

Pinchbeck Penguins Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY343011
Inspection date	14 September 2007
Inspector	Sandra Hornsby
Setting Address	Baptist Church Hall, Knight Street, Pinchbeck, Lincolnshire, PE11 3RA
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Registered person	Pinchbeck Penguins 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Pinchbeck Penguins Playgroup became a committee run provision in 2006. The setting operates from the Baptist church hall in the rural village of Pinchbeck. The setting has the use of the main hall, kitchen, toilet areas and a meeting room. There is an enclosed outside play area and garden for outdoor activities. The playgroup is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children between the ages of two and five years at any one time. The playgroup is open each week day during term-time from 09:15 until 11:45. There are currently 31 children on roll. Of these, 22 children are funded for nursery education. There are currently three children attending with identified special needs and those who speak English as an additional language. The setting employs six members of staff. Five have completed recognised qualifications and one is currently undertaking further training. The provision is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and Children's Links. Staff receive support from a teacher advisor at the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment, where they benefit from a good level of cleanliness and hygiene procedures, this helps to limit the risk of cross-infection. Staff demonstrate good cleaning procedures and practices that further support children's knowledge and health. Children participate in good routines that help them understand about hygiene and personal care. They wash their hands and use the toilet independently, they help themselves to drinks and wash up their plates and cups after snack time. By carrying out these tasks children are learning about keeping themselves healthy and developing personal care independence. Staff have relevant first aid training and implement procedures such as, recording of accidents and administration of medication appropriately which help to maintain the good health of children and consistency of care.

Children are provided with healthy and tasty snacks, for example fruits, crackers, cheese, biscuits and sandwiches. They help prepare the snacks with staff who hold food hygiene certificates. Children cut the fruit and place the biscuits on plates. They can choose when they want to have their snacks as it is available for most of the session. This means children's play, imagination and creativity is not interrupted for a group snack time.

Snack time is a very social occasion and children enjoy talking to their friends and staff about what has been happening and about what they are eating. Children serve their own snacks and drinks, and then complete the task by washing up their cups and plates, supporting and promoting their independence. Staff have documents in place on the wall that includes children's medical and dietary requirements, this helps to make sure children are offered appropriate food.

Staff manage the young children very well. There is a very good settling-in process which helps the young children build up confidence and settle happily. Children have already developed healthy attachments to their key workers, and look to them for support and reassurance. Older children help the younger ones to feel safe and secure as they support them. For example, children sit alongside each other and help to complete puzzles, while others offer simple instructions for story time. Young children benefit from the good staff to child ratio as staff make themselves available to the children for cuddles, comfort and affection in an environment that is new to them. Children are welcome to bring in comfort items and toys from home, and staff allow them to take home small nursery toys, this helps them to develop an association and a sense of belonging to the nursery.

Children enjoy the outside and physical play opportunities. They get regular opportunities for fresh air and to engage in physical play and practise their skills. Children are offered good opportunities to explore at their own pace and develop and construct their own ways of using the equipment. Children with difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported in their outside play. Children can dance to music, balance on low-level beams, and manoeuvre around the garden on bikes and

sit-and-ride toys. This helps to develop confidence and an interest to try new activities. For small movements children are offered a selection of tools and equipment such as, pencils, cutting and dough tools. Children enjoy their physical play and challenges, and use the garden safely and confidently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a large welcoming play space, that is well organised, which keeps children busy and interested. Good use is made of the space enabling children to play, move equipment from place to place and be able to move outside safely and freely. A range of toys and play resources are made available daily and staff checks make sure they are clean safe and age appropriate. Children see their work displayed on boards which helps them develop a sense of pride and belonging.

Risk assessments are carried out daily to maintain safety standards and ensure children are safe on the premises. Young children explore the environment freely and without fear of risk and harm because they are well supervised and staff understand the importance of keeping children safe. Fire precautions are not fully in place. Although a fire escape route has been planned and practised the procedure is not displayed, which means visitors and parents unaware of the procedure would hinder a safe and efficient evacuation.

Staff have understanding of child protection and most have undertaken some child protection training. This ensures knowledge is kept current and staff are clear about their responsibilities and the procedure to follow to safeguard children if they have concerns. This helps to mostly protect children from harm and neglect. However, the procedure for when there is an allegation of abuse made against a member of staff is not in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures, and would not immediately protect children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff are making every effort to get to know the children as most children have just started their first pre-school experience. They have written information from parents that help them understand what children like to do and what skills they come with. Staff use this information to help children settle and develop a secure feeling. Staffs' warm interaction and good support helps build positive relationships and helps children feel safe. Children confidently move about the setting, approach staff for help and chat about what they are doing. A key worker system is in operation and staff use this process to get to know the child and offer them quality play experiences and lots of support. Children are happy and settled in the group and concentrate on activities available, making decisions and choices from a wide range. Some children enjoy imaginative play where they involve themselves in the home corner or dressing up, playing make-believe cooking and making a hot drink, while other children spend time doing puzzles, participating in water play and using their senses to explore the environment and play materials. Children are encouraged to find out what they like to do, as staff observe them, and support children by being nearby to help them. Most activities are suitable and are adapted to accommodate all the children. However, group story time at the end of the session put a high expectation onto the younger new children. These children were not able to concentrate and sit down and listen. They disrupted the story for the older children who could not hear, and distracted them by leaving the group. Staff focused on bringing them back, and did not look for other ways to occupy them during the story.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and deliver it with consideration to children's needs, using different

teaching methods. Staff provide a sufficient range of activities and experiences, and the level of challenge is sufficient to interest the children and enable them to make satisfactory progress.

Children are keen and enthusiastic about the activities they spend time doing. Children concentrate on chosen tasks, and younger funded children are given time to explore the environment and find out what they like doing. Children are independent and address their own personal needs, for example using the toilet and washing hands. Children's independence is encouraged in all areas within the pre-school routine as children can access water and snacks, make choices when they have their snacks and wash their cups and plates afterwards. Children work well in small groups and alone, helping the younger and less-able children. They talk freely to staff and other children about their home experiences. Children enjoy books as a small group activity, and those sessions led by a staff member. There is a good choice of books available in a comfortable book corner. The library van attends each term and children have the opportunity to select books for the pre-school. Children use story books and dual language books, and there are some labels and signs around the room which help them to see writing for different purpose. They see writing in different forms, for example, lists, labels and numbers and see different languages written in the dual language books.

Children have some opportunities to make their own marks with pencils and paints and hold the equipment correctly. Those older children who are able to form letters are encouraged to practise regularly through a writing table and focused activities, and other less-able or younger children make marks and explore early writing skills freely at the painting and writing tables. Children happily talk in small groups and take turns listening to each other and staff. They share experiences and older children confidently talk to the whole group, communicating and expressing what they want clearly.

Children's mathematical experiences are however limited. There are few accessible number charts and written numbers around the room, and staff use some basic counting activities, rhymes and songs. There is little focus on calculating and problem solving, which hinders children developing an interest in numbers and early mathematics.

Children are seeing diversity around the setting and are learning about people speaking differently and looking different. Children's curiosity is supported by staff who have toys and equipment that begin to help them understand the world around them. They participate in local village life and have visits from people who work and live in the local community. Children confidently talk about their own experiences at home and their family. Children are interested in the computer and used it with help from staff. However plans, although they include knowledge and understanding of the world topics and theme for example the weather, do not offer children regular free opportunities to explore and investigate remote toys and information technology equipment. This prevents children from exploring the equipment, becoming familiar with it, and extending and practising their skills. Children enjoy the home corner and using dressing-up clothes where they can practise behaviour and actions they see all around them. Children's creativity and imagination is developed through role play, arts and crafts, dressing up, and music. They are given free opportunities to listen to music and sing. Older children are confident and sing enthusiastically to familiar songs.

Staff understand the children and are enthusiastic and positive in supporting children's learning and development. They involve parents in their initial assessment of where children are at in respect of the stepping stones. Staff carry out short observations on each of their key worker children and record the findings, this ensures staff are aware of any learning that has taken place. However there are gaps in assessments, for example, mathematical development and in

knowledge and understanding of the world, and children's next steps are not identified. Consequently future learning needs are not identified and planned for in the short and medium term plans.

Weekly planning does not always cover a broad spectrum of the six areas of learning and is repetitive, consequently it is difficult to see that children receive a short term balanced curriculum. Although planning is basic the children are still offered interesting play opportunities and a wide range of resources to support learning to a satisfactory standard.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are treated as individuals, and staff effectively support the families using the pre-school. Children, through observing staff and other children, are learning to respect each other, to value each other's differences and needs, and to be kind and caring. Children have access to a selection of toys and equipment in the pre-school. The group also participates in the village festivals, carnivals and celebrations. This helps them understand about their own culture, community and that of others. There are good systems in place to help younger children settle into pre-school life, and enabling children to bring a comfort toys from home promotes a sense of belonging and identity.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered well. Children are valued as individuals, and their individuality identified and supported. Children are included in the local community as the pre-school participate in the village church flower festival, and village carnivals and pageants. Visitors come to the nursery and bring their own experiences to share with the children. Consequently children are beginning to learn about differences and valuing others. Children behave very well, and older children help and support the younger children. Staff encourage good behaviour by using praise and encouragement, and children display kind and caring behaviour. Children happily share and take turns and help clear the toys away at the end of the session when the tidy-up bell rings. Children who are new to the setting are supported in learning the ground rules, and when a child wanted to stick a wet painted picture on the wall with blue paint he was dealt with sensitively and calmly, and helped to leave it to dry before attempting to stick it to the wall again.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well supported by a committed and caring staff team. Although children have a one-to-one key worker system all staff are aware of children's individual needs and work alongside the children supporting their development. There are good recording systems and observations in place to ensure children's goals, identified in their individual educational plans, are being met. Staff spend time supporting the children on a daily basis, physically helping children to stand or sit at an activity and join in with their peers. Some children who speak English as an additional language have the opportunity to see their first language in dual-language books, and parents are encouraged to support the staff with some words and translations. Any concerns that arise are shared with parents, and parents encouraged to speak to staff if they are worried. This means parents can feel comfortable and reassured knowing that the staff are supporting their children and working alongside them to benefit their welfare.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Although the parents of funded children are made aware of the Foundation Stage curriculum, the information they are given is general and mostly verbal. They have some information about the stepping stones and early learning goals, and staff share with parents what projects and themes they are doing. Parents are informed that

they can have access to their children's files at any time, and staff share information in informal meetings. Parents complete registration forms which keep staff up to date with their children's needs, and promotes appropriate continuity of care between home and the pre-school. Children benefit from the friendly informal relationship between staff and parents. Parents are welcomed into the setting and are able to stay and be involved for as long as the child needs reassurance of their parents' presence. Parents receive newsletters about events, and a notice board informs parents they can see the complaints records and policies and procedures at any time.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled at the setting. They benefit from the experienced and qualified staff who are caring and understand the children. Staff offer all children good support, where they can play safely and with a variety of toys and equipment. The day is organised to allow the children indoor and outside play, promoting children's physical development and health. Most regulatory documents are in place, however recruitment information held about staff is inconsistent and does not include application forms and medical information. Committee members, who lead the provision with the manager, assure they recruit suitable personnel and are updating their policy to formally include this information, which they understand supports the well-being and safety of children.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager and committee work together to provide an organised pre-school. Members of the committee have a variety of life experiences and expertise, address issues at the setting and support the staff and manager. The staff, manager and committee are able to identify their strengths and weaknesses and pro-actively work with other professionals to improve the quality of nursery education. The committee and staff are receptive to constructive criticism and are looking at different ways of developing their service. The manager supports the staff in their everyday work, and encourages them to take on additional responsibilities, such as a special needs co-ordinator and child protection officer. The provision also supports staff undertaking courses and additional training. This support has a positive effect on the children as staff remain focused, interested and keep up to date with new childcare practices and developments, so children attending benefit from their expertise and enthusiasm.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration 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 satisfactory.

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):

- display the fire evacuation procedures to ensure all visitors, parents and staff can see them
- ensure all child protection procedures are in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures
- ensure learning and play opportunities, for example story time are appropriate for the age and stage of development of all the children
- offer parents basic written information about the setting including information about the Foundation Stage curriculum (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):

- develop consistent opportunities for children to explore and investigate information technology, remote and programmable toys
- offer children a variety of opportunities and experiences to promote an interest in numbers, shape and size, calculation and problem solving
- ensure children's differing educational needs, their next step, and a broad spectrum within the six areas of learning are considered when planning the children's curriculum.

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