

Lowater Street Play & Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253207
Inspection date	18 October 2007
Inspector	Ros Church
Setting Address	Lowater Street, Carlton, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG4 1JJ
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Registered person	The Trustees of Lowater Street Play & Pre-School
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?

Lowater Street Play and Pre-school opened in 1987. It operates from the Carlton Community Church Hall in Carlton, Nottingham. Children attend from the local area. The group have access to a large room, two small rooms, kitchen and appropriate toilet facilities. The setting is open each weekday from 09:15 to 11:45, and on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday from 12:45 to 15:15 during school term times.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 52 children from two and a half to four and a half years on roll. Of these, 38 children receive funding for early education. The group currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are five staff who work with the children. Of these, three staff hold a recognised early years qualification, with one member of staff working towards a qualification. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the Nottinghamshire Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and welfare is promoted because staff ensure that children are cared for in clean and hygienic premises. Staff follow effective health and hygiene procedures. For example, ensuring tables are cleaned prior to snacks, toys and equipment are clean and well maintained and good procedures are in place when changing nappies or wet clothing. Children are generally encouraged to learn about good hygiene, for example, many children know why it is important to wash their hands after using the toilet or before snacks. However, although equipment such as anti-bacterial liquid soap and paper towels are located within the toilet area, liquid soap is not always easily accessible for children to use independently to ensure the risk of cross-infection is prevented. Clear arrangements ensure children are well cared for if they are sick or injured. For example, at least one member of staff who holds a current first aid certificate is present and there are clear procedures when administering medication.

Children have good opportunities for physical exercise within the main room, during each session an area is designated for large physical movement. Children learn to move creatively whilst dancing and moving to music. They use a wide range of equipment which promotes children's physical skills, this includes, a climbing frame, obstacle courses where children go under, over and through objects, they learn to balance, throw and catch. Children have opportunities to extend their skills further when visiting local parks where they use fixed equipment, such as, rope ladders and bridges.

Children benefit from a good range of healthy snacks and activities which promotes their understanding of eating healthily. For example, at snack time a wide range of fruit and vegetables are offered, drinks of either milk or water, and activities which include making their own fruit salad. Children have opportunities to try different tastes and experiences, to taste foods from different cultures, such as, when celebrating various festivals. Staff work well with the parents to ensure children's individual dietary requirements and preferences are met. Drinking water is available for children to access as they require during the session, this ensures they do not become thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and stimulating environment. Activities are carried out in three rooms, the main room is thoughtfully organised using a number of screens to divide areas providing space for children to play actively, to explore and to rest. A wide range of activities are set out prior to children arriving. The setting has a very good range of equipment which is organised well within labelled containers, and is catalogued within a pictorial folder, this system provides easy access to staff and enables children to make choices in play activities. Equipment is well maintained, safe and suitable for children's individual developmental needs.

Children remain safe within all areas of the pre-school because there are effective systems in place to identify and minimise any risks. This includes risk assessments and daily checks of the areas used by the children. Good security systems are in place, with a lock and chain on the main entrance door and bell to alert staff of any parents or visitors. The staff are vigilant at collection times ensuring that only authorised persons collect the children. Staff ensure children are safe on outings, clear procedures are in place and high adult to child ratios are maintained.

During their time at the setting children are helped to learn about safety, such as, when on outings children know to hold hands and learn how to cross roads safely. Children are protected by staff who have a good understanding of their role in safeguarding children. Staff are kept up to date with any changes in the safeguarding of children, either through attending training courses or information being passed on through staff meetings.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and enjoy their time at the setting. They are interested in their play and make choices from a good range of planned activities which are stimulating and are adapted to individual developmental needs. Children happily engage in role play, dressing up and re-enacting familiar events, such as, making dinner or going shopping. They are creative, physically active and enjoy story time and singing songs. Children are cared for by enthusiastic and supportive staff. They settle well as staff give individual time and attention as required. Children form close trusting relationships with the staff, they approach staff with ease and often talk about their interests and experiences. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement from staff which promotes their confidence in activities.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a solid understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and of how children learn and progress. As a result children take part in a broad range of stimulating planned activities that help them make good progress towards the early learning goals. All staff are involved in the planning of activities, this ensures they are fully aware of what children are expected to learn. Children's assessment records link clearly with the Foundation Stage stepping stones and staff are currently in the process of setting up a system to record children's next steps in learning. However, although planning has clear learning intentions and is adapted for individual children, these are not being consistently evaluated to see if the learning intention has been achieved enabling staff to effectively set clear targets for children's learning.

Children are motivated and show positive attitudes towards learning because staff plan a good range of activities with many of these being linked to themes. For example, during a topic about colour, children explore a wide range of equipment and materials. They use torches to experiment what happens when shining the light onto materials, such as, foil and coloured cellophane. They explore other equipment which includes colour changing discs and kaleidoscopes. During these activities and others, such as painting, they learn what happens when two or more colours are mixed together. Children learn about the world around them through first hand experiences, such as, on local visits to the park they collect leaves, they explore the different shapes and textures, and learn about the changes in colour. The leaves are then used for a variety of creative activities, such as, printing and collage.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is promoted well. They are happy and confident in their familiar surroundings and in their communicating with adults and peers. Children learn to share and take turns with equipment and form good relationships. During group times they learn to talk confidently and learn to listen to one another, such as, sharing their experiences about what they have seen on their journey to pre-school. Children's reading skills are developing, as they recognise their own name or labels around the setting. Children enjoy listening to stories during group times, these are usually organised into three different groups to provide children with enjoyable experiences at their level of development. Children

learn the sounds that letters make and staff encourage children to say the initial sound. All children are encouraged to write or make marks for their name. Children are interested in numbers and counting, where many children are able to count accurately to nine and are able to recognise some numerals. Routine activities and the wide range of resources are used well to develop children's understanding of number and letter recognition. For example, children count together the number of children within the group and then find the written number. Children are developing their awareness of addition and subtraction through practical activities and also number rhymes where they sing enthusiastically together.

Children have good opportunities to use a wide range of tools and equipment to design and be creative. For example, they use large boxes to make different types of homes, cars or boats, they use different tools and materials, such as, scissors, tape, fabric and cardboard and learn how items are shaped, assembled and joined. Children learn to use technology equipment, such as the computer, they learn to use and control the mouse to follow programmes. Children's imaginations and creative skills are developing through a wide variety of activities, such as, role play, music and dance.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are included and valued by staff and as a result their self-esteem is fostered. They are helped to settle into the setting as staff work closely with the parents to ensure that they have a good knowledge of children's individual needs. This supports all children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to integrate well into the pre-school. Children's sense of belonging within the setting is encouraged through providing all children with their named coat peg and displaying children's work extensively on the dividing screens, this also provides a bright and welcoming environment. Children are beginning to understand how they are part of the local and wider community through planned activities which link to different festivals and the use of a wide range of resources which reflect positive images of diversity in society. Children enjoy a variety of outings into the local community that helps them to appreciate the world in which they live. Children's behaviour is good. They learn to play cooperatively together, to share and take turns with the equipment. Staff reward positive behaviour and children's achievements through stickers and certificates, this encourages their self-esteem and confidence. Children learn to take care of equipment and their environment, such as, helping to tidy away after they have finished playing with an activity, this helps them to have a sense of responsibility.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff work well with the parents ensuring that relevant information is in place to enable them to care for individual children. Good information is accessible which includes policies and procedures, information on the Foundation Stage curriculum, and daily activities. Parents are kept well informed about their child's achievements through daily communication. Parents are invited to attend meetings with their child's key worker at a time convenient to them, in order to discuss their child's progress and contribute to their assessment of learning. Staff work well with the parents giving ideas on what activities children can do at home to encourage and extend their learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children receive a good standard of care and education because the organisation of the setting is effective. Robust recruitment and selection procedures are in place to ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Clear and supportive induction procedures promote the safety and welfare of the children. Children are looked after by staff who have a sound knowledge and experience of child development and who plan a good range of activities which promote their progress. Staff are encouraged and supported to attend relevant training which helps them to keep up to date with current practice and support the needs of the children. Clear and comprehensive policies and procedures are in place and are shared with parents. Essential records and parental consents are kept up to date to promote the well-being of the children.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The committee, supervisor and staff work well together to ensure the smooth running of the group. Through training, staff team meetings and everyone's contribution to planning, staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and know how to apply this in practice to support children's development. Children benefit from the continual improvement in the provision as there are suitable systems in place to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching and the progress children make in their learning.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to develop the system for conducting risk assessments on the premises and to devise operational procedures for the safe conduct of any outings provided. A risk assessment of the premises has been developed and carried out, this identifies any actions to be taken and minimizes identified risks. Operational procedures have been devised for outings. This promotes children's safety.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider was asked to consider continuing with the development of the formal staff appraisal system. A formal appraisal system is in place and is carried out for the development of all staff. This helps staff to evaluate their own development and the provision.

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 good hygiene procedures are in place at all times, with reference to the availability of soap within the toilet areas.

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 evaluations of children's learning ensuring that these link clearly with planning and assessments, enabling staff to plan effectively for children's next stage in 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