

Penguin Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254221
Inspection date	03 October 2007
Inspector	Andrea Caroline Snowden

Setting Address	Newtown Methodist Church, Caister Road, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk, NR30 4DB
Telephone number	01493 851101
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Registered person	Penguin Pre-School
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?

Penguin Pre-School opened in 1993. It operates from two rooms in a building adjoining the Newtown Methodist Church in Great Yarmouth. A maximum of 36 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The pre-school is open each week day during term time, from 08:30 to 15:00. There is access to an enclosed outside play area.

There are currently 42 children aged from two years to school age on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those with English as an additional language.

The pre-school committee employs a team of five staff. The staff have considerable experience in providing childcare and education. Two staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted in the clean and well maintained setting. Effective hygiene practices and record keeping means that the risk of cross-infection for children is low. For example, clear information is sought from parents before care commences to establish any individual health or dietary needs. Children having allergies are cared for appropriately and all staff are informed to ensure children are not at risk from allergens. Staff are appropriately equipped to deal with emergency situations as they are trained to administer first aid and have ample equipment to treat children effectively. Permission has been obtained from some parents to enable staff to seek emergency medical treatment. However, not all parents have been asked to give this permission. This has the potential for those children to experience a delay in receiving treatment in cases where parents can not be contacted. There are clear procedures in place for the administration of medication and recording of accidents. Children are able to learn about their personal hygiene in the setting from an early age. Children who wear nappies are encouraged to wash their hands after staff have changed them staff talk to children about why it is necessary for them to wash their hands to ensure they begin to understand the need for good personal hygiene.

Snack time is a sociable occasion where children sit together with adults who help them to serve themselves food and drink. Their independence is promoted as staff enable children to pour their milk or squash and spread cheese, marmite or jam on their toast. Snacks are healthy and varied and children enjoy fresh fruit, salad vegetables and cheese. The setting works with parents of those children who stay for their packed lunch to ensure children enjoy a healthy meal and that food is stored appropriately. Children are beginning to learn about the healthy options through activities and role play. When reading a book at circle time children see that there is a wide variety of fruit available and staff promote awareness of fresh fruit being good for you as they play alongside children in the home corner.

Children have taken part in topics which help to promote an awareness of their health and body. For example, the nutritionist has visited and spoken of healthy diets, whilst children freely access outdoor play for fresh air and exercise. Most children eagerly join in with music tapes, warming up their bodies and then following the instructions for exercise. They march, jump and move around the room excitedly demonstrating an eagerness to be active. Some children say they do not wish to join in because they feel tired, showing an understanding of their body and how they feel physically. They are able to watch, whilst playing quietly with a puzzle, ensuring that children's individual needs and preferences are catered for.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The indoor environment is extremely vibrant, stimulating, warm and welcoming. The child-centred play rooms ensure children feel safe and settled and have access to a good range of facilities to promote their development and welfare. The outside area by contrast is small, stark and bland offering children a concrete yard in which to play. Although staff provide resources for children to use outside and have tried to brighten up the area with posters in the windows, the outdoor environment is neither stimulating nor a child-centred area to play in. This has the potential to discourage the less active child from venturing outside. Indoors there is a cosy book corner with a large sofa for rest should children require it and separate areas for

floor play, messy activities and table-top toys. This means that children can select which area they would like to play in and move freely throughout the premises according to their particular interests.

The setting has a wide selection of resources which are clean, bright and safe, and there are very good opportunities for children to select resources independently. Many items of equipment are placed at a low-level where children can select and return toys, promoting respect and independent choice for them. They eagerly tidy away when staff indicate that it is time to do so and do this in a calm and co-operative manner. Children show great excitement at new equipment. When staff show them pictures of some new equipment which will soon be available they exclaim 'wow-wee I'm going to put rolls in that oven, that'll be fun' showing an acute interest in their equipment and surroundings.

Children's safety in the setting is highly important to the staff. There are effective systems in place to ensure the setting is secure and policies and procedures clearly define roles in an emergency situation. Risk assessments are carried out periodically and staff carry out visual checks to ensure the premises are safe before children arrive. Outings are conducted in a safe manner and a risk assessment carried out before visiting a venue in order to maintain children's safety. Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe. Having read a story book about a fearless fire-fighter, children discuss the dangers of fire and what they would do if there was a fire. Staff explain to them how to use equipment properly and explain the consequences of not doing so in order for children to learn.

Children are safeguarded effectively by staff in the setting who demonstrate a clear understanding of issues concerning child protection. Staff have received training. They are able to follow the internal procedures or make direct referrals to social services if this is not appropriate. Staff recognise the possible signs of abuse and children's welfare is their top priority. Children are not allowed to leave the premises unless there is prior consent from parents for another party to pick them up and the setting have developed robust procedures to be followed should a child become lost or is not collected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Without exception the staff are all kind, gentle and calm with the children. They demonstrate a warm rapport and very close relationship with all of the children which in turn helps children thrive. Children are greeted warmly by staff who meet them at the door and as a result they enter the room happily and confidently. Children are well supported and are actively encouraged to become independent and therefore confident. They chat freely to staff and are pleased to greet other visitors in the setting. Friendships between children are forming well and some children show consideration for their peers whilst others are pleased to see their friends arrive at the setting. Staff listen to what children are telling them. They ensure they work at children's level and always respond to what has been said with interest. As a result, children feel valued and more able to contribute their thoughts and ideas.

Children enjoy messy play activities. For example, the gloop absorbs them for a long time as they continuously squelch it between their fingers and watch as it drips back into the tray. Whilst marble painting their hands are covered in paint. They rub their hands together and look at the mixture of colours, and think about how it feels on their hands. They count as they prod holes into the play dough to represent birthday candles and talk about colours as they set out the plates in the role play area. Whilst constructing with blocks children say they would like to

build a castle. Staff encourage them to think how this might be done, by asking 'how shall we begin?' When children are unsure staff offer reassurance and children's knowledge of language is extended when staff say 'we need a foundation'. Children have real choices about their learning and have free access to all areas in the setting allowing them time to investigate and complete activities to their satisfaction and to revisit them if they feel so inclined.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have taken steps to familiarise themselves with the Foundation Stage curriculum and have a really clear understanding of the areas of learning children engage in. Staff understand that children learn at different paces and give clear explanations to ensure younger children understand. For example, when talking about a grass snake the member of staff explains why it is so called. Staff ask open questions of children such as 'what do you think will happen if?' or 'what do you think it is?' to promote prediction and problem solving skills. Staff have developed easy relationships to promote children's confidence and they are therefore happy to participate and learn. Staff have created an environment where children are self-sufficient and can begin to direct their own learning by making resources easily available and allowing children free choice. All staff are involved in curriculum planning which is flexible enough to incorporate the spontaneous interests of children. When children say they are going to the circus and the whole group becomes animated about the subject, staff immediately revise the plans to ensure children's interests are followed. Planning is varied and covers all areas of learning effectively and staff are aware of how to promote learning at each activity children take part in. Focus activities are well planned in terms of groupings and resources, but there is little information for the practitioner about how to adapt the activity for a child who may have specific requirements. As a result, the activity may not always be tailored to meet individual children's learning needs. Staff make regular observations of children. However, this is not always consistent and some children are not being observed in all six areas of learning. This has the potential to mean children do not make satisfactory progress across the whole curriculum.

Children separate from their carers mostly with ease and have formed nice relationships with their peers. They play together independently and develop their own games promoting their social skills. They understand the routines of the day and manage their own behaviour well. They understand about turn taking and sharing and when a third child arrives to play in the sand where only two are allowed, one graciously leaves to make space. Children speak clearly and confidently in large group situations and they listen to others with interest. They join in their favourite nursery rhymes with enthusiasm and enjoy story books. Activities such as jigsaw puzzles are helping to develop their hand-eye coordination and children recognise their names as they self-register at the beginning of the session. Children's counting skills are developing well and they are introduced to early addition and subtraction when singing number rhymes. Children recognise some simple shapes, whilst more able children talk to staff about complex shapes such as hexagons and trapeziums, showing an interest and willingness to learn.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is fostered through a variety of meaningful activities. They watch changes occur as the snow melts or the bread cooks into toast and discuss the different environments around them. They have enjoyed trips to the fire station and celebrated Chinese New Year by designing and making a dragon and then dancing with it. Children have access to a computer and to electronic equipment. They demonstrate great knowledge of such items and older children select the mouse from the shelf and plug it into the back of the electronic game. They operate the volume switches easily, further demonstrating the confidence with information communication and technology. Children's imagination is

fostered. They make up their own stories and children are observed with dolls on their laps reading them a story. They read and talk to their dolls with interest and intonation and great excitement as they exclaim '...and the rabbit hopped right up in the sky...'. There is also a well resourced role play area and the small world equipment enables children to create scenes of dinosaurs walking through the mud and trees. Children use their senses to describe and explain that the uncooked rice sounds like rain and that the gloop looks like soup. Children enjoy free access to the outdoors. They scoot along in toy cars, pedal tricycles with ease and attempt to use skipping ropes to skip. They bowl balls at skittles improving their coordination skills. Visits to the local park offer children opportunities to use equipment which is far more challenging and helps to develop their large muscles and balance. Their fine manipulative skills are enhanced, for example, as they use scissors to cut along lines whilst making lanterns.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are well met within the setting. Key working staff use information from parents to ensure they are able to care for and respond to children effectively. Their likes and dislikes are catered for and staff have come to know the children well. Equality is promoted throughout the setting and children have opportunity to learn about similarities and differences. There are resources available to promote positive images of diversity and activities such as the dancing dragons as part of the Chinese New Year celebrations help children to learn a little of other cultures. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well cared for by the staff team. The setting coordinator works with parents and liaises closely with outside agencies in order to provide good care. Children are monitored closely and small steps are taken to enable them to make progress through the creation of individual education plans. All staff are made aware of specific issues concerning children to ensure that their learning outcomes are successfully promoted regardless of which adult they are with.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Their behaviour is good and consideration for others is growing. Staff effectively encourage children and promote their self-esteem with comments such as 'well done', and 'what a good job', and as a result children's confidence and willingness grows. Staff recognise that different strategies are required to manage children's behaviour dependent on their age and level of understanding. Children receive explanations about why their behaviour is unacceptable and as a result are beginning to understand the difference between right and wrong. In difficult circumstances, parents are involved to try to foster a consistent approach between home and setting.

Parents are welcomed by the staff in the same friendly manner as the children and they are able to stay and settle their children and use this time to pass on any information. The entrance hall is welcoming to parents and there is useful information available for them to read on the white board. Comprehensive policies are available for parents to read should they ask to see them and displays of children's work helps keep parents informed about what their children have been doing. There is a complaints procedure which is displayed on the notice board and a robust system in place for the investigation of any concerns raised.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents speak highly of the setting and say that they receive good verbal information when they register their child at the pre-school. They say that ongoing communication is also frequent and as a result they feel well informed. Parents describe staff as friendly and approachable and are confident about raising any concerns about their children with them. Staff have regular discussions with parents about their children's learning to find out what their children are doing at home. As a result,

they are able to build on these interests in the setting and promote children's learning further. Parents are given very regular opportunities to see their children's assessment records and, if they take up this opportunity, are able to contribute their observations and comments about the child.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is supported by a team of experienced staff who work hard to provide good quality care and education. They attend regular mandatory training and short course training to ensure their knowledge and skills are updated. Recruitment and induction procedures are in place to ensure that new staff are suitable to work with young children. There is no formal vetting process to be followed in order to ensure all committee members also undergo suitability checks. As a result some new members to the committee have not been satisfactorily vetted to determine their suitability in running the pre-school. The organisation of the setting is generally good and staff are well deployed throughout the various areas in order to ensure children receive appropriate levels of support at activities. The staff work well as a team ensuring that all members are aware of specific issues which effect the smooth running of the session. Mostly the policies are effectively implemented and promote the outcomes for children. The required documentation is maintained to a good standard in order to protect children and maintain their welfare.

The leadership and management is good. The manager of the setting has a clear understanding of her roles and responsibilities in supporting her staff team. She ensures that they access regular training and supports them by conducting regular supervision interviews to discuss their work. The whole of the staff team work together taking responsibility and making decisions about the running of the group and as a result all staff feel valued and have some 'ownership' of the setting. The manager adopts a 'can do' attitude and is proactive at trying out new ideas or implementing new requirements in order for children and staff to develop and learn. There are systems in place to monitor the quality of practice and ensure it is maintained. Through self-evaluation and observations the manager is able to ensure areas of weakness are highlighted and acted upon. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to address the following issues: to enable children to have independence in accessing clean water for hand washing; to consider the organisation of snack time to avoid children waiting during preparation; to review the safety of the carpet and kettle and to improve the partnership with parents to help them become more involved in their children's learning.

A low-level sink with hot and cold running water has been installed in the messy play area and as a result children can now independently wash their hands in clean water, reducing the risk of infection spreading. Snack time has been reorganised and children are now involved in the preparation and serving of snacks, promoting their independence further and avoiding the need to wait and possible disruptive behaviour. The carpet has been replaced and the kettle is not used, removing the potential hazards for children. The setting have made progress in improving the partnership with parents and as a result parents now have more frequent opportunities to discuss their child's progress and see their individual Learning Stories.

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.

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 written permission to seek emergency medical treatment or advice is obtained for all children on roll
- consider the outdoor environment and how it might be made as stimulating and child-centred as the indoor environment
- further improve the staffing policy to ensure there is a clear vetting procedure to be followed to make sure that all committee members are vetted in a timely fashion

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 assessments of children are made in all areas of learning in order that children can make progress across the whole curriculum
- ensure planning, specifically for focussed activities, incorporates differentiation for more able or less able children.

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