

Red Brick Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY262710
Inspection date	05 March 2008
Inspector	Diane Lynn Turner
Setting Address	St John Fisher/Thomas Moore Church, Bradford Road, Burley in Wharfedale, LS29 7PX
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Registered person	Helen Michelle Reynolds
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?

Red Brick Pre-School Playgroup has been registered since 1980 and is a privately owned provision. It operates from the church hall within St John Fisher/Thomas Moore church in Burley in Wharfedale. The group has use of a main playroom, toilet and kitchen facilities and an enclosed area for outdoor play, which is situated to the rear of the building.

The group serves families from the local and surrounding areas and is open Monday to Friday from 09.15 to 12.15 during term time only. On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday children also have the option of attending a lunch club which operates from 12.15 to 13.15. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time and there are currently 13 on roll, eight of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding.

There are two members of staff including the owner/manager, both of whom hold a recognised childcare qualification to level 3. 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 good.

Children are kept healthy because they are cared for in an environment where staff follow effective procedures and practices, which help to prevent the spread of infection. For example, tables are cleaned in-between activities and those used for snack time are covered with wipeable cloths before food is served. The toilet areas are checked for cleanliness at the beginning of the session and toys and resources are maintained in a safe, clean condition.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines. They know, for example, that they need to wash their hands before eating and do so routinely before they sit down for their snack. They also learn the importance of wearing appropriate clothing in cold weather.

Staff give high priority to providing the children with healthy nutritious snacks. For example, they are offered porridge and fresh fruit mid morning, with a choice of drink. They also enjoy food tasting activities linked to themes when they try dishes, such as vegetable stir fry and curry. Snack time provides them with valuable opportunities to develop good social skills and manners. For example, they are fully involved in helping to prepare the table, setting out the plates and cups and making sure there are enough chairs for everyone.

Children are able to explore, test and develop their physical skills through experiences both indoors and outside. For example, they join in with action rhymes, explore dough and water and are keen to play outside where they use equipment, such as balls, quoits and cones. The children have a very positive attitude to physical exercise. They eagerly put on their coats ready to go out, confidently take part in running races and throw and kick balls with good control. They also have access to wheeled toys and a slide.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff strive to provide a stimulating environment and despite the constraints of the premises they achieve this very well. For example, portable screens are used to display posters and bright and interesting examples of the children's art work, all of which are presented at child height. Children use a very good range of well maintained toys and resources which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. These are well presented to promote independent access, and are rotated to maintain the children's interest and to support the topics being followed. Children are also able to request additional items that are not immediately available, such as story books.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised effectively in the well organised setting, which has good safety and security precautions in most areas. For example, parents and visitors are admitted by staff and a visitors' log is completed, equipment is maintained to a good standard and children are well supervised. Staff use daily checks to reduce potential hazards and follow good practices in their daily routines, for example, mopping up any spills of water straightaway. They regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedures with the children so they know what to do in the event of a fire and they explain why they must not run inside as they may trip and fall. However, some of the mats in the play area pose a tripping hazard as not all of

these lie flat and a gate has been removed and not replaced in the outdoor area which means children could access an unsuitable area.

Staff have a clear understanding of the group's policies and procedures in regard to protecting children from possible abuse. They fully understand their responsibilities in this area and know what to do if they have concerns. Information about the referral procedure is displayed for both the staff and parent's information in the entrance.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle very well in this extremely welcoming and friendly group. For example, staff greet them with a warm smile and a cheery greeting on arrival. The children clearly feel comfortable in their surroundings and are keen to learn, remaining motivated and engaged throughout the morning as they confidently develop their own play or join in with adult led activities.

The youngest children who attend benefit from the lead of the older ones and are well supported by staff who skilfully adapt activities to meet their learning needs. For example, each child has their own named teddy bear who stays at the group and they can access this at any time, for example, if they feel a little unsure. The teddies are also used very well to develop the children's confidence in sitting in a group and joining in with activities, such as counting and rhymes. They also have many opportunities to learn through tactile experiences, such as playing with water, exploring the texture of dough and paint, and using the touch screen computer.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and offer a good balance of both child-led and adult-initiated activities in a stimulating environment. They skilfully support children's learning through effective questioning techniques and make very good use of any learning opportunity as it arises. For example, encouraging the children to observe what happens to the ice they find in the outdoor area when this is put in the shade and the sun.

Staff enthusiastically describe to the children what is on offer at the beginning of the session, which inspires them to take part in the activities, and they introduce any visitors to ensure the children know who they are and why they are there. Staff also place a firm emphasis on developing the children's interest in books and encouraging a love of reading. For example, they make the book area extremely inviting, with cushions and story sacks which include items, such as puppets to capture the children's imagination.

Both the three and four-year-olds are very confident learners. They concentrate well, both on the activities they choose for themselves and those at group times, and they persevere with tasks. They are confident in their self care. For example, they put on their own apron before taking part in messy activities, hang this up after use and then wash their hands.

Children's communication, language and literacy skills are developing well. They all recognise their own name card at registration and confidently use writing for a purpose. For example, the more able write their own name on their work and copy or write over text to describe their pictures. They demonstrate good language skills as they engage staff in conversations, discuss the weather at group time and confidently predict what might happen next during stories.

Children's understanding of number operations is developing very well. They confidently count up to 10, correctly identify how many cups, plates and chairs they need at snack time and know only four can play in the water at once. They correctly sequence the days of the week and months of the year and understand about positional language as they line up to go outside, identifying that the smallest child is at the front and the tallest at the back.

Children confidently use simple tools to shape and mark as they play with dough and they use this to recreate various experiences, such as making pancakes. They confidently use the computer to complete various programmes, such as matching objects and they demonstrate that they understand about floating, sinking and capacity as they play with different objects in the water tray. Displays which depict clocks the children have made also show they understand about the passing of time and when everyday activities, such as having breakfast and going to bed occur.

Children use their imagination very well and are very confident in their creativity. For example, they act out domestic situations in the role play area as they make cups of tea and meals for their friends. They join in enthusiastically with singing activities and learn to use a range of art and craft techniques. For example, they make 'hot air balloons' from papier maché and displays show they use toy cars to make patterns in paint and print with leaves. They also help to mix their own paint, showing that they understand when to add more water or powder to obtain a useable consistency. They correctly identify which two colours they need to use to make another and confidently create independent works of art, carefully selecting their own collage materials to achieve their planned idea.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff create a very family orientated atmosphere. They know the children very well, value their individuality and meet their needs very well. Children's photographs, birthdays, reward charts and art work are all displayed which promotes a sense of belonging and raises their self-esteem. As a result, the children are proud of the group and are keen to show visitors what they do, and to invite them to join in with activities, such as snack. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are very welcome to attend and good support from staff during activities ensures they are fully included.

Children have very good opportunities to learn about the wider world and their local environment through a range of interesting activities. For example, they celebrate Diwali with craft and baking activities and make soup from different vegetables as they learn about harvest time. Photographs show them visiting a nearby children's farm, proudly wearing their t-shirts they designed specifically for the occasion. They also visit the local park, library and nearby airport. This positive approach ensures children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is very good. Staff support the youngest ones very well in sharing and turn taking and have high expectations and set consistent boundaries for the three and four-year-olds. They are very good role models for the children to follow and pay very good attention to fostering their independence and helping them learn to take responsibility. As a result, a very harmonious atmosphere is evident, with children playing very well together, readily helping with tasks and consistently using good manners.

All children benefit from the very good relationships staff develop with their parents. For example, they receive a prospectus when the placement begins, which includes statements relating to various policies, information is displayed in the entrance and regular newsletters keep them informed about forthcoming events. Good verbal interaction and friendly relationships are evident, with parents comfortable in approaching the staff. Parents spoken to at the inspection were very keen to express their satisfaction of the service, making particular reference to the family atmosphere staff create.

The partnership with the parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is very good. Staff ensure parents know how their child is progressing and developing, with records of progress readily available for them to view and regular written reports being sent home. Children also benefit greatly from the involvement of their parents in their learning. For example, they can borrow resources, such as books to share at home, they are very welcome to share their skills with the children and are able to share special times, such as attending the nativity play at Christmas. Open days are also held. However, parents are provided with limited information about the Foundation Stage.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The premises are very well organised, with indoor and outdoor space used effectively to maximise play opportunities for the children. Activities are well planned and documented, and clear records of the children's progress are maintained.

Children benefit from well qualified, experienced and committed staff who work extremely well together. They are very enthusiastic and clear of their role and responsibilities and it is very evident that they enjoy working with the children. They regularly monitor and improve the quality of the care and education through discussion, attending training and the advice and support they receive from other professionals.

The group has clear policies and procedures. These cover all areas, with one exception. Staff have not devised a written policy that details how children will be kept safe on outings. All legally required documentation, which contributes to the children's health, safety and well-being is in place. This is well organised and maintained in a confidential manner. However, the system for recording any complaints that may be received from parents has not been updated to reflect the recent changes in legislation. 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 recommended that the group improve some aspects of the documentation. The recommendations have been addressed successfully. A book is now in place to record any existing injuries the children may have when they arrive at the session, the lost child policy has been reviewed and amended to ensure it has all the required information, and written parental permission has been obtained for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment. In addition, staff now ensure they make observations of the children's learning across the six areas and that they use these to help them chart their progress towards early learning goals

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 all aspects of the outdoor area are safe and that the mats used in the hall do not pose a tripping hazard
- devise a policy to show the procedures to be followed during outings and improve the system for recording any complaints that may be received from parents.

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 information about the Foundation Stage is made readily available to parents.

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