

Medbourne Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	226442
Inspection date	08 January 2008
Inspector	Sarah Measures

Setting Address	Medbourne Village Hall, Main Street, Medbourne, Market Harborough, Leicestershire, LE16 8DT
Telephone number	01536 770 421
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Registered person	Medbourne 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Medbourne Playgroup was established in 1982. It is a voluntary group and is registered to care for up to 24 children from two to five years of age. It opens on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 09:30 to 12:00, term time only. The playgroup is situated in a village hall in the rural village of Medbourne.

The playgroup serves Medbourne and the surrounding areas. It is registered to accept nursery funding. At present there are 25 children on roll including 14 funded three and four-year-olds. Children are grouped together in one large hall and also have access to the entrance area and toilet and wash areas. There is an enclosed outside play area for children's physical play and activities. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

In total, five members of staff work with children throughout the week, with some parents helping on a voluntary basis. All staff either hold or are working towards appropriate qualifications. The playgroup is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and hygienic setting. Their health is further promoted because staff follow careful cleaning routines. For example, they clean tables before and after snack and as they are put away and they are mindful that the premises is used by other groups, and therefore, take responsibility for ensuring areas are clean themselves. Children learn simple good hygiene routines as they independently wash their hands after messy play and are reminded to wash their hands before snack and after using the toilet.

All children very much benefit from the lengthy periods of outdoor play offered in the large outdoor play area. They are fully engrossed in purposeful outdoor activities as they explore, digging in the leaves and collected sticks. Three staff are qualified in first aid in order to ensure children are always protected in the event of an accident and accidents are recorded with clear detail and signed by parents. Secure systems are in place to identify and meet children's health and dietary needs. Children enjoy healthy snacks and can help themselves to a drink whenever they feel thirsty. This further promotes their independence and ensures their physical needs are met.

Children in receipt of funded nursery education make very good progress in their physical development. This is because staff plan and provide a full range of opportunities for them to develop confidence in their physical skills and to learn an awareness of space, of themselves and others. Children thoroughly enjoy choosing from the varied range of tricycles, bikes, stilts, scooters, balls and hoops available. They show good co-operation and learn good co-ordination as they push each other and use tricycles designed for two children. They make full use of the natural surroundings and safely climb the tree and balance on the wall within the outdoor area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Space, equipment and activities are organised to meet their needs and to give them free choice from a range of interesting learning experiences. Suitable and safe child sized furniture is used to create an accessible setting for children. A range of equipment is available in order to meet children's varying needs. Staff carry out daily checks to ensure there are no hazards in areas used by the children and they are well deployed in order to ensure children are safely supervised. The arrival and departure of children is carefully monitored, however, written risk assessments completed across all aspects of the provision are not regularly reviewed in order to fully promote children's safety.

Outings and walks off the premises are appropriately risk assessed before hand in order to ensure children's safety when out of the setting. Fire practises are held each term in order to give children a satisfactory understanding of action to take to keep them safe in the event of a fire. Children are not fully safeguarded because there are no written guidelines to follow if a member of staff is accused of child abuse, and not all staff have a suitable knowledge of the possible indicators of the different types of child abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and at home in their environment. They have good relationships with staff who effectively encourage them to explore and to develop a desire to learn. Staff are warm and caring and engage children in purposeful discussions in order for them to make the most of the learning opportunities available. All children choose from a varied range of activities that successfully promote all areas of their development. Staff are well aware of the needs of the younger children and take care to ensure they are fully supported in order for them to participate in playgroup activities and routines.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning for children in receipt of funded nursery education is good. Planning for funded children is particularly effective because of the good communications that take place between staff on an ongoing basis. This helps staff to plan and provide a program of learning opportunities that interest children and meet their individual developmental needs. Good quality observations are completed in order for staff to plan for the next stages in children's development. There is potential for planning for the individual child to be improved further through the use of a key worker system and by organising observation records to give a comprehensive picture of where children are at across all aspects of their development.

Children arrive, part easily from their carers and are keen to participate. They develop good friendships amongst themselves as they play and interact, sharing ideas and experiences. They use their imagination as they take part in role play and learn from each other as they act out real life situations and make sense of the world around them. Children very much enjoy being able to express themselves freely and to create their own ideas as they take part in painting, collage and cutting and sticking activities that allow them to choose from an interesting range of colours and textures. Children proudly show off their work to staff, telling them about their work and ideas. Staff skilfully praise and encourage children in order to promote their confidence and self-esteem.

Staff talk to children about events from home and within the group so that they feel valued and develop a secure sense of time and place. Children show a love of stories as they choose from a varied range of books and reading material to share amongst themselves and with staff. They very much look forward to visits from 'Singing Sally' who comes into sessions in order to share lively and fun songs, stories and musical activities with them. Children talk excitedly about her visits and fully participate, developing important creative and communication skills.

Children take part in a good range of games that develop the understanding of number mathematical concepts. They enjoy games that help them to count and compare and staff help them to sequence numbers from one to 10 using number cards. They enjoy number rhymes and count during everyday situations in order for them to learn whilst they are having fun and completing everyday practical tasks. Staff effectively plan and provide a range of first hand learning experiences that help children to develop a knowledge and understanding of the world. Children look at the different seasons which involves walks so that they can explore the local area. They grow their own seeds and look at change as they make ice cubes and watch them freeze and melt.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a secure sense of belonging because they are valued by staff. Children learn to value and appreciate difference because toys and resources that represent a diverse society are well integrated within their play environment. Their experiences are broadened as they look at different religious and cultural celebrations that are thoughtfully brought into the planning. Although there are currently no children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities in attendance, the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good because the Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator is confident in her role and knows how to access professional support for children if necessary.

Children are well behaved because they feel secure and are well occupied. They show very good co-operation and consideration for others because of staff's encouragement and good role modelling. For example, two children complete a painting together, sharing tools and ideas and feel proud of their joint achievement. Staff involve children in purposeful discussions in order to help them to learn a good sense of self-discipline by carefully considering the consequences of the actions. Staff work co-operatively with parents in order to promote good working relationships so that children are well supported. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents for the nursery education is good. This is because good systems are in place to share ideas with parents in order for them to continue with their child's learning at home. Staff make themselves available for meaningful discussions at the end of the day and encourage parents to share their ideas and observations of the children at home. This helps staff to get to know the children well and ensures parents also feel valued and included. Parents actively participate in their children's learning as they help children to bring in items from home that begin with the 'letter of the week'. Staff make good use of their observations in order to show parents how their children are progressing across the development areas.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Policies and procedures effectively promote children's health, enjoyment, achievement and their ability to make a positive contribution and are satisfactory in the way that they encourage children's safety. The manager and the deputy are both experienced and work closely together to ensure the efficient running of the provision for children. Ofsted is not currently informed of all persons making up the registered body in order to ensure appropriate vetting can take place in order to protect children. Vetting procedures for new staff are not sufficiently robust in order to protect children as the group does not follow suitable procedures when employing persons that are already known to them.

Good staff to child ratios are in place and staff are well deployed in order to support the children. Space, equipment and resources are organised to meet children's needs and to ensure they feel welcome. Systems for keeping records meet requirements and are used to promote children's welfare. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management for the provision for nursery education is good. This is because staff constantly review the effectiveness of the provision for children through daily meetings and are committed to improvement. More formal opportunities to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the group take place as the group works co-operatively with the Local Authority.

Managers are skilled at motivating and supporting staff who in turn pass on their enthusiasm to the children, creating a positive learning environment.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the playgroup agreed to; develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will hold a Level 2 qualification in childcare; devise a policy for the administration of medication, and make sure that the written complaints procedure includes the address and telephone number of the regulator, and to make sure that premises and outdoor areas are secure and that children are unable to leave them unsupervised. All staff except for the manager and the deputy are currently working towards Level 2 qualifications in order to enhance the provision for children. A written complaints procedure that includes relevant information regarding the regulator is readily available for parents and the premises and outdoor are now sufficiently secure in order to improve children's safety.

At the last nursery education inspection the playgroup agreed to; develop staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage and their understanding of the learning intentions for focused activities, and to develop children's assessments so that there is a clear indication of their progress in relation to the stepping stones and use this information to help plan for what children could usefully do next. Training from the local authority has been organised within the group in order to develop staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage and individual planning sheets clearly now clearly identify staff's role and learning intentions. Profiles of learning are completed to show children's individual progress towards in relation to the stepping stones and staff discuss this information to ensure plans give children opportunity to take part in activities that cover what they could usefully learn next.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints 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 upon request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to parents.

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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 Ofsted is informed of all members and the nominated person that represent the committee acting as the registered provider for the group and improve vetting procedures for new staff to ensure they are fully robust
- improve children's safety by regularly reviewing risk assessments and by developing staff's awareness of child protection issues.

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 further the planning for the individual child, for example through the use of a key worker system and by ensuring regular observations are carried out on the children that are supported by clear evidence of their progress.

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