

Lilliput Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221920
Inspection date	29 May 2007
Inspector	Denise May Smith
Setting Address	Drybread Road, Whittlesey, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE7 1XJ
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Registered person	Debbie Latham
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 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?

Lilliput Pre-School is a privately owned Pre-School. It opened in 2000 and operates from a mobile building situated in the grounds of Alderman Jacobs County Primary School in Whittlesey, Cambridgeshire. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.00 to 11.30 and 12.30 to 15.00 for 48 weeks of the year. All children share access to two secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 61 children aged from two to under five years on roll, all of whom receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area and the group currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene through consistent, daily activities. All of the children wash their hands appropriately. For example, before eating or after using the lavatory. Staff act as good role models by washing their own hands and cleaning the tables before and after meals. Children's health and welfare is promoted well because there are good systems in place to record accidents. Children receive appropriate treatment if they have an accident as all staff have up-to-date training in first aid. Emergency telephone numbers are easily accessible in case parents need to be contacted. The toys and resources are cleaned as required to ensure they remain suitable for the children to use.

Children sit together as a group at snack time. They enjoy eating a range of healthy snacks such as fruit and raw vegetables and are offered milk or water to drink. Most children bring in a water bottle daily, which they access independently, ensuring they are well hydrated. Staff take care to record any allergies or special dietary needs which children may have to ensure their individual needs are met.

Children develop their interest in physical activities as they play active games indoors such as 'What's the time Mr Wolf' and as they play outside in the two play areas. Children use the 'trim trail' on the field during school holidays.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in premises which are made bright and welcoming because children's work is displayed attractively on the walls and ceilings. The room is clean and routines include ensuring toys and resources are maintained and in a suitable condition for children to use. Children are encouraged to tidy up and clear away so that the floor is free from hazards. There are a good range of toys and resources available which are appropriate for the children's age and stage of development. However, these are mostly stored in cupboards and children are not encouraged to access them or make choices in their play, which limits their independence.

Regular daily checks ensure the suitability of the premises and staff are proactive in preventing accidents such as not having any hot drinks when children are present. Socket covers are in place and detergents are all stored together in one cupboard. However, this is not consistently kept locked making the dangerous substances accessible to children. Fire evacuations are practised which enables children to learn about keeping themselves safe. Staff are vigilant and implement good security procedures, such as checking any adults collecting children who are unknown to staff and ensuring the playroom door is kept secure.

Children's welfare is promoted. Staff have a sound understanding of the local child protection procedures and are in the process of organising further training to update their knowledge. Parents are well informed about the setting's responsibilities through an appropriate policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children quickly settle into the group and enjoy exploring the toys and activities set out for them during the free play part of the session, which lasts for the first 55 minutes. This is a busy, enjoyable time where children are able to explore and experiment as they build tents from lengths of material and play together as they roll buttons through different sized cardboard tubes. Staff work well with the children as they sit and play with them, supporting activities such as reading and wrapping parcels in the role play post office. However, after this initial fun and interesting time the children spend the rest of the session involved in whole group activities. This results in children spending long periods of time waiting for their turn, waiting for others to finish or waiting in line. Although some of the group activities are worthwhile such as children enjoying playing 'What's the time Mr Wolf', generally children become bored and disengaged.

Children are relaxed in the company of the staff and are comfortable to approach them, share their news or a story as they wish. The overall planning takes into account the 'Birth to three matters' framework because a minority of the children are under the age of three when they start at the group.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

The range of opportunities available for the children is generally broad and planning shows that children are provided with a wide range of experiences. Staff assess children during key activities, but these assessments are not effective in identifying the children's next steps of learning and are not used to inform the short term planning.

Some children use numbers in their play as they count the bricks to build a tower, some are able to associate numbers to numerals and others can count forward and backwards when singing number rhymes. Children self-register in the morning adding their photograph onto a number line which further develops their understanding of numbers. Children learn about size and shape during topic activities and through general play. They confidently use language to identify to staff their needs and wishes and as they chat to their friends as they organise their play. Staff talk to the children, and extend their language by using appropriate questioning skills. Children have opportunities to develop a love of books and really enjoy the whole group story time. Children mark make across most activities developing their skills. The pre-school is a word rich environment, where children have lots of opportunities to see the written word in various formats. This helps to develop their understanding that print carries meaning.

Children have access to technology throughout their play and have opportunities to experiment and find out how things work. They develop their understanding of other cultures as they routinely use a wide range of resources which reflect our diverse society and the differing cultures within it. They take part in activities to celebrate a variety of festivals throughout the year.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children receive a warm welcome as they arrive at the setting and enjoy affectionate relationships with staff and with each other. They benefit from using a wide range of toys and activities that are appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are well supported by experienced and committed staff who are dedicated to ensuring their needs are met. However the children's Individual Education Plans, although in place, have not been recently reviewed with the children's parents. This is because of staff changes and impacts on the partnership with parents. Children take part in activities that help them develop a positive view of the wider world. Resources and activities support children's understanding of difference and diversity.

Children play harmoniously together and show kindness and consideration towards each other. For example, they work together to build a camp. Children are beginning to learn right from wrong because staff set clear, consistent boundaries; as a result their behaviour is good. Children's social, moral, spiritual, cultural development is fostered.

Children have their needs met because staff and parents work together and relevant information is sought from parents to ensure appropriate care is offered. Staff liaise with parents and develop good relationships with them, which ensures children are well cared for. Settling in procedures are flexible to reflect the needs of the child. Good information is displayed for parents about the running of the group and a policy book is set out for parent to read.

The partnership with the parents or carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Newsletters are sent home to inform parents of the current topics and plans are displayed so that parents are aware of the activities their children are taking part in. Basic information about the Foundation Stage is displayed, but this is not sufficient to fully inform them about the early learning goals and the stepping stones children take to achieve them. Parents' consultations are offered to discuss children's progress and to discuss their needs. However, parents do not formally share with staff the starting points of what their children know and can do or contribute to their assessments of learning. Parents spoken to feel that their children are well cared for and that they receive general information. However, they feel that they do not receive information specifically about what the children are doing, the progress they are making and they do not receive information about the Foundation Stage.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The staff team are long established. They work well together throughout the session to ensure children's needs are met. Staff are deployed appropriately within the setting and suitable staff cover arrangements are in place ensuring children are well cared for. It is unclear if the owner is qualified to act as the manager of the group and there is no named deputy in place. This impacts on the organisation of the group. The staff enjoy working with the children and have a commitment to undertake training to widen their knowledge and develop their early years practice.

The organisation of the session is not effective in allowing children to develop their own interests and follow their own ideas. Children spend a lot of time waiting in line or waiting for their turn

as a high proportion of the session is spent on whole group activities. The children have little choice about what they play with as they do not routinely access resources independently.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by well-maintained and generally comprehensive documentation. Staff and parents work together to ensure that all information about the children's care is relevant and up-to-date.

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

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory.

Children make appropriate progress because staff are mostly qualified and experienced in providing the children with a range of play opportunities. The owner informally evaluates the quality of the care and education but does not have any formal strategies in place to do so, which makes this less effective. Staff appraisals are in place, but have not been undertaken for 18 months and children's Individual Educational Plans have not been reviewed. This impacts of the quality of care provided.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the proprietor agreed to, consider extending the records of fire practices to include comments for evaluation purposes. This is now in place which has improved the quality of the risk assessments undertaken. She further agreed to obtain parents signed consent to take children on any outings where parents are not present. Children do not now routinely go on outings so this has not been necessary.

At the last nursery education inspection the proprietor agreed to, develop planning to show what children are expected to learn from the activities provided and demonstrate how their achievements inform future planning. Activities are now clearly linked to learning intentions but assessment of their achievements still do not inform future planning. This remains a recommendation from this inspection.

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):

- promote safety within the setting by ensuring any dangerous substances are inaccessible to children
- review the routine of the day so that children have more opportunities for free play and organise resources so that they are easily accessible to children
- ensure the manager has at least a level 3 qualification appropriate to the post and that a named deputy is in place. This refers to establishing the level of qualification of the owner and the appointment of a named manager if this is not equivalent to level 3 and the appointment of a named deputy.

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 the observations of children's achievements are used effectively to monitor their progress and identify their next steps of learning; use these next steps to inform the short term planning
- ensure that procedures to monitor and evaluate the care and education offered to the children are either implemented, re-instated or maintained. This refers to the reviews of children's Individual Education Plans where relevant and the quality of the opportunities offered to children and the staff appraisals
- develop the partnership with parents of children in receipt of funding for nursery education. This refers to encouraging parents to contribute to their children's ongoing assessments and providing more information for parents about the Foundation Stage, the early learning goals and the stepping stones children take in order to achieve them.

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