

PlayPen Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY348751
Inspection date	12 July 2007
Inspector	Lesley Anne Cannon
Setting Address	Meopham CP School, Wrotham Road, Meopham, Gravesend, Kent, DA13 0JW
Telephone number	07814 533 510
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Registered person	Playpen Pre-School Ltd
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?

Playpen Pre-School opened in the current premises in 2007. It is privately owned and replaced the previous group registered at a previous local address. It operates from a self-contained single story building with a large hall, an adjoining smaller room with a kitchen and toilets, including a disabled toilet. There is access to a varied outdoor area. It is situated in the village of Meopham, on the outskirts of Gravesend. The Pre-School serves the local community and some families from further away. The Pre-School opens five days a week during school term times; sessions are from 09:00 to 15:00. Currently there are 51 children on roll, 41 of these receive funding. The setting is registered to care for up to 24 children from two to five years. There are nine staff working with the children, all hold a relevant early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children participate in a wide range of activities which help contribute to their good health. Every day children have a variety of physical activities. Indoors they participate in action rhymes or music and movement and outdoors they have a range of equipment they can select such as hoops, bikes, soft balls and balance beams. This encourages children to have control of their bodies and learn how exercise has a positive effect on their health.

Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They are independent and understand the need to wash their hands after using the toilet and again before snack time. This is enabling children to take some responsibility for their own health. Less able children are supported by staff who help them to follow good routines.

A clear policy is in place for children who are unwell that is shared with parents in the nursery prospectus. Children who are unwell do not attend. Staff help prevent the spread of infection by making tissues available with a bin close by and children use these independently. These routines help reduce the risk of cross-infection and help children remain healthy. Accident and medication records are well maintained and shared with parents to help provide children with continuity of care.

Children learn about healthy eating through topics and daily discussion at snack and lunch time. Children are offered a variety of snacks such as apple, toast, or biscuits. Snack and lunch time is a social occasion for the children where they sit with friends and staff exchanging conversation about their day or what they are eating. They can access drinking water at all times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a purpose built premises that are well maintained. Staff carry out a daily risk assessment of the whole premises. When going off the premises staff conduct a one off assessment to ensure children's safety when out. The premises are secure, with a lobby area where staff can talk to visitors prior to the entering the main room, helping to protect the children's welfare.

Staff are aware that safety is ongoing and talk to the children about keeping the environment safe, for example asking children not to run inside. The group also welcome outside visitors to the group who reinforce how children can keep themselves safe, such as road safety being reinforced by the local Police Officer.

Furniture in the room is all at child height and resources are stored so children can access resources safely. Resources are checked regularly to ensure they are safe for the children to use. The room is prepared for children giving them space to move around whilst having the opportunity to take risks and face new challenges in safe surroundings. Children participate in emergency evacuation of the premises. Staff have designated roles and monitor the procedure to ensure the process is efficient.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures. The policy is shared with parents to help them understand the role the group have in protecting children. This enables staff to safeguard children's welfare within the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive at the nursery happy and settle quickly into the daily routine. There is a lively atmosphere and the children are eager to participate in the range of activities provided. They make choices in their play and choose to sit quietly with a book or to be involved in the busy role play area, enabling children to express their own ideas. Children can be independent and help themselves from a wide range of high quality well maintained resources. They are available at children's height in easily accessible containers so they can select the activity of their choice. Children are content to play alone, in small groups or all together for group games. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement throughout the morning, building on their confidence and self-esteem and giving them a feeling of self-worth.

Staff use the children's assessments to build on what they know and can do. They plan activities and resources making every effort to ensure children with learning difficulties and or disabilities are integrated into the nursery, adapting activities to meet their needs and introducing a daily visual routine. Younger children also settle well into the group. Staff are trained and use Birth to three matters to enable them to provide differentiation in activities for the younger children that inspires their curiosity and promotes their confidence in a new environment.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and their roles and responsibilities. They provide a well balanced curriculum offering children a wide range of experiences that supports the early learning goals, and ensures the inclusion of all children. The staff build on the initial assessments of children enabling them to plan their progress. They are aware of how to adapt activities to suit children who learn at different rates or who have particular needs. Staff use their knowledge and experience well to present children with new experiences that challenge and motivate the children.

Children's communication skills are encouraged as staff actively help the children and stimulate their thought process during conversation and activities the children participate in. Staff also adapt the conversation to reflect the age and stage of the child's development. Children are encouraged to find their own name at snack time or when putting their work in their tray to be taken home. Children can practise mark making in various situations, such as menu and shopping lists in the home corner. Children enjoy reading and listening to stories, they handle books confidently and enjoy sharing books with their friends.

Children can express numbers in day to day language, for example the number of candles on a pretend birthday cake. Children take part in day-to-day activities taking part in simple tasks such as adding one more, or if we take one away how many are left. They learn about size, shape and weight through practical activities such as water play or at snack time. However, there is limited opportunity for children to see and match their learning of letters and numbers in activities outside. Children enjoy counting rhymes when singing.

Children have regular physical exercise in the garden, using large blocks for building or balance beams, improving their coordination. They can also access the school field building children's

awareness of the local community. Children are using a good range of tools and equipment to explore their surroundings, for example they look at mini beasts through magnifying glasses. They also enjoy cutting and sticking, encouraging the children to develop their fine motor skills.

Children are provided with regular opportunities to explore with sand and water in an imaginative way and enjoy a variety of different types of art and craft work throughout the sessions. Their imagination is extended as they are stimulated by the numerous opportunities in the role play area contributing to their creative development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children currently attending feel good about themselves and learn to show respect for others. Children play happily together talking confidently to familiar adults during activities, for example they will interrupt a conversation by saying 'excuse me'. They bring small items from home that are stored in the treasure box, helping to forge links and develop a sense of belonging. Children have access to a good range of resources that help them understand diversity in our society. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave very well during the session, this is reinforced by staff giving clear boundaries. Staff use appropriate management strategies helping children to respond positively. They show care and concern for each other, for example a child told me her friend was at home unwell and share and take turns and play well together. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are well catered for and receive good additional help and support. Good partnerships are formed with parents and outside agencies helping to provide continuity of care for the children.

Partnership with parents is good and contributes to the children's wellbeing during their time at the nursery. The staff have a relaxed approach and chat happily to parents when they collect their children. Staff know the children well, which helps children settle easily. Children's needs are monitored starting with written information that parents share when children first start to attend and through discussion with their parents. Parents are encouraged to help in the nursery enabling them to be fully involved in their child's learning and encourage the children's progression. The parent's notice board has some relevant information, however this needs to be maintained with appropriate information.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are welcomed in to a fun and exciting environment where resources are displayed in a variety of ways that encourage and motivate them. The atmosphere in the nursery is bubbly as the children chat with friends and staff and involve themselves in activities around the room or in the garden outside.

The nursery's organisational plan is regularly reviewed to ensure the needs of the children and staff are maintained. All staff hold a relevant childcare qualification and up-to-date first aid certificate. The staff work well together as a team and children are assigned a key worker, this helps ensure appropriate support and care for individuals throughout the session. All documentation required for the nursery is in place, and all mandatory documents are well maintained. This ensures the safe and effective management of the setting in order to promote the welfare of the child.

Leadership and management is good. There are clear aims for the provision and staff are using self- evaluation during meetings and appraisals and contribute to in-house training. Staff are encouraged to keep up-to-date with current childcare practices by attending relevant courses. This is reflected in the staff's commitment to improving the care and education for all the children who attend. Deployment of staff is clear and they plan well for the inclusion of children with learning difficulties and or disabilities and staff liaise with others enabling them to establish plans that all staff can be involved with enhancing the care provided for the child.

The setting 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 sufficient information is available for parents

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- ensure children have opportunity to see letters and numbers outside to consolidate their learning

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