

Barnardo's-Learning Together

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	317472
Inspection date	03 July 2007
Inspector	Andrea, Marie Paulson

Setting Address	12 Wampool Place, Wigton, Cumbria, CA7 9SA
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Registered person	Barnardo's
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Sessional care, Crèche
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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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Barnardo's: Learning Together is run by Barnardo's as a pre-school facility which is part of a range of support services for families in the area. The group operates within housing on a local estate. The children have access to four play rooms and adjoining outdoor area. The High/Scope approach to pre-schooling is implemented in the layout of the activities and the accessibility of the play materials. The staff members are all qualified in child care with four staff, including the coordinator, having Level 3 National Vocational Qualification. Staff have regular training, including courses on food hygiene, child protection and first aid. The pre-school operates each weekday 09.15 to 11.45. There are currently 23 children who attend for varied sessions, 10 of whom receive nursery education funding. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and no children attend for whom English is a second language. The provision achieved accreditation in a quality standards scheme in 2004, which is valid for three years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff work closely with parents to promote children's health well by sharing and recording individual health and dietary needs. Children enjoy varied, nutritious snacks which include raisins, apples, oranges, yoghourts and a choice of water or milk. Staff ensure that children have enough to eat so that they are well nourished. Meal times are social occasions where children are encouraged to use good manners, develop healthy eating habits and interact socially with other children and adults.

Children rest and are active according to how they feel throughout the session. They learn how to keep themselves healthy as they follow effective hygiene practices, such as washing their hands ready for snack time. Children know to wear sun hats when out in the sun and learn that the play areas are kept clean as they tidy up and tables are wiped. Their understanding of good hygiene is demonstrated, for instance, by keeping tissues in their own pockets.

Children enjoy a wide range of frequent physical activities both indoors and outside. They develop good movement skills as they run, climb and balance on the outdoor equipment. Children ride on bikes and play with balls and hoops in the spacious garden. They have much freedom of movement indoors between the adjoining play areas and move around to music tapes and action songs. Their fine movement skills and coordination are developed well as they use crayons, scissors, paintbrushes, jigsaws and work out how to unscrew bottle tops and fasten buggy harnesses. The quiet room is well resourced with several big comfy cushions and sensory displays that create an environment where children can rest and relax.

Children's good health is further supported through the regular training of staff so that each child receives good individual care. The required records and parental consents help to ensure that children receive appropriate care. The level of staff involvement and interest in the children further promotes their health and general well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The pre-school unit provides a bright, warm and colourful environment in which children are very well settled. Four adjoining play rooms are well maintained and checked regularly to ensure good safety levels. Staff have a good level of awareness and are responsible for daily checks of the rooms before children arrive. A safe routine for the collection of children is very effective where staff ensure that children leave only with authorised adults. The premises is particularly secure both indoors and outside.

Resources in the playroom are arranged in a way that enables children to access them very easily and move around safely. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they sit properly, have shoe laces tied so as not to fall and think about having enough space to do a roly-poly. The emergency evacuation is practised regularly so that children are familiar with the procedure.

The interesting outdoor garden has several different play areas which children explore safely. It is fully enclosed, the sand pit is covered and safety surfacing covers a level piece of ground. The wooden fencing around the sand pit enclosure has been done recently and has not yet been completed, so that some of the wood is still rough enough to cause a hazard. Staff members actively supervise the children and are particularly alert to potential dangers. Small toys that

children can trip over while running around, such as toy cars, are removed and the use of the hopper is kept to level ground rather than uneven slopes.

Staff have good knowledge and experience of child protection issues and procedures. They are regularly trained to keep up to date and are supported through the Barnardo's management structure. Children, therefore, are particularly well safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children choose freely from a stimulating range of interesting resources which are easily accessible to them and are effective in developing their independence, confidence and self-esteem. They are eager to join in with activities and their ideas and work receive positive responses from staff, so that they feel valued. Children enjoy their time at the pre-school and actively participate in the many activities available, such as outdoor play, role play, craft and making music. Children develop good relationships as they play with each other and with staff, who show a high level of interest in them as individuals. They concentrate well and feel a sense of achievement as they finish jigsaws, develop cutting out skills and work the computer mouse with increasing skill. Staff use their knowledge and observations well so that the needs of each child are met.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff plan activities which are linked to all the areas of learning. They work closely to share observations which are used to assess children's learning so that each child progresses towards the early learning goals. Staff work well together to develop a stimulating environment with interesting and challenging activities for children, sometimes building on children's own ideas, such as having a spontaneous music session. Children access all the play areas throughout the session due to the effective deployment of staff. Staff know the children well as individuals and interact closely with them to offer support when needed and to encourage their participation.

Children have many opportunities to develop communication skills as they play together, discuss the weather and share resources. They have ready access to books and often choose to look at them in the comfy quiet room. Children enjoy nursery rhymes and action songs so are becoming familiar with word patterns. The writing table is resourced to encourage children to create their own notes. They recognise familiar words through effective labelling of the play areas and resources. Children learn their own name through various ways and show increasing skill in writing their names. They learn to recognise some letters by shape and sound through planned activities but opportunities to reinforce this learning are not frequent enough. Children learn to listen well at story time and following instructions on how to use the computer.

Children have several spontaneous opportunities to practise counting, such as the flowers, bears and card games. They learn to link counting with the number symbols through activities and resources on the number table. However, there are fewer opportunities to develop calculating skills, such as basic adding and subtracting. Children learn to recognise shapes through activities, but opportunities to reinforce learning by identifying shapes in their environment are not regular enough. Children learn about volumes and weights as they use containers of different sizes in the sand tray. They use mathematical language as they discuss 'big' and 'little' animals in the small world activity.

Children learn about living things through topics such as 'flowers and butterflies'. They are fascinated as they study worms found in the garden. Children explore the weather theme each session when they observe and share ideas, which are then linked to creative activities and displays. Children's Information Technology skills are well promoted as they become increasingly skilled in using the computer mouse and following programmes. They have many opportunities to use tools and to build models through craft activities and construction equipment. Children become familiar with the world around them through strong community links.

Children move around confidently and with increasing control during physical play indoor and outdoors. They enjoy music through action songs, music tapes and by making sounds with musical instruments. Children have a wide range of interesting resources and textured materials to enhance their creative experiences and stimulate their imagination.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about the wider world through topics, such as Chinese new year, when they take part in activities and make displays. They learn about their own community as they go on outings and have visits from local people who help in the community, such as the 'lollipop lady'. Children follow this up with making posters which include photographs of the visits. All children have the same access to all the resources so that each child fully participates. Staff have the skills and experience, along with the well established support network, to ensure that children with learning difficulties and disabilities take an active part.

Children are well behaved and learn to respond positively to consistent ground rules and appropriate explanations which reinforce good behaviour. They feel valued and build a high level of trust with staff who act as good role models. Staff remain calm, friendly and affectionate with children. They respond sensitively to situations so that children benefit from the settled atmosphere. Children learn responsible behaviour as they tidy up after them, are very gentle when a baby visits and are careful when studying worms out in the garden. They show initiative as they choose activities, for instance, older children choosing work sheets and then finding the materials needed to complete them. Their ideas are valued as staff build on these, such as providing musical instruments after children started banging out a rhythm on the table. Children feel that they belong as their names, photographs and own work are displayed, along with the high level of interest shown by staff. Children enjoy each other's company and learn to interact confidently with each other and adults, so learning to make positive relationships.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff and parents work closely as part of a good working relationship in the care of children. Individual details and consents are recorded after discussion. Parents are welcome into the pre-school where they talk informally with staff about the activities of the day, any significant events and their progress. Useful information about the pre-school is displayed. The policies and procedures are accessible and comprehensive. Parents are positive about the care provided and speak of the approachable staff and how the children enjoy their time at the pre-school. Interesting, illustrated information booklets about the learning areas are displayed which include photographs of children and what they learn from the activities.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff members are all professionally qualified in child care which is a strength of the provision. They are supported well through a clear management structure which is actively involved in organising the provision effectively and in the recruitment of staff. Children are settled and confident as staff work closely to maintain familiar routines and ensure that sessions run smoothly. The sessions are well organised and staff are well deployed in order to supervise children throughout the play areas. Children are provided with a bright and colourful environment both indoors and outdoors which stimulates their interest and so enhances their learning.

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

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The manager is qualified and experienced, with sound knowledge of the learning areas. She is clear about planning activities to cover all the areas of learning so that children's overall development is promoted. Staff work closely to implement the planning of nursery education, so achieving a generally satisfactory balance. Sound systems are in place to assess children's individual progress throughout their time at the provision, so supporting their satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. The manager meets regularly with staff who are all knowledgeable, skilled and committed to each child's development. Appraisals and training needs of staff are monitored to promote their professional development.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the pre-school was recommended to keep the nappy disposal unit more inaccessible to children, and to have fresh drinking water accessible to children at all times. These practices are in place to support the continuing health of children.

The policy statements on child protection and lost/uncollected children were to be reviewed. The policies are clear about the procedures so further supporting pre-school practices.

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.

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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):

- make safe that part of the outdoor fencing that has a rough surface

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):

- provide more opportunities for children to link sounds with letters and to recognise shapes as part of their environment so that their learning is further reinforced
- further extend mathematical development by providing regular opportunities for children to practise basic calculating skills.

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