

Pollyanna Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	140849
Inspection date	16 October 2007
Inspector	Jane Plested
Setting Address	Community Centre, Eskdale Road, Stoke Mandeville, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire, HP22 5UJ
Telephone number	01296 612107 07746750945
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Registered person	Pollyanna 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?

Pollyanna Pre-School has been open for over 20 years. It operates from the Community Centre in Stoke Mandeville. The areas of the premises used by the setting comprise the main hall, kitchen, storeroom, and entrance hall, plus toilet facilities. The group uses the adjacent playing field for outdoor play.

There are currently 34 children on the roll. This includes 20 children in receipt of funded nursery education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens five days a week during school term time. It is open from 09:15 until 11.45, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays is open from 12:30 to 15.00. The children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are seven staff who work with the children, four of these, hold early years qualifications. In addition, four staff are working towards relevant early years or higher education qualifications. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is supported by good hygiene practice. For example, meal tables are kept clean. Practitioners promote independent personal hygiene by encouraging them to wash their hands before eating a snack. This good practice will minimise infection amongst children. The majority of staff are qualified to administer first aid to children in the event of an accident. In addition, there are a range of effective procedures, policies and records to support children's health and safety.

Children benefit from daily planned physical activity. They use balls, bikes and other wheeled toys outside. Indoors children take part in music and movement to keep muscles toned. The curriculum allows older children to consider the effects of exercise on the body. Table activities such as the manipulation of dough develop hand and arm muscles and threading hand-eye co-ordination.

Children enjoy their snacks of items of fruit. The curriculum helps them to learn about which foods harm their teeth and practitioners encourage children to identify healthy foods in their lunch boxes. The setting supports parents in providing healthy lunch boxes through the provision of dietary information. Children receive a drink of water or milk with the snack. In addition, a jug of water is available throughout the session so they do not get thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Dangerous substances are kept out of children reach. Stacked chairs are stored safely and doors remain locked during the session. The setting maintains detailed written risk assessments covering all aspects of children's health and safety. Practitioners encourage children to use tools safely. This range of good practice minimises the risk of accidents to children. Emergency evacuation procedures are in place and staff know their roles in keeping children safe.

Efforts are in place to improve the environment for children. The pre-school provides child-sized tables, rugs for floor toys and small chairs in the book corner. Items of children's work, photographs of them at play and some posters to support learning are on display, however, the hall lacks brightness. Toys and resources that children use are of generally good quality and there are plans to update these resources as budgets allow.

The setting acts to safeguard children. Staff clearances are in place for all current staff, and there are effective collection systems. The pre-school has a clear child protection policy and staff are fully aware of the group's procedures. Managers have completed child protection training and staff have a range of reference materials to support their knowledge and work in this area. This will act to ensure the well-being of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are developing in self-assurance through their increasingly strong relationships with their carers and peers. A parent says that her child speaks about his carers at home. Children quickly learn the dynamic daily routine. All children experience a broad curriculum and have

access to ample play and learning materials. Most settle quickly and new children with separation anxiety receive positive support from their key-worker, demonstrating a caring attitude by staff. Key-workers know their children, sit with them at the activities, during meal times, and are generally active in encouraging participation.

All children join in with group songs such as 'The Wheels on the Bus' and enjoy participating in ring games. They have fun playing with balls outside and become excited when exploring the properties of flour. The pleasure they gain will help to ensure children are happy and secure within the setting.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The curriculum for learning is planned and evaluated; as a result, children are making sound progress toward the Early Years Goals. Practitioner's regularly observe and assess children but record keeping procedures lack a systematic process. Therefore, some written records on children are not up-to-date. This hinders the most effective planning for future learning. Children with English as an additional language receive assessment and support.

There is a very clear and dynamic routine and this ensures children are busy. Most practitioners are effective in supporting children's learning and encourage them to develop their ideas. For instance, an able child uses the Duplo to construct a tower and is encouraged to talk about his knowledge of the tower at Pisa. They also use care routines such as lunchtime to reinforce ideas on healthy eating and positively get involved in activities such as singing. Practitioners provide first hand learning experiences such as modelling with junk materials to make three dimensional structures. They frequently praise children's achievements and this ensures children know when they are successful.

Children are becoming self-confident and show feelings of pride in their work and excitement as they learn. In addition, they are developing good social skills such as being helpful, sharing and making friendships. Children learn with their peers and independently and to behave very well. Children learn about the wider world by mixing with children from a variety of backgrounds and from parents who visit the setting to share their roles in society and varied cultural backgrounds.

Children speak confidently and listen well. They know and join in with, familiar nursery rhymes and songs such as 'Baa Black Sheep', this will support the development of language skills. Children have good opportunities to learn to recognise their name woven into the daily routine. They benefit from the opportunities taken by practitioners to support their mathematical development. Children are encouraged to count items during planned and spontaneous activities and to learn numbers in songs. Planned activities such as weighing encourage children to develop an understanding of ideas like 'more or less'. Children recognise and name simple shapes and some use mathematical language as such as 'huge' spontaneously, demonstrating a clear understanding of the concept of increasing size.

Activities such as construction, modelling with dough and junk materials allow children to use design imaginatively and develop their skills in using tools. They have good opportunities for sensory learning as they cut and stick, explore the properties of flour and manipulate play dough. They use these resources to link ideas. For example, a child uses the flour to represent snow on a vehicle and demonstrates an understanding of the effects of different weather patterns by saying, 'my one is very cold'. Children use the home corner to develop familiar

scenarios of life in the home. Displays show children paint detailed and imaginative pictures of themselves as part of their creative development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Strategies for working in partnership with parents and carers are strong. The setting maintains an 'open door' policy to reassure parents about the well-being of their children. Parents have opportunities to contribute to the curriculum by sharing their varied backgrounds and professional skills with the children or by serving on the management committee. This provides a strong stake in the success of the group and their children's progress. They receive information about the setting, curriculum and current themes. Children's developmental records are available for their parents to see bi-annually. Therefore, the partnership with parents of children receiving nursery education is good.

Behaviour management is strength of the setting and as a result, children behave very well. They enthusiastically respond to staff requests for help, play together harmoniously, share and are able to wait in a queue patiently. Practitioners frequently praise children's achievements, and always comment on what each particular child has done well to develop feelings of self-worth.

The pre-school welcomes children and families from a range of ethnic backgrounds. The setting has some resources depicting differences available to help children to gain a wider understanding of the world in which they live. Practitioners establish individual children's needs and gain some information on each child's developmental stage via the entry profile and through on-going discussion with parents. They foster children's independence. There are clear systems for ensuring children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive the right support. The Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator quickly establishes close working links with parents and other agencies to support children. Overall, the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting has good staff management systems. The appointment procedures are robust. Staff meet regularly, receive an annual appraisal and say that they feel well supported in their work. All current staff are vetted and children's safety and security are well thought through, this positively ensures children are protected. Managers have a clear vision for future improvement of the resources, the environment and more systematic record keeping of children's attainment. The pre-school has close and supportive links with the local school, which aids the development of the curriculum and ensures a smooth transition for children. The setting's practitioners are encouraged to develop their skills through training. However, support and supervision systems for students are limited and at times, this hinders children's achievements.

Leadership and management of the nursery education are good. Children and staff are familiar with the daily routine which ensures children remain busy. Staff ratios are high and this means practitioners are able to support and positively interact with children during their play. Activities support children's learning across the Foundation Stage Curriculum and the Birth to three matters framework. Children's progress is monitored and there are effective evaluations of the planned activities so practitioners know when they are successful in supporting children's

learning. However, the record keeping is less effective and this will hamper most effective planning for future learning.

The setting maintains most records very well. However, the complaint log is overly detailed and some minor detail is missing in the register. Clear policies, procedures and agreements are in place to support children's care. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of care, the setting agreed to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

A clearly worded consent for these actions is in place so that staff can ensure children receive the correct care in the event of an accident.

At the last inspection of the nursery education, the setting agreed to create opportunities to develop the children's understanding to healthy living. They also agreed to develop clear objectives for planned physical development activities and provide child led opportunities for the children to display and label their own artwork.

Children tuck into snacks of apple, which helps to promote a healthy diet. Spontaneous and planned learning also supports children's understanding of healthy eating and the effects of exercise on the body. Children benefit from planned daily indoor and outdoor activities to support physical development. These include the development of ball skills, plus activities to support the strengthening of both larger and smaller muscle groups. At times, children are encouraged to attempt to write their name on their work but the setting does not implement this practice consistently and therefore, this remains an area for development. There are new display boards for exhibiting children's work such as self-portraits, which will ensure children feel valued.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 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):

- develop effective support and supervision systems for students
- increase further the resources and images to develop children's awareness of diversity and review the organisation of the setting to create a more welcoming environment for 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):

- improve further the recording systems so that the observations completed by staff are regularly entered onto each child's development profile so this information is available to inform the planning.
- continue to develop opportunities for children to name their work.

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