

Cheeky Monkeys Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	321493
Inspection date	19 October 2007
Inspector	Lindsay Helen Dobson
Setting Address	Westfield County Infant School, Askham Lane, Westfield, York, YO24 3HP
Telephone number	01904 783 377
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Registered person	Cheeky Monkeys 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 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?

Cheeky Monkeys Playgroup registered in October 1992. It operates from a room within Westfield County Community School, in the Acomb area of the City of York. Children may access the schools facilities for various activities, and use an enclosed area for outdoor play opportunities.

A maximum of 18 children may attend the setting at any one time, between the ages of two and four years. There are currently 20 children on roll, which includes five children in receipt of funded nursery education. The group currently operates term time only each Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday morning 09.00 - 11.30. There is also a session on a Thursday afternoon, 12.25 - 14.55. Additional sessions for parent and toddlers are also available. The setting provides support for children with learning difficulties.

The setting employs two regular staff members, both of which hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting is supported by parent helpers who assist on a regular basis. The group is run by a voluntary management committee, and is a member of the Westfield Childcare Partnership. The setting receives support from the Local Authority and is a member of the Pre School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing an appropriate understanding of how to keep themselves fit and healthy. Staff encourage children to wash their hands during the day in order to reduce the spread of germs and children understand why it is important to wash, particularly before eating. Staff apply the sickness policy, such as exclusion times for sickness and diarrhoea, which reduces the spread of illness between all those present. General cleaning routines ensure the environment and equipment remains suitable for children's use.

Children benefit from staff trained in first aid. Documentation relating to children's health contains appropriate levels of information and when shared with parents, such as after an accident, informs the parents of the medical care their children receive.

Children receive regular opportunities to be physically active, which in turn promotes their good health. Children are provided with daily opportunities to go outside to play in the fresh air which helps to stimulate their minds and bodies. They develop their strength and co-ordination as they scoot around on sit and ride toys and collect leaves in the wheelbarrow.

Children enjoy a range of snacks to ensure they are nourished during the sessions. The snack menu includes fresh fruit and vegetables, cheese, breadsticks and crackers. Children enjoy the social aspect of snack time as they sit together and join in with conversations. The children are given drinks at snack time but they do not have independent access to drinking water at other times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter the welcoming play room which presents bright and cheerful wall displays of their work. They benefit from the use of their play room, a freely accessible bathroom and a secure outside area which offers both a grassed and a flagged area which is available in all weather.

Children enjoy access to a suitable range of toys which are checked by staff to ensure they are safe for children's use. Toys are safely stored within the play room, although the storage systems within the play room restricts some children during activities, reducing their enjoyment of the activity and inhibiting their independence at this time.

Children benefit from a safe and secure indoor play area, where staff complete risk assessments to maintain safety in most areas. However, the very infrequent practicing of the fire evacuation procedure, does not ensure children are aware of the procedures to follow in an emergency and therefore puts them at risk.

Children are safeguarded because staff have a suitable understanding of child protection procedures and their responsibilities to the children they care for. Systems such as a visitors book, authorised collection of children and an uncollected child policy also protects children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children come into the play group eager to start their day and are happy in their play and learning. They act confidently in the secure environment and understand the play group routines well. The younger children benefit from staff's use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to provide age appropriate activities and experiences. The children particularly enjoy the sensory experiences provided for them such as modelling dough, painting and sand play. They benefit from opportunities to be active as well as quiet areas where they can rest and be quiet if they choose.

The younger children are developing their confidence and are able to act with some independence in their environment. For example, they are able to choose between the activities set up for them on arrival. Children are able to select some equipment for themselves from storage boxes such as role play resources. However, overall children's independence and decision making skills are not promoted well due to the lack of readily available resources to extend their own ideas and play.

Children are generally engaged with the activities of their choosing such as imaginative play, drawing and outdoor play. However, the range of activities available each day is not sufficient to ensure all children find something of interest to motivate and challenge them. Some of the activities are not sufficiently organised or presented to encourage the children to investigate them purposefully and potential learning opportunities are lost.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making some progress towards the Early Learning Goals because staff have a sufficient understanding of how children learn and they ensure children who need extra support are catered for. Children are able to work in groups, with an adult or alone. Staff carry out some planned and spontaneous observations on children. However, not all records are regularly updated with this information in order to represent an up-to-date account of each child's stage of development. As a result, staff are unable to effectively plan activities to promote children's learning according to their individual stages. Planning does not reflect children's individual needs to ensure effective learning takes place or how children are moved on in their learning. Inconsistencies in planning means that it is not always clear what children are expected to learn from activities.

Children are eager to enter the setting as they collect their name tag and self register on the board in the main play room. They smile and shout hello to their friends and talk about past and future events. Children settle quickly with a suitable range of activities set out for them, they are confident in their surrounding and are aware of the daily routines. Children show positive attitudes towards learning. They enjoy showing each other their creations, such as the box craft models they have made out of recycled materials. Throughout the setting, children are developing recognition of the use of writing through the labelling of common items. Children enjoy handling books and show interest in listening to stories and re-telling them to their friends.

Children are developing an appropriate understanding of mathematical concepts. They talk about the brick towers they have made being 'big' or 'small'. Children enjoy looking at and naming a range of shapes such as circle and star. They are beginning to engage in early counting practice as they count the play dough shapes and the pieces of fruit at snack time. During the

session, children have access to an appropriate range of tools to use within activities, such as cutters and scissors. They are developing their fine motor skills through using these tools and staff offer suitable support to enable the children to achieve. For example, children involved in collage pictures are given help to use the scissors and create the desired shape in the paper.

Children are gaining control of their small muscles, such as when manipulating with dough or using a paint brush. Children are able to move with confidence such as, jumping and running when playing outside. They have access to a suitable range of outside play equipment, which includes hoops, balls and ride on toys. All of which enable children to begin to gain control over their large muscles and to build body strength.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle quickly into play group life because there are appropriate procedures to support them and staff are warm and caring. This helps children take the difficult step of separating from their families. Children play and learn in an environment where staff promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children. They begin to develop an understanding of people's similarities and differences because they see positive images and play with toys and resources which reflect diversity. For example, they have daily access to puzzles, books, dolls and play figures. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with additional needs have their individual needs met through the appropriate systems in place. The group receive additional support through external agencies, such as speech and language therapists. Most children behave well, with staff encouraging children to say please and thank you. During their play staff talk to children about sharing and taking turns with the toys and equipment. Behaviour management is consistently applied by staff and consequently children begin to learn about boundaries and appropriate behaviour. Staff give positive praise to children, which they respond to well.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are welcomed into the group to settle their children at the beginning of the session, with staff available to discuss any issues or concerns as they arise. Parents receive some information about the group in the form of a welcome pack, newsletters and information displayed on notice boards. Parents are informed of the topics each term, with information on activities. However, general information for parents about the education provision, the Early learning goals and the stepping stones is not freely available. Staff provide parents with opportunities to look at their children's records of achievements and to discuss children's progress, although there is currently limited information recorded on children's abilities and the next stage of their learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are kept safe as effective recruitment and selection procedures are in place which include appropriate vetting systems so that all staff working with children are suitable to do so. Clear and supportive induction processes are implemented to ensure staff are aware of the appropriate policies and procedures to promote the safety and welfare of the children. Staff have early years qualifications which means children are cared for by adults with a sound knowledge of child development. Staff meetings are regularly held and an appraisal system helps to assess staff's training and development needs. Required policies and procedures are

in place and are available to parents. Essential records and parental consents are kept up to date to promote the well-being of the children.

Leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The two staff employed manage and run the group with support from a committee. They plan to attend regular training in order to extend their knowledge of early years care and education. Staff hold meetings and include the committee in these. However, there are limited opportunities for staff to monitor and oversee the provision of nursery education and therefore systems to evaluate and develop the educational provision are ineffective. This also impacts and reflects in the planning of the educational provision and evaluation of activities and children's learning. The group receive support from a development worker and the pre-school learning alliance on a regular basis.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was required to make several improvements linking to documentation, the physical environment and training. The staff have now implemented the required policies, completed appropriate training courses to obtain the necessary qualifications and have introduced daily opportunities for children to engage in outdoor play. Other improvements included identifying a designated officer for child protection and ensuring observation and assessment are taken into account when planning for children's learning. Staff have failed to ensure a designated officer is in place with regard to child protection and observation and assessment of children is still not fully taken into account when planning for children. These areas still need to be addressed.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was required to implement a system to ensure children have sufficient time to end their play before routine changes. Staff now play music and children acknowledge that this is the end of the session and respond by tidying up the toys and activities. Staff were also to improve the information available to parents with regard to planning and activities provided across the six areas of learning. Staff now display the weekly plan of activities for the parents and this also gives parents information on the current theme or topic.

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):

- ensure children have independent access to drinking water
- ensure the fire evacuation procedure is regularly practiced with the children
- provide more opportunities for children to become independent and develop their own play and ideas (also applies to nursery education)
- develop the way some activities are presented to encourage children to become involved in them. (also applies to nursery education)

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 observation and assessment of children is regularly undertaken and used appropriately to up date children's individual development records
- develop planning records to ensure they reflect learning intentions for children and how children will be moved to the next steps in their learning
- improve the information available to parents with regard to the education provision including the Early learning goals and the stepping stones
- develop systems to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery education provision.

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