

Lindal Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	317551
Inspection date	18 February 2008
Inspector	Sandra Elizabeth Williams
Setting Address	Buccleuch Hall, Lindal, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 0LX
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Registered person	Lindal Playgroup
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 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?

Lindal Playgroup opened in 1968 and is managed by a management committee. It is situated in Buccleugh Hall in the centre of Lindal-in-Furness, Cumbria. The provision consists of a large hall, toilet facilities, kitchen and outdoor play area. The playgroup serves children from the local area.

A maximum of 26 children aged from two to under five years may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 21 children on roll aged from two to under five years, of whom 18 are in receipt of funding for nursery education.

The playgroup is open on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 09.15 until 11.45. The playgroup also runs extra sessions in the summer term if there is a demand for it. The playgroup also operates at Lindal and Marton Primary School on Monday and Friday afternoons from 13.00 until 15.15. This is separately registered.

Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties. There are no children for whom English is an additional language.

There are eight members of staff including an administrator employed at the setting. All of the staff, apart from two, hold appropriate qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where staff implement good hygiene procedures and practices. Children learn the importance of washing their hands before eating their snacks, after using the toilet and after painting. They know that they need to do this in order to get rid of germs. The ability of the staff to attend to the children's health and medical requirements is good as their training in first aid is up to date. The contents in the first aid kit are also up to date and therefore staff are fully equipped to respond appropriately in an emergency.

Children are developing good physical skills as they engage in a range of physical activities which contribute to their good health. The children are able to enjoy continuous provision with the freedom to choose to play inside or outside throughout the session. They are learning about the importance of exercise to keep fit and healthy and they understand the importance of warming up their muscles to prevent getting injuries. They recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they have exercised, for example, they can feel their hearts beating faster and they feel hot. They move with control and coordination as they thoroughly enjoy their movement to music sessions. Children develop their fine motor skills as they use rolling pins and cutters for making different shapes in the play dough. They confidently use a good range of mark making equipment, glue sticks, paint brushes and rollers to create cards and paintings to take home with them.

Children begin to learn about healthy eating as the staff provide healthy snacks such as apples, cheese and crackers. Children are encouraged to develop their independence as they choose from water and milk and pour their own drinks from the jugs. Snack times are enjoyable and social occasions and staff talk to the children about the importance of eating five pieces of fruit and vegetables a day. Children's special dietary needs are known to the staff who work very closely with the parents to ensure children's needs are met appropriately.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is taken very seriously by the staff who organise the playroom well to enable children to move around safely from one area to another. There is ample space for them to easily and safely access the play equipment, which is stored at a low-level in clearly labelled drawers. The children are confident to choose and help themselves to their favourite toys, which helps them to develop their independence. Children are protected from harm as the staff regularly check the equipment for any damage or hazards.

Children learn to keep themselves safe because staff explain acceptable boundaries. For example, children know that they must clear a space on the floor before they take part in their exercise sessions, in case they trip over their toys. The children learn about fire safety as the staff regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure with them. The staff are watchful and vigilant at all times, ensuring that the children are safe as they play. The thorough risk

assessments help to minimise the hazards to children. The front door is always kept locked and secure and children are always supervised when playing outside.

Children's welfare is promoted as the staff recognise their responsibilities to protect young children from harm. They have a good understanding of potential signs of abuse and neglect, also of who they are to contact to report any child protection concerns. They have undertaken recent safeguarding children training in order to keep updated on recent changes to the legislation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled, happy and enjoy their time at playgroup. They are excited and enthusiastic when they arrive at the setting and are greeted warmly by the staff. The children proudly show the staff what item they have brought from home for the 'show and tell' session later in the day. Children show an interest in what they do in the setting. They particularly enjoy the role play area, where they enjoy linking up with their friends and dressing up in various costumes and accessories. The children also particularly enjoy outdoor play, where they delight in blowing bubbles with soapy water. Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong because the staff teach them to take turns when playing games, such as snakes and ladders. The children learn good manners and respect for others because the staff act as positive role models. For example, children are encouraged to apologise if they upset each other.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress as the staff have developed a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They plan an interesting curriculum which covers all aspects of children's learning. Staff gain some idea from parents about their children's attainment on entry, however, there is currently no system for gathering and recording this information. Planning, assessment, observation and recording in relation to the early years goals and stepping stones are well recorded. Children's individual learning needs are known, which means that the staff have clear plans to enable individual children to move on to the next step in their learning. Staff set high expectations of what the children can achieve, consequently they receive sufficient challenge.

Children are developing good social skills and are making positive relationships with their peers and staff. They are interested and motivated to learn and are becoming confident to suggest ideas and speak in a familiar group. This is particularly evident during story time and 'show and tell' sessions. They confidently play in small groups and on their own if they choose. Children are developing good self-care skills as they put on their coats before going outside to play and put on their aprons before painting.

Children develop good speaking and listening skills as staff regularly engage them in conversations. They enjoy 'show and tell' time when they bring an object from home and tell their friends about it. They are encouraged to recognise their own names as they self register. They are beginning to develop skills in linking sounds to letters and naming and sounding letters of the alphabet. Children are encouraged to select books from the book corner and are able to handle them carefully and turn the pages in the correct order. They enjoy sitting with the staff reading the books and learning to follow the text from left to right. Children have plenty of opportunities to develop their writing skills as they attempt writing for a variety of

purposes using different forms. For example, children enjoy writing shopping lists and making cards. Others enjoy making marks outside with water and chalks.

Children have opportunities to count in everyday activities and most can count up to 10. Some can count up to 30. They are appropriately challenged by staff to attempt simple calculation. For example, at snack time, children talk about having five fruit and vegetables a day. They have an apple at snack time and are asked to work out how many more pieces they will need to eat to make it up to five. Some of the older children enjoy more complex problem solving activities, for example, dividing 12 objects equally between three and then four children.

Children do not currently have continuous access to a computer and therefore their ability to develop their skills in mouse control and general computer skills is restricted. They also have limited access to programmable toys. Children have opportunities to express themselves creatively in various different ways. They really enjoy the role play resources, the movement to music and also experimenting with different coloured paints.

Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals given their capacity and starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children make a positive contribution and learn about their community as the staff take them on outings to the nearby wild animal park, the steam railway and the beach. The children also enjoy meeting the local firemen and police officers and learn about fire safety and stranger danger. Children are encouraged to develop positive attitudes about a diverse society through the activities provided by the staff. They celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali by undertaking craft activities. There are some multicultural resources such as books and dolls available, however, there are few visual images in the setting to support the children's learning about the wider world.

Positive behaviour is constantly encouraged by the staff by use of praise and encouragement. With support and guidance children are happy to share, take turns during their play, learn to play cooperatively and develop skills in negotiations. These positive approaches foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are welcome in the setting and there is a good support system set up. Staff have attended appropriate training courses to support children with difficulties and work very closely with parents and other agencies in order to fully support the children's needs.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the positive relationship the staff have with the parents. They are given good information about the curriculum planning by displaying current themes and activities being undertaken. Parents become involved in their children's learning by bringing items in for certain activities, such as 'show and tell' sessions. Staff communicate with parents on a regular basis about the children's welfare and care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the care is good because staff are well qualified and attend a wide range of training courses to enable them to keep up to date with current childcare practices. The staff group are extremely committed to working with children and devote considerable time

and effort to ensuring that they deliver good quality care and education to the children. A rigorous procedure is in place in relation to the recruitment of staff. This means that staff employed in this setting are suitable to meet the needs of children.

Children are relaxed and confident in the environment due to the good organisation of their care and learning. Children's play opportunities are good as the staff organise the premises very well, thus allowing children to move about easily from one activity to another. Documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is well organised and thorough. Staff are familiar with the policies and procedures and these are also shared with the parents.

Leadership and management is good. Children's educational needs are well met through the strong leadership and management of the supervisor who has a constructive partnership with the management committee. Staff have developed a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The staff have established links with the advisory workers who assist them in their teaching methods and systems for assessing children.

Children are provided with a varied educational programme. Staff meet regularly to evaluate and monitor the quality of teaching and learning. This means that the staff have an understanding of the setting's strengths and weaknesses. They experiment with different methods of recording children's progress and are very open to trying new ideas and methods.

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 it was agreed that staff would remain updated regarding the Safeguarding Children procedures. Staff have attended training, thus improving the level of safety for children. It was also agreed that the contents of the first aid kit be checked and replaced as necessary. This has been undertaken, thus ensuring that the appropriate equipment is available for treating children in the event of an accident or emergency. It was agreed that the unsecured store in the yard be made safe. These recommendations have been addressed, thus improving the level of safety for children. The complaints procedure has been updated to include the regulator's details and the policies are available to parents, which improves the level of information sharing with parents.

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 records 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 range of multicultural images and resources to increase children's awareness of the wider world.

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 children have continuous access to information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their learning.
- develop the system for obtaining information from parents about children's abilities on entry

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