

Breaston Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206727
Inspection date	16 November 2007
Inspector	Georgina Walker
Setting Address	St Michaels School Rooms, 2 Main Street, Breaston, Derby, Derbyshire, DE72 3DX
Telephone number	01332 874832 during session time
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Registered person	The Trustees of Breaston 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

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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?

Breaston Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1967. It operates from the St Michael's School Rooms in the village of Breaston, Derbyshire. There is a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The pre-school playgroup serves the local area and surrounding villages and town.

The setting opens five days a week during school term only. Sessions are Monday to Friday from 09.15 to 11.45 and Monday, Thursday and Friday 12.45 to 15.15. A lunch club operates between sessions on Thursday and Friday.

The setting is registered to care for 24 children and there are currently 61 children from two-years- one-month to four-years-five-months on roll. This includes 35 children who receive funding for early education. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school playgroup employs nine part-time staff who work with the children. Six of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification.

The setting receives support from the local authority and are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The pre-school playgroup is managed by a parental committee of trustees, who delegate day to day responsibility to the staff.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and safety is generally promoted. Children learn about personal hygiene through daily routines and are made aware of why they wash their hands so there are no germs on them. If children are ill or infectious a written policy regarding exclusion is effectively implemented. However, the setting does not consistently follow appropriate procedures when dealing with minor accidents. Records have limited detail regarding the size and location of the injury and existing injuries a child arrives with are not recorded confidentially, which does not fully safeguard children. Written consent to administer medication is given by parents. A first aid box is available. However, contents are not all suitable to effectively meet the needs of the children. Written consent to seek emergency medical advice and treatment is in place to ensure children's medical needs are suitably met if a serious injury occurs on site.

Children's dietary needs are met effectively and healthy eating is promoted. Individual needs are discussed with parents and recorded. With a café style snack bar the children register their time at the table by collecting their name card, which includes excellent information about the drinks they prefer or are allowed and any potential allergic reactions to food. Snacks provided are very healthy and nutritious, for example children enjoy a wide range of fruit and raisins, carefully counting out their allowed amount. Drinks are readily available and children are becoming skilled in helping themselves. Food handling procedures are appropriate.

Physical development is promoted very well and consequently children are able to develop a healthy lifestyle. Children have extensive opportunities to engage in a wide range of activities which encourage a positive attitude to healthy exercise. Climbing and sliding equipment, wheeled toys, balls and jumping activities are enjoyed by the children. They expertly use hoops and roll balls down plastic guttering into buckets as both a mathematics and manipulation skills activity. There is a set routine for use of the resources which contribute to developing large muscle skills. The small playroom is used to create space for ring games, action rhymes or parachute games when the weather is inclement. The children use an extensive range of construction toys, puzzles and have daily access to paper and drawing resources to develop fine manipulation skills.

The staff positively follow the 'Birth to three matters' framework, although parents are not formally informed of this. Most staff have attended training and have an awareness of the terminology and how to promote children's development through activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in warm and welcoming, secure and suitable premises where there is sufficient space indoors to play and learn comfortably. The children's safety is inconsistently promoted as the staff do not ensure the children have restricted access to the radiators, which potentially pose a hazard to the children's safety. Other aspects of indoor safety are carefully followed, such as the arrival and collection procedures. An awareness of safety during a fire is

promoted and evacuations have been practised. Children are also developing an awareness of personal safety as they respond positively to the staff's expectations when they are outside the premises on walks in the village, or on a bus trip to the local town.

Children independently select activities from the versatile range of good quality toys and equipment which are attractively presented each day. The children engage in the worthwhile activities which are presented in the playrooms and are encouraged to pack away before group time. Resources are stored in labelled boxes on shelves in the two store rooms and used on a rotational basis to ensure all children have access to the extensive range over a period of time. Their individual skills develop competently with the age-appropriate resources.

The protection of children and their well-being is promoted as the staff attend ongoing training and have a thorough understanding of child protection procedures and how to put these into practice. Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures have been received. Information and references to current legislation and local authority contact addresses are included and shared with parents and carers in the written policy files, presented each session on the parent's information table in the entrance hall.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are confident and keen to join in the interesting range of different activities presented each session. They have a friendly relationship with the staff, who encourage the children to separate from their parents and carers and access the extremely well-presented activities. Great concentration is shown and an eagerness to spend extended periods in something which stimulates, such as placing candles in the cakes in the mathematics game or painting with black and white paint on black paper. Children's developmental progress is informally promoted under the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff have developed a balanced programme linked to the older children's activities. Plans do not fully show which aspect of the framework is linked and records of how the child has progressed are not yet fully developed to show what the child needs to engage in next to promote progress. Staff are aware of the 'Early Years Foundation Stage' to be implemented next year and are already planning changes with record keeping to implement this. Children learn to make choices about activities and copy the older children, which leads to them quickly settling into the pre-school playgroup. New children are given time to settle in as staff recognise the need for them to relate to a key-worker and become confident to join the other children at play.

Children learn to share resources with other children, staff and visitors. The staff have been creative in introducing interesting ways for children to learn. The children enjoy the topics as they dress up as police officers and the school crossing patrol lady, both of whom visited the setting. Children develop appropriate socialisation skills as they join in group activities and move between the resources. This ensures they are purposefully occupied and are supported to develop their potential with steady progress. All children become purposefully occupied in topics, such as 'people who help us' and eagerly engage in the carefully planned activities, for example as they paint pictures of black and white lines, like the zebra crossing outside the premises. Parents are aware of themes through the termly newsletter and how they can extend learning at home.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff record comprehensive detail on weekly planning documents, consistently demonstrating they have an extensive knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones, early learning goals and how they will present activities. These provide a well-balanced, broad programme and there is some evidence of differentiation. Focus activities, especially for funded children, include small group activities in the small hall in the 'Smarties' group for rising fives. The focus activity sheets used for all children contain some useful information of how the child learnt and how staff will progress the learning next time. However, not all activities are effectively evaluated. This does not ensure children benefit fully from the learning experience as information is not formally available to assist with planning for their individual future progress. With the professionalism of the staff however, children's learning is extended as the pre-school playgroup have successfully developed the practice of having a key-worker for each child. This enables staff to progress specific learning and generally challenge children to think about what they know. Staff consistently ask open-ended questions, for children to think about and respond to. They promote the use of sounds and letters and children eagerly respond and use mathematical language as they play indoors and outdoors. Staff are very aware of the changes within the curriculum guidance to promote children's use of sounds and letters and have enthusiastically introduced effective activities which the children unquestionably enjoy. A variety of methods are used to help children learn effectively. Staff manage the children proficiently. Children are asked questions at the end of register time and respond with appropriate answers, such as 'why do we walk?'; 'because we might fall'. They are willing to help tidy up immediately when they are asked to for group and story time. Children's progress is verbally shared with parents, although they are aware written information in the folders is available at any time and always at the end of each term.

Topics are enthusiastically enjoyed by the children who suggest ideas of how to develop them. Activities are developed over a period of time, this ensures children's learning is effectively promoted as they are challenged to think by staff to recall relevant words and activities. The staff present very interesting and stimulating activities daily and children are eager to share information when talking between themselves or at the snack table.

Children are well behaved, accepting younger children have yet to learn routines and the expectations of the staff and are eager to try new experiences. They ask questions about how things work and listen to the responses from staff. They are animated when suggesting their own ideas and children organise each other to play together with the role play resources, becoming police officers, making marks in a notepad and using the telephones and old keyboards in the 'police station'. They share information about their life outside and have confident personalities, to include visitors in their play and conversations, such as talking about going swimming and their love of trains.

Children have the tools to spontaneously copy their own names from name cards as they sign in each day or find another name label to register themselves for snack time. They mark-make with good skills and write some recognisable letters. Some children are aware of the initial letter of their name and use letter sounds spontaneously. The children have access to an extensive range of books, which are well used as they often read stories to their friends. They enjoy story time and listen and respond appropriately to questions asked by staff, eager to recall the events in the story, repeating new and familiar words and showing they know an octopus has eight legs.

Children have a significant understanding of mathematics and spontaneously use their knowledge effectively when recognising numerals or counting during register time. They are very aware

of shapes and eagerly inform staff the shapes of resources in an extensive variety of activities. Calculation knowledge is accurate during snack time when children add and take away as they eat the food. Children develop problem solving skills, for example when suggesting the longest and tallest on graphs.

Children have regular access to a wide range of technology and battery operated resources. A computer gives significant opportunities to develop mouse skills and follow instructions to complete a programme. They learn eagerly about the natural world, when on outings to the church or when releasing the butterflies they have hatched in the pre-school playgroup. They go on the bus to the local superstore and watch bread being made as they learn more about time. Children are learning through carefully planned activities about the world around them. Topics which introduce them to the needs of others and diversities in society are included and children have daily access to resources which promote positive images of diversity.

Children's physical development of fine manipulative skills is promoted effectively through the use of an extensive range of resources. They use scissors with increasing competency. Large muscle skills are successfully developed, for example when they pedal wheeled toys with confidence and stop skilfully, or climb, balance and jump on the wide range of resources presented on a rotational basis in or outdoors. Children's awareness of how their body changes during exercise is an aspect of learning, included in topics and referred to by staff after energetic games or play outdoors on a cold and frosty day. As a result, children's learning in this area is well balanced.

Children are motivated to develop their creative experiences as they have access to a wide range of craft, role play and singing activities. Opportunities to paint and play with sand and water using a substantial range of different tools and resources ensures children are inspired to play and learn. Children are eager to discuss their work of crafts, drawings or imaginative activities. The loud laughter and smiles on their faces indicates how much they are enjoying themselves, such as when they push the trains around the play tray faster and faster, as they pretend they are the actual engines, 'Thomas the Tank Engine and Friends'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated fairly as the setting has an open minded approach to inclusion and meeting individual needs effectively. Staff encourage all children to access age-appropriate activities and develop life skills. Individual needs are discussed with parents. However, record sheets for each child do not contain all the details which enable appropriate care to be given, as any additional languages spoken at home are not requested. They do include medical information, especially with regard to food intake and allergies. The children have access to a wide range of toys and resources showing positive images of diversity, culture, gender and disability. Understanding and acceptance of the wider community and the development of positive attitudes is effectively increased.

The pre-school has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and an excellent understanding of potential need. Staff are aware to adapt activities to ensure inclusion and have a positive attitude to caring for all children. The designated members of staff are well trained to be the co-ordinators in the setting and the relevant code of practice is followed. Children and their parents are effectively supported from outside agencies as necessary. Some staff have an awareness of Makaton sign language and use a range of signs each day.

There are comprehensive procedures in place to manage a wide range of children's behaviour. Children are always given reasons why their behaviour is not acceptable. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Older children behave appropriately as they respond to boundaries set. They are aware of why they must share and take turns, happy to wait until there is an apron to put on to do crafts, especially when there is only one salad spinner available to create their circle pictures. This helps children feel secure knowing what they can and cannot do. Good use of praise and encouragement by the dedicated staff team helps to build development of children's self-esteem and they spontaneously use 'please' and 'thank you' at snack times and during activities.

Positive relationships with parents and carers and a desire to work in partnership with them to meet children's individual needs, ensures the staff are able to meet emotional and physical needs effectively. A starting point is known for each child and used to progress their learning experiences. Parents are updated on their children's well-being and development through discussion regarding learning and play activities. The setting does not ensure parents are fully aware of policies and procedures and how children will be cared for as some written information in the files for parents is out of date. Parents respond to requests to help on the board of trustees or committee and most parents or carers volunteer to do a rota duty and share in their child's learning experiences. They help prepare snacks and engage in some play activities. Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is satisfactory. Increased information is provided regarding the early learning goals and plans. The sharing of development documents is not formally organised on a regular basis as parents have suggested on a questionnaire earlier this year; this is to be developed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are in the care of qualified or experienced staff who are fully supportive to ensure they are settled in the pre-school playgroup. A happy atmosphere is evident as children play with an extensive range of inspiring resources. Suitably planned, developmentally-appropriate activities ensure children's time in the setting is worthwhile and provide suitable levels of challenge for most children. Consequently, children are very happy in the setting and are eager to engage in the interesting range of exciting and stimulating activities. The ratios are maintained and children benefit from the key-worker system. The routine and organisation of the playrooms is monitored effectively. The children's needs are generally met by the setting which maintains their personal records to meet individual needs. However, some records are not fully maintained to promote the welfare of the children at all times. Written policies, some of which require up to date information to be shared with parents, assist in promoting the care and learning of the children. The registration system which monitors all persons on site is robust and children's writing skills are promoted as they sign themselves in the setting each day.

The leadership and management for early education is good. A clear vision has been developed of how the setting will present a wide range of activities to meet the educational needs of the children effectively. The committee, made up of trustees, leave the day to day management to the manager and the planning of the education to the staff group who work with the children. Qualification requirements are met and staff also attend training to raise standards and increase knowledge and broaden children's experiences. Regular support for the staff team during site visits from staff from the local authority assists in the promotion of children's learning and well-being. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection the setting agreed to update procedures and policies relating to child protection and complaints. Both have been updated twice to reflect the ongoing changes. Staff attend child protection training on an ongoing basis and have a good understanding of the policies relating to the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Children's welfare and safety is promoted effectively. The complaints policy contains some inconsistent information for parents regarding who investigates, the responsibilities of and contact number of the regulator. However, the setting endeavour to work in partnership with parents and carers to ensure no complaints arise.

At the previous education inspection the setting was set four key issues. They were to increase staff's knowledge and confidence in the use of everyday activities and routines to support children's learning in mathematics and linking sounds and letters. Staff continue to attend training. An extensive variety of resources have been purchased, more activities planned and spontaneous use of language by the staff ensure mathematics and sounds are incorporated at every opportunity. The promotion of the 'sound of the week', not the letter, inline with new initiatives ensures children 'hear and say sounds in the order in which they occur'. Children bring in resources starting with 'P' and sing 'p, p, p, puff the candles on the big pink cake', with great enthusiasm.

Two issues relating to planning and assessments have been substantially addressed to promote individual children's learning. An effective key-worker system has been introduced which ensures each child and parent relates to a designated person and learning is closely monitored. A two year system of themes and topics has been devised, to ensure curriculum planning covers all clusters in each area of learning and clusters are revisited in the planning process to cement prior learning. This is constantly under review to include current festivals or celebrations. However, more work is required on the sharing of development records.

Parents' information on how they could support and extend the learning undertaken in the setting within the home environment has been instigated. Detail of the stepping stones and Early Learning Goals are given. Notice boards which provide information and newsletters reiterate what the themes or topics are. The 'sound of the week' is included, prompting children to bring in resources such as a pen, purse and toy platypus for the 'sound of the week' discussions at group time. Photographs and open days give many other ideas and information about children's learning. Parents can be assured the proactive staff group encourage children to flourish in the setting.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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

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 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 positive steps are consistently taken to promote children's safety
- ensure accident records are appropriately maintained, are confidential and the contents of the first aid box are appropriate to use
- improve outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters' and record purposeful information to assist in planning for children's progress
- ensure children's records contain relevant information which enables appropriate care to be given and parents are consistently provided with current information regarding regulations and the learning frameworks

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):

- develop the evaluation of planned activities with purposeful information to assist in planning for individual children's future needs and develop further the methods of formally sharing children's records with parents and carers (also applies to care)
- continue to develop the planning to show differentiation (also applies to care).

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