

Field Lane Playgroup Limited

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY307423
Inspection date	06 July 2007
Inspector	Jean Otter
Setting Address	Field Lane Community Centre, Field Lane, Alvaston, Derby, Derbyshire, DE24 0GW
Telephone number	01332 571699
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Registered person	Field Lane Playgroup Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Field Lane Playgroup is privately run and operates from the Community Centre in Field Lane, Alvaston, Derby. It was initially registered in 2005 and was re-registered in 2006 following significant repairs to the premises. During this time the playgroup operated from temporary premises. A maximum of 30 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.15 to 15.00 during term times. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 64 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 18 children receive funding for early education. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The playgroup employs 10 members of staff. Of these, eight hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned routines, such as washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating meals. Children's good health is well supported because staff practise good hygiene routines, such as wiping tables at snack time and ensuring all preparation surfaces, toys and equipment are clean. Policies and procedures are in place which help children stay healthy, for example, the policy for caring for sick and infectious children helps to prevent the spread of infection. A suitable procedure for the administration of medication is also in place, however the recordings do not currently include the date that the administration was given, which may have an impact should the administration be subsequently queried.

Children's understanding of healthy eating is not fully promoted in the setting as staff are not always proactive in introducing them to healthy options. Children rarely have an opportunity to become involved in the preparation of snacks or to develop an interest in the process of introducing healthy items. Fresh water is available whenever children are thirsty and they have a choice of drinks at snack times, which they independently pour. Special dietary requirements are respected to ensure children remain healthy.

Children have ample opportunities at each session to take part in physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They develop self-confidence in their physical skills as they use a wide range of toys and equipment either indoors or outdoors. The indoor activities include movement sessions, action songs and musical games, which the children enjoy, and they learn to move their bodies in different ways.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment where risks are limited through very good safety and security procedures. Staff monitor access to the group at all times and good procedures for the collection of children are in place. Risk assessments and daily checks on the outdoor area, premises and equipment are completed to ensure children are kept safe. Children are well supervised by staff that are vigilant and support children appropriately in safety matters. Fire fighting equipment is in place and fire evacuation notices are displayed appropriately. Emergency evacuation is practised regularly ensuring that children are familiar with the procedures and can help to keep themselves safe in an emergency. Procedures for lost and uncollected children are comprehensive, minimising harm and anxiety.

The premises are suitable for their purpose, they are cheerfully decorated and well maintained. Children have free access to a good range of high quality toys and equipment that support their development well.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of safeguarding children issues. Staff know signs of possible abuse and the procedures to follow if they are concerned about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident within the group and enjoy their time there. They benefit from familiar routines which are well organised. Activities and resources that they enjoy are well presented and effectively support their learning through play. The interaction between children and adults is very positive. Staff provide help and support and interact sensitively with the children to encourage their confidence and emotional well-being. This is particularly well implemented with the younger children. The key worker system ensures that children's welfare and development is monitored effectively and they approach all staff for their needs, which are met well. In this supportive environment they are learning good social skills, such as being caring towards each other and sharing their toys and resources. Children's personal independence is nurtured well and they are keen to demonstrate their skills such as pouring drinks at snack time. They know how to behave appropriately and listen carefully to instructions from staff. Staff are using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan suitable activities for the children under three years, and observations and assessments are completed to support their all round development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff know how children learn and use the stepping stones to identify their achievements. Planning is well organised, and ensures a range of activities and experiences are provided which, on the whole, extend children's learning well. Observations and assessments are completed and staff use these to inform planning for the next steps in children's learning. Staff engage in children's play and work very well together as a team, sharing observations and aspects of planning. The deployment of staff is effective, generally supporting the children to get the most out of activities. However, there is the potential in some areas to introduce activities and discussion that challenges the older children further. Staff provide opportunities for children to become independent learners and there is a good balance between free play and adult focused activities. Children are eager and motivated to learn, they form good relationships with staff and their peers which helps to promote a sense of belonging. Behaviour is well managed which results in a calm environment.

Children's achievements in speaking and listening are good and they have opportunities to speak out in a familiar group which promotes their self-confidence. They listen to stories and sing their favourite songs and rhymes. The use of books within the setting is satisfactory, and children are learning to handle them appropriately. Children are beginning to recognise familiar words and are learning that print carries meaning. They recognise their own name as they collect their name cards before snack. Staff encourage children to say initial sounds in words so they are beginning to link sounds with letters. There are good opportunities for children to practice their emerging writing skills, for example, when they write letters to others.

Children are beginning to count and are using numbers generally well. They count reliably to 12 and some children can count beyond this figure. They have some opportunities to develop simple calculation skills, for example through number rhymes, however, opportunities for subtraction and more developed problem solving is limited. Children have good opportunities to access technology via lap tops, keyboards and telephones for example. They are beginning to learn how magnets work and are learning some concepts such as matching, sorting and sequencing, and how to tell the time. Children are generally knowledgeable about shapes and size, and can demonstrate their knowledge, for example, by cutting out correctly the shapes

they have previously named. However, the introduction of more difficult concepts such as changing properties, heavy and light, floating and sinking are limited.

Children are introduced to a range of topics that help to develop their awareness of the environment and the world in which they live, for example, they learn about the different animals on the farm and consolidate their learning by visiting a farm and playing with the small world farm animals. Children are encouraged, in circle time for example, to talk about familiar people and the things they enjoy. They discuss the weather and have the opportunity to develop simple gardening interests. Staff spontaneously show and discuss items of interest with the children, for example, when the grass was being cut outside the setting.

Children move confidently and are developing good co-ordination skills. They handle a range of tools and small equipment well and have access to a range of large equipment which further tests their skills. Action rhymes and movement sessions that involve moving their bodies in different ways are particularly enjoyed. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-planned routines and activities. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their snack, and staff provide good visual and verbal reminders.

Children use a satisfactory variety of different materials to develop their creativity and imagination. They explore texture through natural materials, for example, they enjoy making soap suds from bars of soap, water and sponges. Painting, drawing, colouring and malleable play is regularly available, which offers the opportunity for free expression, as well as organised creative opportunities. An interesting home corner and dressing up trolley, for example, helps to develop the children's imagination. However, older children have limited opportunity to construct large models or to explore various aspects of construction, such as how things work.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a supportive and caring environment, they enjoy positive relationships with staff and their peers and are valued as individuals. Children develop their ability for self-control through discussion and activities that re-enforce suitable boundaries and behaviour. They are learning, for example, to take turns and share their toys. Children's self-esteem is developed well by staff who value their contributions and use meaningful praise and encouragement for achievements. Staff encourage children to make choices about their play. Allowing free choice of toys and activities fosters their independence and decision making skills. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed into the setting and staff are committed to the full inclusion of all children. Staff have identified that training in this area is needed to further improve their skills and understanding. The setting provides an environment where mutual self-respect is taught through activities and discussions with children. Satisfactory opportunities are given to children to explore, acknowledge and value similarities and differences between themselves and others, however there is the potential to improve the images which provide a positive and balanced view of the world. A basic range of resources are available which generally supports children's learning in this area. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children settle well because staff work closely and sensitively with parents to ensure their child's needs are met. There is a meeting for new parents who also receive good written information about how the setting operates. Parents are welcome and there is an 'open door' policy, however the parent helper rota is, unfortunately, not well attended. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is being implemented well and informs

the planning process for the younger children. Parents whose children receive nursery education funding are given clear information on the educational programme and have the opportunity to discuss their child's progress in detail. Daily verbal feedback ensures parents are informed about what their child has been doing whilst attending the setting and their general welfare. Regular newsletters and a useful parents' notice board helps to keep them up to date with matters of interest and forthcoming events. Parents are informed about how to complain, however the recommended timescale to respond to a written complaint is not specific within the policy.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by staff who have been appropriately vetted, have relevant qualifications and demonstrate a good understanding of the needs of all children to promote their well-being. Children benefit from a familiar routine and are confident to approach staff to ask questions and request support which is freely given. Space and resources are well organised to maximise children's play and learning, and staff work well together to ensure the smooth running of the setting. Staff have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. They continue to examine their practice in respect of how best to support the children to move forward in their learning. Policies and procedures generally support the care, safety and welfare of the children. An accurate record is maintained of children's attendance.

Leadership and management of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Staff are included in all aspects of decision making regarding the running of the playgroup. The manager works directly with the children and has a good understanding of their learning and developmental needs. The organisation of the planning has been reviewed and upgraded. The manager has worked hard to produce a system that works for the setting, and the review process has achieved a greater understanding of planning, both for herself and the staff team. A system of observation and assessment is in place, and staff are using these to inform planning for the next steps in children's learning. The provision is monitored and evaluated to ensure the curriculum is being delivered effectively, which in turn promotes the progress of the children. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and systems are in place which provide them with good direction and support. The manager ensures equality of opportunity is promoted via policies that reflect inclusion for all and anti-discriminatory practices.

Overall 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

Since registration 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 written records relating to the administration of medication contain the date the medication was administered
- promote the children's interest in, and understanding of, healthy eating
- develop the images and resources which help to provide children with a positive and balanced view of the world
- develop the complaints procedure to include the recommended timescale for responding to formal written complaints.

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):

- introduce activities and discussion that offer greater challenge for the older children, particularly in relation to mathematical development and the opportunities for construction using tools and more substantial materials.

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