

Belton Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	226194
Inspection date	12 September 2007
Inspector	Lynn Dent
Setting Address	School Lane, Belton, Loughborough, Leicestershire, LE12 9TU
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Registered person	Belton Pre-School 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?

Belton Lane Pre-School Playgroup is committee run. It opened in 1984 and operates from the village hall in Belton in north Leicestershire. A maximum of 26 children aged from two to five years may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open Monday to Thursday from 09:15 to 11:45 during term-time only. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 19 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 14 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The playgroup employs five members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good hygiene procedures are implemented. As a result children wash their hands and blow their nose. They explain where they put used tissues and that germs can make them ill. Younger children are helped with their personal hygiene whilst older children use the toilet and wash their hands independently. Staff maintain high levels of hygiene throughout the session by cleaning and covering tables at snack time. Routine cleaning of the premises, toys and equipment results in children's health being maintained. Children receive the appropriate care following accidents as staff are trained in first aid and details of accidents are recorded and shared with parents. The risk to children from illness and infections are minimised effectively because a clear policy and procedure is implemented and shared with parents.

Children receive a variety of fruit for snack. Therefore, they receive a healthy diet. Children can make choices about when and what snack to eat. Consequently, they manage their own dietary preferences. Children serve themselves and can pour milk or water accurately into cups. Snack times are used effectively to help children learn about the benefits of healthy eating. For example, staff talk to them about how milk helps them develop strong bones. Children explain that fruit makes them grow big and strong like their grandparents. A display of healthy foods reminds children which food groups are good for them. All children independently access drinks at any time from a water dispenser. Consequently, they do not become thirsty. Children's dietary needs are met as this information is readily available.

Children have a range of opportunities to participate in physical activities that they enjoy. For example, children show a good awareness of space as they carefully move around their friends when playing on wheeled toys and during movement sessions. Children can competently move in different directions and in a variety of ways, such as, skipping, marching and shuffling as they move sideways, forwards and backwards. They develop an understanding of how exercise affects their body because staff effectively use discussion to promote this. For example, during movement sessions staff ask children if they can feel their heart beating faster, if they are hot and explain that some have a reddened face. Children independently access drinks during and after exercise showing an understanding of keeping their body hydrated. Children are skilled in using tools for painting and drawing. They can use scissors well to cut out their pictures. Children show they can build towers with bricks and to manipulate materials, for example, play dough. Therefore, physical development for all children is reinforced and challenged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff regularly undertake risk assessments to identify potential hazards and take appropriate action to ensure these are addressed before each session. For example external doors are locked and alarmed. Protectors are attached to the toilet for the disabled. Therefore, children cannot trap their fingers. As a result the environment is generally safe for children to use. However, plug sockets are not covered. Consequently, these pose a risk to children. Parents are greeted by staff when they leave and collect their children. Procedures are effective in ensuring that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised. This means that a member of staff stands by the main door at the beginning and end of each session.

Children can safely access a range of toys and resources which are in good condition and regularly checked to ensure they are safe and suitable for them to use. Staff supplement the resources with equipment from home, for example, soft toys, information from the local community, such as, booklets about dogs and books from the local library. Children clearly understand the rules of the nursery that help to keep them safe. They know they must walk not run indoors. The emergency evacuation procedure is practised regularly throughout the year. Consequently, children understand this. Children are kept safe during outings in the village as they walk in a line, in pairs and away from the pavement edge. They develop an understanding of how to cross the road safely as this procedure is used at all times.

The outdoor play area poses a potential risk to children because it contains a broken chair, barrel and a radiator which are placed against a wall in one area. However, the risk is minimal because staff supervise children at all times in the play area to ensure that children do not touch or go too near these items and place themselves at each end of the playground. Children cannot leave because gates are locked. When children are involved in activities in the outdoor area, chairs form a physical barrier to restrict children's access to a more manageable area. Consequently, they can move around freely and safely. Due to a clear policy and procedures, staff can explain the indicators of child abuse and neglect. As a result incident records with information from parents about injuries that children receive when away from the setting are in place. Therefore, these help to build a clear picture of the children. Staff can explain how to implement the internal procedures and the Local Safeguarding Children Board reporting procedures. Consequently, children's welfare is protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are very settled and happy within the setting. Therefore, they are confident, have good self-esteem and are happy to leave their parents. They happily engage in the wide range of planned activities provided that link well to the current theme. Children have time and space to play alone and with their friends. Therefore, they develop their independence and social skills. Staff effectively interact with the children to support their learning and play. For example, when the children are washing replica plastic dogs in the water tray, staff discuss size and count how many dogs there are with older children. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is not yet fully implemented. However, staff will ensure this happens after following training. All children have the opportunity to participate in some interesting experiences. For example, they enjoy messy activities, painting and play dough, imaginative and role play, number games, drawing, construction and jigsaws.

Activities and routines help children to consolidate their prior experiences. For example, they complete a range of jigsaws which support their learning of numbers. During role play older children show imagination as they discuss cooking food and decide they need to put play food in a saucepan or the oven to cook for 10 hours. All children have the opportunity to participate in all the activities as these are repeated for children who attend on specific days. Staff help children to think about how things feel and encourage them to become involved in cooking activities in which staff and children make dog shaped biscuits. They use their hands to mix the ingredients and to roll out and cut the mixture into shapes. Some children's preference not to handle the mixture is respected. Children cut up play dough into small pieces. Staff tell the children these remind her of small toffees that she used to eat as a child. This conversation is developed further by children who remember they eat toffee at home. Appropriate use is made of the outdoor space. For example, water and role play is provided. Therefore, children can

play in a different environment. All children's care needs are met because staff know the children well.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are involved in planning and have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. As a result they can explain what the children are expected to learn from the activities and experiences provided. Children receive a suitable curriculum with a range of activities which are interesting. Staff explain to children what to do at each activity. For example, the children know they can use the scales to weigh dog biscuits and make dog shapes in the play dough. Staff can adapt experiences to help the more able children learn. However, planning of the Foundation Stage does not include how the activities are used to meet the individual needs of all the children. Staff observe and monitor children's progress. This information is used in the children's developmental records. However, most of these are not sufficiently updated to show children's achievements. Consequently, their progress is not always fully recognised or supported as the next steps in their learning are not clearly identified.

Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals in most areas and good progress in their personal, social and emotional development. They concentrate and listen well at register and story time. Children develop good relationships with others and are confident and have a good attitude to learning. Resources are organised to enable children to develop their learning independently. Whilst some children show they recognise their names as they place these on the wall at snack time, others cannot currently do so. Labels and written information is placed around the room and on furniture for children to read. Some children are at the early mark making stage. More able children can writing their name independently. Children enjoy books, they access these at will and are happy to share these with staff. They use a large book and talk about the pictures, remembering phrases from well-known stories like 'Hairy McClary from Donaldson's Dairy'. Children show excitement as the turn the page to see 'Scarface' the cat at the end of the book.

Children use mathematical concepts, in meaningful contexts for example, they can recognise numbers when completing jigsaws. Most children can count to five as they count objects in the water. More able children can count to 14. There is a number line with pictures to remind children about the order of numbers. However this is not easily accessible to consolidate the learning for the children. By using scales to weigh out dog biscuits, children are learning about heavy and light. Children have a sense of curiosity. For example, they spend time investigating how toys work. Children have a sense of time, can explain what will happen next during the session and can relate experiences to their own lives. For example, a member of staff finds a spider. She holds it for children to observe. When children express their dislike of spiders it is put outside. A child then explains that there was a spider in his bath at home and it disappeared down the plug hole. Children show they enjoy musical activities as they sing a range of songs and rhymes, matching actions to the words and participate well in movement sessions. They use an appropriate variety of materials to be creative, such as, crayons, paints, glue and wool.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children receive a warm welcome at the setting which takes appropriate account of the children's differences and individual needs. Consequently, all children develop a good sense of security. All children are fully included in the setting because they have equal opportunities to participate

in all activities. The early identification of children with special needs means that outside professional help is sought. This helps children to try to reach their full potential through focussed help and support. Children receive a range of opportunities to learn about their environment and the wider world. They go on walks and visits in the village and the staff organise a range of visitors to the setting, for example, the fire service and a local bus company. Children learn about the wider world by celebrating a wide range of festivals and events throughout the year. For example, they cover fruit with honey to celebrate the Jewish festival of Rosh Hashanah. Resources and pictures in the setting promote positive images of different cultures and disabilities well. Therefore, children learn to respect differences in others around them.

Children understand the rules of the setting and happily follow these because they are promoted positively. This means that posters supported by pictures remind children that 'We help to tidy up'. 'We share and we take turns'. Staff firmly believe that punishing children for their unacceptable behaviour is destructive and humiliating for them. Therefore they use positive behaviour management techniques to reinforce good behaviour. As a result staff are good role models and consistently use praise and awards. Consequently, children develop and show good behaviour and self-esteem. Children play harmoniously together for sustained periods of time. They can negotiate and share during play and activities. For example, children are playing with play dough. They discuss who has more play dough and share it out. A child then states she needs a plastic toy knife to cut up her play dough. Her friend quickly passes her the knife saying "There, you are" and the first child responds with "Thank you". Children have good manners and use these routinely because staff promote this. Children's social, moral spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children are keen to try new experiences and show excitement when they play with new and different resources.

All parents receive a booklet at induction with information about the setting and the Foundation Stage of learning. However, they receive less information about practices with younger children. Consequently, this is not clear to parents. The parents are warmly welcomed into the setting. This includes sitting with their children for a short time at register time to ensure they are settled. As a result parents have the opportunity to observe what is happening. A rota system provides parents with the opportunity to spend time in the setting. Staff ensure they are available at the beginning and the end of each session to informally discuss the children with their parents. This is further supported by a home link book in which all parties make comments and can ask questions. Parents have access to the settings policies and procedures at all times. Discussions with parents show they are very happy with the care their children receive and feel their children are making good progress in their development and learning which is reflected at home as they count and sing rhymes they have learnt.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is satisfactory. They receive information about their children through daily informal discussions and most know that the setting keeps detailed records of their children's progress through the Foundation Stage of learning. Although some parents actively make appointments to share and discuss these, some parents either choose not to or, are unaware that they can arrange such a meeting. Therefore, not all parents are kept fully informed of their children's progress. Staff regularly provide information about what the children are learning and offer suggestions about how parents can develop this at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's welfare and safety are maintained because robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure they are cared for by suitable staff. All committee members and staff undergo Criminal Record Bureau checks to determine their suitability. The committee ensure that staff working with children continue to be suitable as they update personal information about them annually. Staff have an annual appraisal which helps to inform their training needs and areas of strength. Children are cared for by experienced staff. Some staff are trained in early practice and others are currently completing their training. An induction ensures that staff have the information they need to implement the settings policies and procedures. Therefore children's well-being and care are enhanced.

The operational plan works well in practice because the policies and procedures are updated annually. Staff and committee members work together to ensure that they are appropriate and work in practice. Staff are deployed well to ensure children receive appropriate care and support in their learning and play. This is achieved because the number of adults required to care for the children is exceeded. The environment is well organised to provide good play and learning opportunities. Therefore, children feel safe and secure and are happy to be there. The setting has started to implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this is an area of priority for future development to ensure that the activities are developmentally appropriate for the children and they make progress.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. As a result all children are making generally adequate progress through the Foundation Stage. Staff provide appropriate curriculum which is adapted to reflect the time of year. For example, the theme of growing has been replaced by a more suitable topic for the autumn term. Some monitoring and assessment of activities is in place. Staff work together to plan. Consequently, they understand what the children are expected to learn. Although the person in charge has only been at the setting for a few weeks, she shows a clear vision of how she intends to improve the early education for the children. Weekly meetings are used to develop planning and ensure that it is effective in practice. Overall the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the quality of care was judged as inadequate. The registered person needed to ensure that effective procedures are in place for checking that staff are suitable to work with children and show how at least half of all childcare staff hold a level 2 qualification. Review and update the child protection policy and develop a written complaints procedure, including the address and telephone number of the regulator, available to parents. The registered person has taken the appropriate action to meet the actions. Qualified staff are now employed and other staff are working towards a qualification. All staff and committee members undergo Criminal Record Bureau checks to ensure they are suitable. The policies have been updated accordingly and meet the requirements of the National Standards. Therefore, children are cared for by qualified and suitable staff. Policies are detailed and shared with parents. Therefore, these underpin the care of the children. This has ensured the quality of care is now of a satisfactory or better standard throughout the setting.

At the last inspection the quality of nursery education was satisfactory. The registered person agreed to ensure assessment records are complete and show contribution from parents; improve planning to include evaluation of activities; improve opportunities for children to write for a

purpose and access information and communication technology resources; improve opportunities for children to use numbers for counting and to further develop an understanding of calculation. The registered person has taken the appropriate action to meet the recommendations. Information from parents is kept in the children's files. The evaluations of planning are in place but require further improvement to show how activities are adapted to meet the needs of all children. Opportunities for independent writing, to use information technology and for counting and calculating are built into activities and experiences. Therefore, children receive an appropriate curriculum in discussion with parents and their mathematical and writing skills are promoted.

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 that hazards in the main room and the outdoor play area are made safe or inaccessible to children. This is with regards to plug sockets and discarded materials
- provide information for parents about the practice for younger children

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):

- continue to develop the assessments of children's progress through the Foundation Stage
- develop planning further to show how it is adapted to meet the children's individual needs
- further develop the opportunities for parents to discuss their children's progress through the Foundation Stage.

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