

Pebbles Day Care

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY344875
Inspection date	19 April 2007
Inspector	Alison Weaver
Setting Address	Catholic Church Hall, Fort Road, Newhaven, BN9 9QQ
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Registered person	Marion Maureen MacQueen
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Pebbles Day Care opened in 2006. It operates from one large room in a church hall near to shops, parks, schools and railway station. A maximum of 30 children aged from three months to under five years may attend at any one time. The group opens five days a week all year round. Sessions are from 08.00 until 18.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 42 children from 10 months to under five years on roll. Of these 16 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The setting employs seven staff. Of these, five of the staff and the owner hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are two staff working towards a recognised qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean and warm environment. Staff help prevent the spread of infection in the setting by their effective everyday practices. These include appropriate nappy changing procedures and ensuring the equipment used by the children is kept clean. Children's understanding of the importance of personal hygiene develops extremely well. Staff are very good at reinforcing these hygiene messages with the children. Children learn songs about hand washing which they sing daily. They know that they need to make sure their hands are free from germs before they eat. Children have their own toothbrush to use at the setting. They are encouraged to brush their teeth after lunch to keep them healthy.

There is a high level of first aid trained staff, which helps ensure that they can act in the best interest of a child in the event of an accident. Staff obtain the necessary information about children's individual health needs from parents. This helps promote children's welfare. Sick children are cared for appropriately and parents are kept informed about any health concerns.

Staff ensure continuity of care for babies and toddlers as they follow their home sleeping and feeding routines. These children benefit from warm, caring relationships with adults. They enjoy the cuddles and positive attention which helps to promote their emotional well-being.

Children learn about the importance of healthy eating through the snack time. They enjoy a good variety of fresh fruit and sometimes vegetables. They have easy access to a jug of water and children often help themselves to a drink when they get thirsty. Staff use everyday opportunities, such as story sessions and meal times, to chat to the children about what is good to eat.

Staff plan and provide a variety of activities that effectively promote children's physical development. The children enjoy both indoor and outdoor play. They show good co-ordination as they run and play safely with a variety of games equipment. They have fun as they play catching and throwing games. They skilfully use trikes, slides and a trampoline. Their fine motor skills develop well as they use a range of tools and small equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in a secure and safe environment. The staff ensure that there is no unauthorised access into the building. Staff are deployed effectively so that children are well supervised at all times. Good use is made of the space to meet the children's needs and interests. The older children enjoy playing with a wide range of equipment that is appropriate to their age and stage of development. The equipment is safe and in good condition. Children learn how to keep themselves safe, as staff talk to them about the rules in the setting, for example, how they should not run indoors. They also remind children how to carry chairs safely.

Babies and toddlers play in a separate safe area, which is suited to their needs. There is a satisfactory range of suitable play resources for the younger children. The small chairs are less safe for use by the toddlers. There are cots available so that young children can sleep in comfort and safety.

Staff carry out daily visual checks to ensure that the rooms used are safe for the children. Staff also carry out a more rigorous yearly written risk assessment to monitor safety for children in all areas of the setting. Appropriate safety equipment is in place, including heater guards and a fire blanket. The setting carries out fire drills to ensure that all staff and children are aware of what to do in an emergency.

The setting has all the required procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. Overall, staff have a good awareness of signs and symptoms of child abuse. They are fully aware of their responsibilities to report any concerns about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The staff make the setting colourful and visually stimulating for the children. Children arrive happily and most settle quickly into the warm and welcoming environment. Their work is displayed well on the walls, which shows that staff value the children's contributions. Children soon learn the routines of the day and know what activities are available by the staff making use of the caterpillar timeline. This helps children settle and become confident.

Children enjoy their time in the setting and are interested in the activities available. Older children independently choose from a good range of stimulating toys and resources. They have opportunities to take part in quiet and active games. They are well motivated, concentrating well on self-chosen activities. Children enjoy being independent as they help themselves to drinks. They help the staff do special jobs and tidy up. Children relate well to staff and to each other. They are very secure with the staff and confidently approach them for support. Staff talk to children about what they are doing and respond to their interests. They encourage and promote children's development as they play. The children achieve well because staff are very caring and supportive.

Babies and toddlers enjoy lots of positive interaction with the staff. These children enjoy a number of activities that stimulate their senses such as playing with musical toys. They use their imagination well as they pretend to do the cleaning using toy vacuum cleaners and using bean bags as dusters to 'polish' the surfaces. However, staff have not been making effective use of the Birth to three matters framework to plan appropriate activities for babies and children under three years to help promote their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards all the early learning goals due to the staff's sound knowledge of how children learn. Overall, staff interact very effectively with children to support and reinforce their learning. They use good questioning to encourage children to think about what they are doing and express their own thoughts. Staff use the resources well to promote children's learning.

The curriculum planning is broad and balanced as it covers all areas of learning. It shows clear links to the stepping stones to ensure staff are aware of what children should learn. Staff carry out regular observations and use these to inform children's records of progress. This enables staff to monitor what individual children are achieving and learning. The staff have started to identify the next targets for children but these are not used fully to inform the planning. The written short term plans do not show staff how to adapt activities to meet the individual needs of children and those working at different rates.

Children's independence develops well in the setting. They are keen to take part in activities and make their own choices. They particularly like joining in with games and activities with staff. Children respond well to adults and form good caring relationships with them. They speak confidently to staff and talk openly about their families. They listen well to staff and learn to take turns when speaking in circle times. Staff make good use of 'jolly phonics' with the children. The children learn to recognise letters and join in suggesting a word beginning with a particular letter, such as 'j' is for 'jam'. They enjoy books and stories, particularly when with adults. They join in enthusiastically with the refrains, for example, in 'Three Little Pigs'. They have regular opportunities to practice mark making but sometimes formal letter formation is introduced too soon with less able children.

Children count confidently and frequently choose number activities during free play. They explore measuring and weighing as they play in the sand and do cooking activities. They count how many scoops it takes to fill a bucket. Children learn to recognise simple 2-D shapes as they enjoy physical games activities. Children develop a very good awareness of simple calculation. Staff promote this aspect extremely well during free play and everyday routines such as registration. They often chat together about 'one more' and 'adding on'.

Children enjoy investigating using their senses as they explore a variety of different materials and objects. They look at the ladybirds a child has brought in. They plant and grow sunflowers. They have regular access to the computer and other forms of simple technology. They learn different skills as they use a small variety of tools and equipment. They learn about other ways of life as they explore topics on other countries and festivals.

Children enjoy music and sing heartily during singing sessions. They have fun playing musical instruments and keep to the beat. Children use their imagination as they role-play and express their ideas at activities. Children express themselves creatively through a range of mediums. The free painting easel is very popular with the children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff value children as individuals and respect parent's wishes. They work closely with parents and ensure that they get the necessary information from them about their child. This enables the staff to meet the children's individual needs. Staff ensure that children have access to a variety of resources that represent the wider community although there is not always sufficient available on a daily basis. The resources include cooking items in the home corner, dressing up clothes, dolls and puzzles. These resources and planned activities help children develop a positive attitude to others and learn about the world around them.

The setting has very good arrangements in place to care for children with learning needs and disabilities. Staff support these children well and give them the necessary care. They work closely with parents and other professionals to help these children achieve and make progress. The staff are able to use simple sign language and all the older children have learnt some signs to communicate with. The setting has not yet implemented it with the very young children. The staff make very good use of visual timelines with the children.

The management of children's behaviour is a strong area in this setting. The staff and children chat together at circle times about how they should behave and what they should not do. Children quickly learn the rules of the setting and contribute their own suggestions to them. They behave well and respond positively to staff. They learn to play happily together, sharing

and taking turns. Children's self-esteem develops as staff value children's contributions, particularly in discussion times. Children benefit from the praise and encouragement given by staff. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. The parents of funded children receive some helpful written information about the Foundation Stage, which gives them a good overall picture of what children are learning. The curriculum plans are displayed so that parents can see what activities the children are enjoying. Parents receive information of how they can continue children's learning at home. The home diaries help to keep parents informed about their child's development. Parents meet formally with staff to discuss children's progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting is well organised and space is used very effectively for the children. Staff group children appropriately and supervise them well. The transition of children from the baby area into the main group is handled sensitively in order to meet children's needs. Children benefit from being cared for by a high level of qualified staff. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

All the required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place. A thorough recruitment procedure is in place, which ensures that staff are suitable to work with children. The ongoing development of staff is promoted through effective induction and appraisal systems. The owner also carries out regular observations on staff to help them improve. These practices ensure that staff understand their role and know how to support children in their play and learning. The staff keep well informed about current childcare practices through ongoing training and good management support.

The policies and procedures are consistently applied by staff, which helps contribute to the smooth running of the setting. They work closely as a team and all are included in the planning and decision-making. The staff are well motivated and enthusiastic.

Leadership and management are good. The staff are committed to continuous improvement and development of the nursery education provision. They seek outside support and advice when needed. Teaching is monitored through observation and staff discussions. Staff regularly monitor and evaluate the curriculum to ensure that it is helping children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- develop the use of the Birth to three matters framework to plan and provide appropriate activities for the younger children.

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 the planning to show how activities can be adapted to take into account children working at different rates and abilities to ensure all are challenged appropriately.

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