference to pineapples coming from other countries including Malaysia. They work out how weight in the boats affects the levels in the water to gain an insight into floating and sinking. A collage activity captivates their interest as they make sunglasses choosing coloured cellophane for lenses. They eagerly look through this exclaiming gleefully that the staff member 'has gone red'. They use a range of tools skilfully including scissors and glue spreaders to create decorative frames. An optician's shop in the role play area successfully links to safe eye care as they engage in meaningful discussions and why spectacles are necessary for some people to correct their vision. They develop two handed skills as they use knives and forks in the dough activity.

Children engage enthusiastically in a bread making activity. They count spoons of bread mix and take it in turns to add water and mix the dough. Skilful explanation incites them to eagerly await the baked bread rolls to see if the yeast has worked. They delight at the aroma and the 'huge' rolls from the small dough rolls they made.

Excellent opportunities are incorporated to increase children's awareness of written text and phonics. They bring items from home beginning with the letter sound of the week and recognise their names at snack time. Mark making activities are available at all times and children are beginning to form recognisable letters. Some older children can write their names as they practise emergent writing. They carefully fold their work to fit into various sized envelopes referring to mathematical terms including halves and quarters, before posting these into the post box until they are retrieved and taken home at the end of the session.

Children listen intently to excellently narrated stories and eagerly join in action songs anticipating outcomes in familiar songs, such as 'going on a bear hunt'. They giggle delightfully as they perform 'songs' without the words.

Personal, social and emotional development is a strong element. Children are very determined in their personal care. They know which colour apron to wear for different creative activities and persevere to put these on independently only requesting help to secure back fastenings. They are highly motivated and enthusiastic as they make active choices about their activities and care. Children are sensitively supported in gaining high levels of self-control. They have an excellent awareness of right and wrong in line with their stage of development. Effective intervention from staff enables them to negotiate and become sensitive and respectful in their interaction with others. Overall, all children make outstanding progress in their levels of achievement.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from a robust equal opportunities policy which works exceptionally well in practice. Individual needs are discussed and recorded on detailed children's records to ensure their specific needs are met well. A strong commitment from staff ensures the inclusion of every child and they work collaboratively with parents and other agencies to meet children's individual needs. Children engage in new and exciting activities to enhance their confidence and self-esteem and foster their sense of worth and belonging. Sensitive recognition of their achievements are recognised as staff reward and praise their efforts.

Children gain high levels of self-control as they follow consistent methods and boundaries to increase their understanding of right from wrong. They talk about having 'kind hands' at registration before they go to play and looking after each other. Picture prompts are displayed within the setting and children implement some simple rules as they play. They understand about sharing and taking turns and remind each other not to push when waiting to wash their hands. They respond positively to gentle staff interaction when a dispute over mobile telephones erupts and accept compromises as they learn to share. Children know when it is time to tidy away as they are given a verbal prompt by staff that this time is approaching. This enables them to bring to a close any activities that they are involved in before ably assisting with this task. Children respond extremely well to staff's use of praise and encouragement to promote a harmonious atmosphere based on positive contribution.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. A comprehensive prospectus provides detailed information about the group and gives them an understanding about policies and working practice. Organised policy meetings ensure they are fully aware of current legislation and they are fully included in monitoring and evaluating these to further influence improvements to the high quality of care that children receive. Children receive consistent care in line with parental wishes. They are actively involved in the initial assessment to clearly identify what children can do on entry. Regular meetings with key workers ensure they are fully informed about children's progress and development, and agreed targets successfully identify the next steps in their learning. Exceptionally well organised workshops provide opportunities to view a recording of the playgroup in action to enhance parents' awareness of what children do and the value of learning through good quality play. They join sessions to experience activities first hand to assist in children's enjoyment and achievement. Partnerships are further enhanced as staff join parents and children, in the reception area prior to registration and engage in informal discussions.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered as children have extensive opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them. They learn about other countries in core activities, such as water play where they talk knowledgeably about exotic fruits, such as pineapples and how these are transported into the country on ships. Children enjoy playing in the Optician's role play area where resources including test charts and various spectacles increase their awareness of community services, and they eagerly discuss a recent visit from the local fire brigade referring to photographs displayed on the wall. Children learn about different cultures as they engage in innovative activities and celebrations.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Robust procedures for recruitment and employment are rigorously implemented and maintained. Staff are deployed effectively within the setting to support children's overall care and an effective key worker system ensures their individual needs are met and pertinent information is shared with parents. Excellent policies, which are successfully implemented, form a strong foundation to the exceptional high quality of care which children receive. Training and development needs are supported as staff attend various courses and events to further enhance their extremely high standards.

Registration systems accurately record children's attendance as parents sign them in and out as they arrive and collect their children.

All required documentation that contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is established and regularly reviewed. Confidentiality is rigorously maintained whilst ensuring parents are well informed and involved in children's care and learning.

Leadership and management is outstanding. Children benefit from a well organised routine and an excellent range of activities presented in a stimulating and highly motivated environment to maximise play opportunities. They spend their time purposefully as they are enthusiastically supported in their play, learning and development.

The care and education that children receive is significantly enhanced because staff have a sound understanding of nursery education and a commitment to implement this effectively. The leader is totally committed to enhancing and developing the setting through her own working practice and attendance at further training. She successfully motivates staff to identify areas of strength and improvement, and works conscientiously to ensure recording systems to monitor children's progress give clear direction for their ongoing learning and development. Individual learning outcomes are incorporated into the planning to ensure each child is highly valued and consequently make excellent progress towards the early learning goals.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection the playgroup were required to ensure the child protection statement includes clear procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff and to ensure the complaints procedure includes relevant information of the regulator and is available to parents.

The comprehensive child protection policy has been improved to include clear procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation against staff and the complaints procedure has been updated to inform parents of the procedure and ensure complaints are fully recorded and investigated.

In nursery education the setting was required to review the organisation of some sessions to ensure the inclusion of all children and to provide sufficient challenge for older and more able children. More opportunities and resources were required to enable children to be independent in their creative ideas.

Excellent planning now provides a wide and varied choice of activities. These are extremely well resourced and presented so that children can make active choices in all areas of their development. A very good balance of adult and child initiated opportunities allow children to express their creativity and imagination.

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

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### **The quality and standards of the care**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

#### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)