

Newick Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109467
Inspection date	13 July 2007
Inspector	Felicity Gaff
Setting Address	Old Reading Rooms, Church Road, Newick, Lewes, East Sussex, BN8 4JX
Telephone number	07788603633
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Registered person	Newick Pre-School Playgroup
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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Newick Pre-School Playgroup is run by a registered charity. It opened in 1969 and operates from a community hall; the nursery have sole use of the premises during opening hours. It is situated in a residential area of Newick, East Sussex. A maximum of 20 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. It is open every week day during term time from 09.00 to 15.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 42 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 27 children receive funding for nursery education. Children are drawn from the surrounding rural area. The playgroup currently supports a small number of children with special educational needs, as well as a number who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup employs nine staff, of whom four hold appropriate early years qualifications and a further staff member is in training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have suitable opportunities to learn about a healthy lifestyle. They follow good personal hygiene habits; for example, they learn to wash their hands skilfully because they have easily accessible basins. They receive nourishing snacks, some of which they help prepare. Staff record and meet individual dietary requirements and there are suitable arrangements for children to bring lunches from home. As a result, children receive food in accordance with their parents' wishes. Children are able to pour drinks of water at any time to keep themselves hydrated. They go out locally for walks in the village and adjacent countryside. Children have limited access to the small outdoor area, and staff do not plan sufficiently carefully, or organise the available time and space effectively. This restricts the opportunities for regular vigorous activity, and limits the provision for physical development. Staff provide suitable care in the case of sickness or minor accidents. However, accident and medication records sometimes lack sufficient clarity and detail to ensure children's needs are consistently met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Staff have a basic understanding of child protection issues; they are aware of how to record and report any concerns. However, the written child protection statement does not provide staff and committee members with enough clear guidance on the procedures to be followed should an allegation be made against a staff member. This puts children at risk through the provider failing to address possible harm or neglect, and is a breach of regulations. Although staff carry out weekly safety checks, the provider does not conduct periodic formal risk assessments of the premises, equipment and the group's practices. The provider does not ensure staff follow the written procedures to keep children safe on outings. Staff work closely with parents and the local school to protect children when collecting them from school, but the provider does not supply them with written procedures to follow. These weaknesses jeopardise children's safety. Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. There are suitable precautions in place to prevent children entering unused parts of the building, and staff and parents ensure the gate is kept bolted at all times to prevent children leaving the premises unsupervised. Staff act effectively to address safety issues associated with the hall in order to minimise risks to children. Children use a suitable range of age appropriate toys and equipment, which is in good condition. However, they are only able to play with those resources set out for them because staff do not arrange a variety of play materials that children can safely select for themselves.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem at the setting. They feel at ease when they arrive because they follow regular rituals, such as finding their own name cards. They learn to take responsibility for tasks, such as keeping the books tidy, which enables them to contribute to the group. Staff take account of the Birth to three matters framework to help them meet the needs of the youngest children. Staff plan a reasonable range of interesting, first-hand play activities to support children's emotional, social and intellectual development. Children develop good social skills. They practise planning, negotiating and using language to resolve disagreements during child-led role play. Staff provide positive role models and children reflect

these in their dealings with each other; they are polite and cooperative. However, children's opportunities to explore a rich variety of age-appropriate learning experiences are limited because most activities are available for less than half the session. Children spend up to an hour in passive activities, such as looking at books, listening to stories, or sitting down for snack time. Some planned physical activities are poorly organised. For example, children spend disproportionate amounts of time queuing for a very limited activity, such as throwing a bean bag.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children behave well; they concentrate on the activities they choose for themselves and talk confidently about what they do and learn. They learn to recognise other people's needs as they celebrate significant events, such as birthdays. Children learn to recognise significant words, such as their own names. Older children begin to form their letters correctly as they confidently write their names independently. However, they lack opportunities to practise their literacy skills through high quality role play because staff provide too few suitable resources. Although there is a mark-making table, it is not sufficiently interestingly equipped to attract the children and they rarely visit it. Children learn to count and compare numbers and there are suitable opportunities for them to explore mass and capacity through every day provision, such as water and sand play. They have a balanced range of opportunities to explore a variety of creative media in two and three dimensions. However, some activities are poorly planned and organised and this limits what children learn. For example, children compare hot and cold foods by grouping pictures rather than through first hand experiences. Staff do not plan informal outings carefully enough to ensure there are sufficient staff to supervise the children as well as teach them. As they do not clearly identify what they want children to see and learn, teaching is repetitive and unfocused and children lose interest. Staff use observations of what children do to inform their future planning, although procedures do not always take into account their previous achievements. They identify how to adapt activities to take account of children's different ages and stages. As a result, children make adequate progress towards the early learning goals.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

The written procedure for dealing with complaints is incomplete. It provides insufficient guidance to staff and incoming committee members in protecting children through addressing parental concerns. The provider is unaware of the requirements for responding to written complaints from parents. This is a breach of regulations. Staff seek appropriate information from parents before children first attend, which enables them to meet their individual needs. Parents appreciate the approachability of the staff and value the nurturing care and education they provide. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn to work harmoniously with each other; they are friendly and treat both adults and other children with courtesy. They respond positively to staff's realistic expectations because staff explain the reasons for rules, such as walking on the pavement. Children begin to recognise cultural diversity as they handle artefacts and dress up in clothes from different cultural traditions. They discuss and compare their own first hand experiences, such as the different ways they celebrate Christmas. However, staff do not consider how to present activities to avoid children acquiring culturally stereotyped ideas. The setting takes appropriate steps to provide continuity in the support offered to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Partnership with parents of funded children is good. Staff and parents exchange information on children's progress informally at the start and end of sessions as well as through formal parents' evenings. Staff

display information about the Foundation Stage and details of planned activities. They use individual notebooks to offer suggestions for follow-up activities to extend children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Although the policies and procedures required to support children's welfare are in place, some are incomplete and provide insufficient guidance to staff and committee members to support children's welfare. The provider does not ensure that risk assessments are carried out with sufficient rigour or that staff follow the procedures identified to keep children safe on outings. As a result, children's safety is put at risk. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are sufficiently robust to ensure staff are suitable to care for children. Appropriate appraisal systems help to identify future training needs. Good adult:child ratios contribute to children's well-being. However, the organisation of time, space and resources does not always allow children to choose freely from a sufficiently wide range of attractive and meaningful first hand learning experiences throughout the session.

The leadership and management of the nursery education are satisfactory. The provider ensures there are sufficient qualified staff and arranges for them to receive relevant training in the Foundation Stage. Plans identify a range of activities suitable to promote children's development in all areas of learning. Staff carry out regular observations and use their records to inform future planning. As a result, children make adequate progress towards the early learning goals.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to develop the assessment of children's learning, to improve the promotion of equal opportunities, and to develop the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children's learning is now supported by the regular use of observations to inform future planning. Children now benefit from a basic range of resources providing positive images of ethnic and cultural diversity. The arrangements to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are now satisfactory and the special needs coordinator has received appropriate training. The provider also agreed to improve the book corner and to update the written policies and procedures. Children now enjoy sharing books in a well equipped and welcoming book corner. All the policies and procedures required to support children's welfare are in place but are incomplete. There are ineffective systems to ensure that they are continuously updated in line with current guidance and legislation.

At the last inspection of nursery education the provider agreed to develop the curriculum, to improve planning and assessment systems, and to increase the opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's learning. Children now make suitable progress because staff plan and provide a broad, balanced curriculum. They assess what children achieve and use their observations to inform future planning. They adapt activities to meet the needs of children of different ages and abilities. Parents receive regular information about their children's progress. Staff offer suggestions for follow-up activities for their children to do at home and invite parents to contribute to children's written records, which provides a more rounded picture of children's development.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- conduct periodic risk assessments of the premises, equipment and practices and take action to minimise any identified risks
- improve knowledge and understanding of the regulations for complaints and ensure the written procedures reflect current legislation
- ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) and includes procedures for dealing with an allegation against a staff member or volunteer

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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 provision for physical development to provide suitable challenges for all children and regular opportunities for vigorous physical activity
- develop role play and mark-making areas to provide a rich resource for children to explore reading, writing and mathematics for real purposes
- develop assessment procedures to take account of children's previous progress along the stepping stones
- improve the organisation of space, time and resources to provide opportunities for children to engage in first-hand learning experiences throughout the session

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