

Calstock Under Fives

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 102895
Inspection date 19 September 2007
Inspector Christine Powlesland

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Registered person Calstock Under Fives

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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Calstock Under Fives opened around 25 years ago. It is held in Calstock village hall on the Quay for four mornings each week during term time from 09:30 to 12:00. Older children meet for one morning each week from 9:15 to 11:45 in the village Primary School. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 24 children on roll aged from two and a half to under five years. Of these, 10 children receive funding for early education. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties. The pre-school employs four members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in a spacious village hall. They learn about health and hygiene through established daily routines such as washing hands after toileting. A reluctant child is persuaded to do this by staff offering extra bubbly soap. However, basins do not have

hot water provided and children share a communal hand-washing bowl in the playroom with a shared towel when they wash their hands before snack time. At the second visit paper towels were provided in this area to help prevent cross infection. Staff follow appropriate procedures when preparing tables for snack time and have talked with the environmental health officer about their provision. They are aware that the village hall kitchen has still to meet recommendations made by the environmental health officer. The person in charge holds a current first aid certificate to help protect children's health, however, staff have not received appropriate training in the use of emergency medical equipment.

Children benefit from daily access to a healthy and varied range of mid-morning snacks. Items provided include a wide range of fresh fruit, cheese and crackers, with choices of fruit juices and banana milkshake to drink. A cafe system is used to enable children to eat when they individually become hungry. Children are encouraged to develop an understanding of their needs, for example they confidently help themselves to water throughout the morning.

Children develop small muscle skills as they carefully fit pieces of different sizes and shapes into jigsaws, handle paint and glue brushes with confidence and use pencils to write orders in the imaginary play cafe area. Children do not access the adjacent outdoor play area for fresh air on a daily basis. They enjoy playing outdoor games organised by staff and learn control of their bodies, running, starting and stopping together. However, they do not have access to play on large equipment to help them develop climbing, balancing and throwing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy playing in a well-organised environment. Low dividers are used in the hall for display as well as to partition different areas, such as the book area, messy play and construction. Children are able to move freely and safely around these areas. Music plays quietly in the background as children arrive and calmly choose the activity they wish to do. Children access a good range of toys and equipment all of which are in good condition and stored within their easy reach.

Children's safety is generally well maintained within the building, but is compromised by the lack of effective daily risk assessments. This results in hazards being overlooked, such as the doors to the main hall not secured throughout the session and electric socket covers not always in place. Fire drills are recorded. However, one has not been held this term although new staff and children are now present and may not be aware of how to keep themselves safe.

Staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and procedures, which would enable them to seek appropriate support for children if necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, content and involved in their play. They receive good care from a responsive and friendly staff team. The positive attention that they receive ensures that children who are new to the preschool settle quickly within the calm environment. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework effectively to plan for young children's learning. Children are enthusiastic and self-assured in the child-centred environment. They know the routines of the day well and self register by placing their photograph into their key worker group when they arrive. They concentrate for long periods of time on the activity of their choice, a young child persevering

in learning the skill of threading beads onto a lace. Children explore varied resources, one child enjoying spreading glue onto a piece of card then independently twirling the brush in the glue to make a picture of tiger footprints. The children are confident and have formed friendships. They play imaginary games together and often move together as groups around the activities.

Nursery education.

The nursery education report for Calstock Under Fives is shared between the two settings, one for four mornings a week in the village hall and the other for one morning a week in the local primary school.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children have a positive attitude to their learning, concentrating well and persisting with tasks. They are making progress towards all of the early learning goals. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and use this knowledge to plan a stimulating learning environment for the children, although activities provided in the school hall are limited to what can be taken up daily in the supervisor's car. This limits the provision for creative development as equipment such as sand, water and paint are not available for the children. Clear daily plans are set out linking activities to the early learning goals. Written plans are clear enough for all staff to fully implement and the whole staff team is increasingly involved in observation and assessment systems that allow the adults to become very familiar with the children's achievements. However, there are some weaknesses in the planning as children's assessments are not always used to inform and direct the planning, which does not include extension activities for older or more able children. Staff are consistent in their use of effective behaviour management strategies that encourage children to give of their best. Space and resources are well organised, and staff are effectively deployed to ensure that children access support for their learning. Staff follow the children in their play and use appropriate questions to help develop the children's thinking, for example asking what will come out of the hosepipe when two children dress up as fire officers and put out an imaginary fire. Staff encourage children to predict what will happen next as they read a story together.

Children become engrossed in their play and their imaginations are allowed to flourish in well-resourced role-play areas. They co-operate well and negotiate in their play, talking to each other on imaginary telephones as they use the tent as their home and take dolls in pushchairs to play in the park. Children clearly enjoy their time in the pre-school as they choose from the wide range of activities and creative resources provided in the village hall. They independently choose activities for the majority of the morning, developing small muscles as they roll and shape play dough, fit train track together and skilfully use brushes to paint and glue. Recycled materials give children the opportunity to design and make things. Children confidently use the computer in small groups, navigating well with the mouse and asking for help when the programme does not do what they wish. They fit small shapes onto larger cards of the same shape, discussing the colours and similarity and differences in shapes as they do this. They count meaningfully and use language such as more or less with accuracy. Children enjoying using the book area, sitting on the floor with a member of staff and listening carefully as the story is read to them. They have good communication skills and talk confidently to each other and to staff in large and small groups. Children are learning to predict, one child telling everyone there were clouds in the sky so it would rain in a minute, when they went outside to discuss the weather. They move from the sun into the shade and discuss which is the warmer, agreeing that the sunshine makes them happy. Together they enjoy playing physical games outdoors, helping develop larger muscles and control of their bodies. However, the outdoor areas are not used to their full potential and children do not always have access to large play

equipment to help them develop physical skills such as climbing and balancing. When in the school setting, children join the reception class every second week for physical education, helping to form a link with the children and teacher they will work with when they start school.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are made to feel very welcome within the setting. They are greeted warmly upon arrival and their family lives and individual needs are well known to staff. Children are able to learn about difference and diversity in society through effective teaching and a range of resources. Consequently, children are learning quickly to be sensitive to their own needs and the needs of others, responding well when they are encouraged to be considerate and well mannered. Children with learning difficulties receive support from the whole team, who are committed to promoting positive outcomes for such children through close working relationships with parents and outside agencies. Children's behaviour is good as they are constantly occupied during their time in the pre-school. They respond positively to the meaningful praise that staff regularly give and are delighted to receive a sticker for exceptional behaviour.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are extremely happy with the provision and think their children blossom with all the free play and peer interaction. Parents are warmly welcomed and chat with staff as they leave or collect their children. This daily exchange of information contributes to the continuity of care between home and preschool that children enjoy. Newsletters are sent home each term and show the planning for that term. Parents also receive letters about current themes, such as inviting them to provide exotic fruit for a tasting session. A parents' day is held yearly when they book appointments to see their children's work and discuss their progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in a well ordered setting. They are cared for by caring and conscientious staff who are enthusiastic about their work. Staff hold appropriate qualifications and are deployed flexibly and appropriately, showing a good awareness of their roles and responsibilities. They work well together as a team and a key worker system is in place to ensure children's well-being is met on a daily basis. The policy file made available for parents has not been updated since 2004 and the complaints policy does not include the new requirements. Children's records are stored securely and contain all necessary consents.

Leadership and management is good. Staff work well as a team and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Staff are conscientious in supervising sessions and ensuring that children are happy and enjoying worthwhile experiences. The pre-school committee has recently changed and staff appraisals will be held and used to monitor standards and improve practice. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection in the preschool was asked to provide hot water for hand washing. This has not yet been provided to help prevent the risk of cross infection.

They were also asked to provide sufficiency of challenge in activities provided for children. Children are engrossed in their play with suitable activities during the session. However, staff

do not include extension for older and more able children in the planning to help challenge these children appropriately.

In nursery education the pre-school was asked to develop outdoors. Outdoor play is not a daily occurrence and is limited in breadth as equipment and activities are not regularly provided out of doors. This limits, in particular, large physical development for children.

The pre-school was asked to provide quiet uninterrupted times for children to discuss the stories read to them. Stories are now read to small groups of children throughout the morning. Children have time to discuss the stories with staff and through enjoyment of this activity are developing a love of books.

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 all staff receive appropriate training in the use of emergency medical equipment
- ensure safety of the children by risk assessing the premises daily to make sure the premises are secure at all times, ensuring socket covers are always in place, updating the complaints policy and holding regular fire evacuation practices to ensure all children are aware of how to keep themselves safe.

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's assessments are kept up-to-date and make use of these to direct the planning, making sure planning includes extension activities for older and more able children
- ensure outdoor areas are used to their full potential and make sure that children have access to large play equipment to help them develop physical skills

- ensure activities provided in the school provide sufficient equipment to allow children to enjoy creative development, such as sand, water and paint.

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