

Pierremont Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	301170
Inspection date	02 May 2007
Inspector	Pauline Pinnegar
Setting Address	Holy Trinity Youth & Community Centre, Pierremont Road, Darlington, Co. Durham, DL3 6DG
Telephone number	01325 461561
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Registered person	Pierremont Playgroup
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Pierremont Playgroup has been registered since June 1999. The playgroup operates from a large hall within Holy Trinity Youth and Community Centre, close to Darlington town centre. There is access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The building is shared with other users, but has sole use when in session. The playgroup serves the local and surrounding areas and is open Monday to Thursday from 09.30 to 11.30 during school term time only.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 38 children aged from two to under five years on roll.

There are five members of staff employed at the playgroup, three of whom are appropriately qualified. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well nourished at the group because they are provided with a large variety of healthy snacks. These include chopped apple, banana, orange and kiwi fruit, which children enjoy and eat well. Healthy eating is promoted and parents are advised that the group adopts a healthy eating regime. Parents contribute fresh fruit for snack time. Staff consult parents regarding children's dietary and religious needs and these are taken into account. Although drinks of water, milk and juice are offered regularly to ensure that children are not thirsty, fresh drinking water is not easily accessible to children should they wish to have a drink independently.

Children are well taken care of if they have an accident due to the well-maintained accident and medication records, and the fact that most staff are trained in first aid. Parental consent for the administration of medication is clearly written. There is a clear policy about children who are ill or infectious, including a procedure for contacting parents if a child becomes ill whilst at playgroup. Staff have written parental consent to seek emergency medical help if needed. Children are supported by staff and learn about basic health and hygiene practices as they wash their hands during the day. For example, staff encourage independence and gently remind children to use the soap, get a paper towel and put it in the bin afterwards. Relationships with adults are good, ensuring individual needs are met. Children's emotional well-being is promoted well because of staff's good levels of effective interaction and support.

Children are able to enjoy a wide range of physical activity which contributes to their health and development. They engage in a range of physical activities where they learn to become skilful in a range of movements. They practise their climbing skills using the climbing frame, and negotiate space well with a range of wheeled toys. Children use the indoor space to enhance physical development. They are supported to develop and extend their physical skills as they use the large indoor space cooperatively; they become confident to express and manage their own needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in safe and secure premises by staff who clearly understand their role in keeping children safe. The welcoming environment is bright and cheerful with examples of children's work displayed throughout the room. The premises are well organised indoors to maximise play opportunities for children. The setting has effective safety and security precautions, such as the main door is kept locked, a visitors log book is kept and external doors are locked. Children use a broad range of safe, good quality, developmentally appropriate resources. They are protected from potential hazards as staff check the premises daily and take appropriate steps to minimise risks. Children learn to keep themselves safe as staff involve them in discussions and teach them safe practice. For example, staff explain to children why it is important not to run about indoors as they may fall and hurt themselves. Children learn about safe evacuation in an emergency when they practise fire drills.

Children are cared for by staff who give priority to protecting children and keeping them safe. Staff's sound understanding of their responsibilities within child protection procedures help to ensure that children are effectively protected and their welfare safeguarded. Staff have

attended recent child protection training and have a clear understanding of procedures. The child protection policy clearly reflects current guidance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children come happily into the group and settle quickly. They engage in a satisfactory range of activities which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development. They enjoy taking part in various activities, such as painting, role play and self-registration. They show developing levels of concentration as they endeavour to complete tasks, and staff give them attention and appropriate support to prevent them from becoming bored and restless. Children have positive relationships with the staff and their peers. Caring relationships foster children's self-esteem and warm interactions give them confidence to explore and enjoy learning. Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong in all age groups. This is because the staff interact well with them and model good behaviour. Children learn that they need to share toys and that they must not be unnecessarily rough with others.

Activity planning is based generally on topics, such as spring animals and flowers. The current topic is 'mini beasts'. However, planning does not clearly identify the learning outcomes for children, to assist teaching methods. Staff are not using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to enhance the planning for younger children, and have yet to access suitable training. Children's progress is discussed informally with parents but staff do not record their observations to plan the next steps for children's play, learning and development.

Children use the small world and role play resources cooperatively, involving others in their play. They concentrate well on activities which interest them, like painting and crayoning pictures to take home. They develop good levels of hand-eye coordination as they use small equipment such as paintbrushes and crayons. Children enjoy using collage materials as they create ladybird pictures and explore and experiment with magnifying glasses. Good use is made of the attractive outdoor play area and children are developing their large physical skills well as they use large apparatus such as slides, bikes and the climbing frame. Free-flow access to the outdoor area is available to children mid-way through the session. This promotes their independence as they choose where they want to play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children know they are valued as staff listen to what they say and ask questions about what they have been doing. Familiar staff are always on hand to offer support and reassurance, they help children develop confidence and self-esteem. Staff link closely with parents to find out what is important to their child; they ensure they have a clear awareness of individual needs. This contributes to children feeling very secure and content within the group. Children play well together and are beginning to form friendships. They begin to show consideration for the needs of others as they take turns and learn to share toys. Staff reinforce rules and boundaries consistently. Children are encouraged to take some responsibility for their own behaviour, for example, they help to tidy toys away before group time. At group time, they understand they must listen quietly when others are speaking and are able to concentrate for the story.

Children access a satisfactory range of resources to increase their awareness and understanding of diversity. This includes multicultural books and small world toys. They explore topics such

as Chinese New Year and Divali to raise their awareness of the wider world and other cultures. Resources, in the main, are chosen for children by staff and put out each day for them. This hinders children's independent choices. Suitable procedures are in place to support children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The group establishes satisfactory partnerships with parents and carers. Parents are confident in approaching staff and regularly share what they know about their child. They enjoy relaxed and comfortable relationships, promoting children's sense of security. Staff keep parents informed about what their children are doing and learning on a very informal basis.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a caring team of staff who are responsive to children's varying needs and interests. Staff show a good level of commitment to creating a child-friendly and stimulating environment, especially given that all equipment has to be got out and put away each day. Most staff have a relevant childcare qualification and attend regular training to update and develop their practice. The group is organised satisfactorily to promote children's welfare and safety. Daily routines are clearly planned and staff are deployed effectively to respond to children's needs. Procedures for recruitment, to ensure the suitability of staff to care for children, are sufficiently robust.

Clear policies and procedures are in place to support children's welfare. These are shared with parents. However, the complaints log is not in line with changes to regulations and the written policy does not contain full details of the regulator. Policies and procedures work successfully in practice to promote satisfactory outcomes for children. All documentation is stored in an accessible yet confidential manner. This contributes to the continuity of care for children. The good adult-child ratios positively support children's care, learning and play.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider was required to make available to parents details of the relevant contact numbers in the complaints procedure, and to ensure that the child protection procedure for the playgroup includes a procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

Although a written complaints procedure is now available to parents, it still does not contain up to date details of the regulator. The written child protection policy now contains clear procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. This contributes to safeguarding children.

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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

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 fresh drinking water is easily accessible to children
- improve the outcomes for children under three years by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- develop the accessibility of resources to promote children's growing independence
- develop the complaints log in line with changes to regulations, and ensure the written complaints procedure contains the correct contact details.

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