

Pixieland Stoke

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	117142
Inspection date	11 March 2008
Inspector	Anne-Marie Moyse
Setting Address	10 Springfield Drive, Plymouth, Devon, PL3 4DU
Telephone number	01752 511007
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Registered person	Pixieland Stoke Village 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 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?

Pixieland Stoke Village is a privately owned nursery, which is one of a small chain of nurseries in the Plymouth and Cornwall area. The nursery opened in August 2000. It operates from a detached property in Stoke, a residential area of Plymouth. It serves a wide catchment area.

There are currently 127 children from birth to under five years on roll. This includes 31 children receiving funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery is open from 07.00 to 18.00, Monday to Friday all year round and only closes during Christmas week and on Bank Holidays.

The nursery employs 26 staff who work directly with the children, plus a cook and cleaners. Of these staff 16 hold appropriate childcare qualifications, including one with a degree, and seven with level three qualifications in childcare and education. Currently 10 staff are working towards a relevant qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority, Family Services. It is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a generally clean and tidy environment. However, some of the toilet and nappy changing areas of the nursery are not kept spotlessly clean. Children's health is compromised as they are changed on these surfaces and do not always wash their hands afterwards to prevent any contamination. Children in most areas of the nursery are encouraged to develop good standards of personal hygiene, through washing their hands using liquid soap and paper towels, or wiping their noses with tissues. However, on the day of the inspection, the setting had not ensured that appropriate contingency arrangements were in place when the water supply was interrupted by planned maintenance on the outside main. This resulted in a lack of water for children and staff to wash their hands thoroughly after toileting and nappy changing. Hygiene standards are well maintained in the baby rooms with good procedures in place for nappy changing and general personal care.

Children receive appropriate care and attention in the event of an emergency. A high proportion of staff hold first aid qualifications and first aid kits are well stocked and available. There are clear procedures in place for the accurate recording of accidents and if medication is administered to children. The setting have a sick child policy, which excludes infectious children to prevent the spread of infection.

Children benefit from the opportunity to play in the enclosed outdoor area, or to be taken out for walks in the fresh air. The babies are taken out in buggies to the nearby park or to the outdoor area, during good weather. Older children make good use of the well equipped play area, where they use climb or balance on the fixed equipment or ride around on the high quality trikes. A wide variety of indoor resources, such as a ball pool, balancing beams and parachute play, also encourage children to be active. Children are able to rest according to their individual needs, with older children encouraged to have a sleep in the afternoon. Babies sleep routines are consistent with home, as they are able to sleep according to their own individual patterns.

Children's health is promoted through the nutritious and varied foods offered to them. The nursery have recently started to prepare and cook their own meals on site. A varied and balanced menu is offered, which is displayed for parents on the notice board. Children appear to enjoy the food and benefit from being able to smell it cooking. The youngest babies are well supported in feeding according to their individual routine and stage of weaning. Staff have their own designated kitchen for preparing and storing baby foods and milk. Mid morning snack throughout the nursery consists of various fresh fruit, and a drink of milk or water. The older children have snack in a café style system, with staff calling small groups of children to eat and drink together during the morning session. They are involved in selecting their own piece of fruit and pouring their drinks. Children are sometimes involved in helping to prepare their own afternoon tea, such as making mini pizzas. Children are encouraged to drink water regularly, as they can independently obtain a drink from the water coolers in the play rooms or reach their own prepared beakers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is giving a high priority throughout the nursery. They are cared for in spacious rooms designated for different age ranges. All the rooms are warm, bright and decorated with

displays of children's art work. Some of the children benefit from having very low windows, allowing them to look out and watch the passing traffic and everyday activity, such as when the rubbish is collected. The nursery is very secure with a finger print entry system, and closed circuit television monitoring all rooms. All visitors to the setting are monitored and recorded in the visitors book.

Children are able to play with high quality toys and resources, which are carefully selected and appropriate for children of different ages and abilities. Many of the resources and some furniture, is made from natural materials such as wood and leather providing children with a broad range of textures and materials to feel. Staff complete daily checks on the environment to ensure that all areas are safe for children to access. They encourage children to recognise the importance of playing safely and not to climb on the furniture. Children are frequently involved in the fire drill, helping them to be familiar with the procedure for evacuating the nursery. The setting have an evacuation cot, to ensure that babies are swiftly and safely removed from the premises.

Children's safety and well being is further safeguarded by the staff's good awareness of the child protection procedures. Staff clearly understand the need to report any concerns to their line manager, and record all details. The staff understand their individual role and responsibility in helping to keep children safe from abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children receive a very warm welcome to the nursery, they are happy and content. All children have a wide range of high quality toys and resources to choose from during their time at the setting. Babies are encouraged to play with an excellent range of resources including natural and manmade materials. They enjoy sitting in small social groups reaching and grasping for a wooden peg or a wicker ball from the treasure basket. They play with various bottles filled with different materials, such as the eye catching glittery water or twigs which give an interesting sound when shaken. Older children excitedly chase the bubbles, developing their balance and movement skills. They enthusiastically join in with making the animal noises in the nursery rhyme of Old Mac Donald, using various animal puppets as props. The staff interact very well with children, talking and reading to the children helping their language development. Children relate well to the staff and frequently approach them for a cuddle, which is warmly given.

Older toddlers, aged two to three years, have a wide range of activities on offer including messy play such as sand, water and paint. They are able to play freely in the large ball pool climbing in and out developing their muscles and confidence. Children enjoy looking at and holding the pet snail and stick insects, learning how to be careful with these delicate creatures. On the whole, staff develop some good relationships with children, supporting their play appropriately in small groups, or reading books with them. However, at times some children in this age group are not engaged or supervised closely enough, and become aimless and disruptive.

The staff plan various activities and visitors to the setting. Recently the children enjoyed a visit from an animal keeper, who brought a range of interesting animals, such as lizards and ferrets, for the children to see and touch.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Most staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn through play. Children are offered a wide range of

toys and activities, which supports their development in all areas of learning. The staff observe and assess children's progress regularly. Although they use this information to plan activities for the next week, the plans do not always contain sufficient details and guidance for all staff to have a clear understanding of how children at different stages will be challenged effectively, across all areas of learning. As a result, some more able children quickly lose interest in the small group activities. The staff develop good relationships with children and have a generally good understanding of their preferences. Most staff have some good skills and are able to extend children's learning through their play on an individual basis.

Children are good communicators and are confident to initiate conversations with adults and their friends. Children love to sit on the comfortable sofa and look at the photograph album, discussing with their peers about recent activities and events. Books are particularly well used by the children, who readily enjoy reading individually and sitting listening avidly to group story times. Children thoroughly enjoy finishing off the ends of the rhyming sentences during one of their favourite stories, 'The Gruffalo'. Children recognise their names during self-registration and at meal times. They write for a purpose in the role play area, which has been transformed into a Doctors surgery. The children are eager to use this very well resourced area, caring for the dolls or their friends, but recognise the limit of only eight children playing in this area at any time. They extend their knowledge and vocabulary as they use equipment such as thermometers, stethoscopes and syringes. The children use a light box to view x-ray pictures learning about the bones in their hands. As part of this theme of learning children have visited a local surgery, giving them first hand experiences of what happens at the medical centre. Children use the computer confidently and independently, using a programme which helps them recognise letters of the alphabet. They enjoy manipulating play dough, using various tools and cutters, recognising patterns made with the instruments. Children demonstrate good problem-solving skills as they sort and match pieces of train track in order to construct a continuous layout. They are developing good social skills as they share resources well and encourage others to join them in their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play with a range of resources, such as puzzles and books, which reflect positive images of their own and others cultures. They are involved in activities which celebrate various festivals, such as making cards for Easter. Some children learn about the different languages spoken. Staff know the children well and seek information from parents on children's routines and preferences, so consistent care is offered. However, at times some children are not effectively supported in their play. For example, some children become boisterous and disruptive, while others are aimless, due to staff being distracted by other duties. The setting have two special needs co-ordinators, who have attended relevant training, ensuring that any children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities have their needs met. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is generally good, and they are learning to play harmoniously together. They are polite and forming warm relationships with the staff and their peers. Staff praise children's achievements well, rewarding children with stickers for special accomplishments. Children are developing an awareness of the settings 'Golden Rules', and knowing right from wrong. Children's independence is not always promoted. For example, in the preschool room staff fetch and put on their coats for them, while children wait for this to happen.

The partnership with parents and carers for nursery education is good. Parents are informed of the programme for children's learning. They receive information on the curriculum and are invited to view and discuss children's progress files each term. Staff regularly exchange information with parents verbally at the end of the session, and an 'open door' policy is in place at the nursery, so parents can visit at any time. Children often take home reading books to read with their family, extending their learning between the setting and home. Parents receive plenty of information on the setting, including newsletters and updates on events and changes to the setting. Notice boards containing useful information, such as menus, planning, key worker information and photographs of all the staff caring for their children are on display in each entrance.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a some well qualified and skilled staff. The ratios are maintained and staff readily move between rooms when extra support is needed. However, students and trainees are included in the ratio for supporting children, and staff are not always deployed effectively to ensure that all children receive appropriate care at all times, especially in the two to three's age room. The large number of children in the preschool rooms are at times grouped together, which exceeds the maximum number and is difficult to manage and organise. For example, during whole group story time, a few children at a time are selected to leave and put their coats on, then wait by the door to go out to play. This is time consuming, disruptive and devalues the quality of the story time for all children.

The setting have comprehensive documentation systems, which are completed effectively and stored confidentially in the main office. However, as the main office is only accessible by leaving the main nursery, it is time consuming for staff to check children's records and development files if needed during the session. Children are cared for in attractive and well organised rooms, and have access to some very high quality toys and resources.

Leadership and management for nursery education are good. The staff are committed to developing their provision and provide a range of interesting activities for the children. Staff are supported by the management team who monitor the setting and evaluates the progress of the children.

The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection for both care and education, the nursery agreed to ensure that children were provided with a broad range of activities to support their learning, language and mathematical thinking, especially for the older children; that children's behaviour is managed consistently and appropriately; and that the group size in the toddler area does not exceed 26 children.

Children now receive a broad range of activities which promotes their language and mathematical development, and are provided with interesting and stimulating learning opportunities. However, some of the most able children are not always challenged appropriately to ensure that they are continuing to make progress in their learning. Children's behaviour throughout the nursery is good and the consistent approach now offered benefits the children by clearly knowing what is expected of them. The toddler group does not exceed 26 children, which is the maximum

group size permitted by the National Standards. However, at times the pre-school aged children join together for activities, such as story and meal times, which exceeds this number. As a result these activities are difficult for staff to manage and organise and has a detrimental effect on the quality of care and learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 that facilities and procedures are well organised to promote high standards of personal hygiene at all times
- ensure that all staff are well deployed, understand their role and that sufficient staff are working directly with the children to meet their needs at all times
- continue to review and evaluate the routines and organisation of the nursery, and ensure that group sizes do not exceed the maximum number of 26 children

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):

- continue to develop the planning and assessment system to ensure that all staff are provided with sufficient information and guidance on the key learning intentions for all activities
- ensure that the more able and competent children are challenged appropriately to extend their learning across all areas

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