

Playzone Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141848
Inspection date	05 February 2008
Inspector	Patricia Joan Latham
Setting Address	Langland Road, Netherfield, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK6 4NP
Telephone number	01908 394996
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Registered person	Milton Keynes Council Learning & Development
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The nursery has been registered since 1998 and is part of a chain run and managed by Milton Keynes Council. The nursery is situated in a purpose built building in Netherfield close to central Milton Keynes. The children who attend come from Milton Keynes and the surrounding areas.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year and closed Bank holidays.

The three and four year olds have use of two rooms and toilet facilities, with an enclosed outside play area. Babies have their own play, sleep and changing areas and use of an enclosed outside area.

Currently there are 32 children on roll aged between birth and five years, 12 of whom receive nursery funding. The nursery is able to support children with a learning difficulty and/or disability, or who speak English as an additional language.

There is a nursery manager in overall charge of the nursery and six staff, some of whom work part time. All staff are suitably trained and hold relevant qualifications. Qualified agency staff are used as relief workers.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff follow good hygiene procedures which minimise the risk of cross infection. All areas that children use are kept clean and surfaces on which food is prepared or served are thoroughly wiped before and after use. Staff have an effective nappy changing procedure and children are encouraged to adopt good practice, such as washing their hands after toileting. Staff are trained to deal with medical emergencies and record all accidents accurately.

Children are offered healthy food which includes a hot mid-day meal and a light tea. An outside caterer is used who provides a four week rolling menu with a daily vegetarian option. Children with individual dietary needs are catered for. Snacks and drinks are also provided by staff and there is a water fountain available for children to access a drink of water if they wish to. However this is not always in use which restricts their choice and may impact on their health.

Children have the opportunity for regular outside exercise to promote their physical well-being. All ages have access to an enclosed outside area and there are suitable resources made available to them. There are also planned physical activities, such as musical movement and action games which enable children to acquire and practise physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and welcoming environment. The premises are kept secure and staff follow safe procedures when children are arriving and leaving. The rooms are made bright and welcoming with bright posters and wall displays of children's work; the environment is made homely, with benches and plenty of cushions, so that small groups of children can sit together. Children have access to a wide range of good quality resources, which are stored in units that they can easily access. The nursery has sufficient equipment to support the care of the children and to aid their learning and development.

Children's safety is maintained and staff re-enforce safety rules on a regular basis. They explain to children why they should not jump too fast when playing a floor game indoors, or how they should be careful when using knives to cut vegetables to go into the soup they are making. Risk assessments are carried out and fire evacuation practised regularly.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff follow clear procedures if they have concerns regarding children's care. There is a designated member of staff who liaises with relevant agencies and parents are made aware of the nursery's responsibilities regarding child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff offer good care to all of the children. A key worker system is used and a daily routine followed in each room. Children under two years have their own play, sleeping and changing

room, although they are often taken to visit the older children in their room. All staff are suitably trained and those in the baby room follow the Birth to three framework when planning activities. They offer lots of tactile activities, such as hand painting and water play as well as encouraging them to play with shape sorters, musical toys and books. Staff are always available to cuddle children and to talk and sing to them. All children are very relaxed with the staff and confident about approaching them for support and assistance and enjoy involving them in their play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and children are making progress in all areas of learning. Staff have relevant qualifications and update their knowledge as required. The curriculum is planned to offer small and large group activities which cover all areas of learning, although some aspects, such as linking the sound and shape of letters together, are not planned for. Staff interact well with the children, questioning them effectively to extend their learning. They are able to support children who have a learning difficulty and/or disability, and children who speak English as an additional language are progressing well. Children's behaviour is generally good but having such a wide age range of children together at all activities does pose problems. Younger ones, who are just learning to play alongside others, sometimes distract older ones who are trying to concentrate. Staff's time is often taken supporting younger ones at an activity which makes it difficult to ensure older ones are acquiring the desired learning.

Staff use time and resources wisely taking every opportunity to engage children in learning. For example whilst children are waiting for snack or lunch they sing songs, talk about what food they like and what keeps them healthy, or listen to a story. Staff use children's love of role play to re-enforce learning. They turn the home corner into a post office or shop where children can write shopping lists, or count the things they buy. Staff take regular observations of children's attainment and record these into a progress report. Parents are able to view these records as they wish and are also able to attend parents' evenings with key workers to discuss how their child is progressing. However the progress records are not filled in regularly enough to provide parents with a clear picture of children's progress, nor to help key workers identify learning needs.

Children are eager to join in activities and show great pride when they have completed tasks. They are developing personal independence and are able to let others know their wishes and views. Children demonstrate they can concentrate when doing an activity and enjoy working with their friends, chatting away as they do so. They enjoy talking and are developing a wide vocabulary; children are often seen looking at books and retelling the story to others. They are beginning to recognise their own names and the more able are writing their own names. Children have an awareness that words carry meaning and enjoy writing shopping lists whilst playing in the role play area. However there are few opportunities for children to recognise the link between the sound and shape of letters as staff do not introduce phonetics as they interact with them.

Children are confident about counting and can recognise and name numbers. Through taking part in planned activities they are also developing an understanding of other mathematical concepts, such as shape, measurement and pattern and are able to solve simple calculation problems, such as which group are the largest. Children are encouraged to investigate things around them and to gain knowledge of their own customs and traditions as well as those of others. They know how to operate basic technical items and enjoy using the computer to play simple games.

Children are able to develop their imaginative skills by playing with a range of malleable materials and by taking part in role play, song and dance. They are also developing their physical skills and are competent at climbing, balancing and using space around them wisely. Staff plan activities to enable children gain skills in using small and large equipment and to develop their understanding of how their bodies grow and stay healthy

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's self esteem is promoted and their social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Staff involve all children in activities and encourage older ones to be aware of the needs of the younger ones and to help them. Staff offer a great deal of praise and acknowledgement to the children which helps them to feel valued. Overall children's behaviour is good and they understand there is a need to follow group rules, such as helping to clear toys away before lunch. However, it is sometimes difficult for staff to re enforce these rules knowing they need to have differing expectations of the differing age ranges and this can result in children receiving mixed messages.

There is a designated member of staff to co-ordinate the additional support needed for children with a learning difficulty and/or disability. She liaises with parents and other professionals to ensure that any child's individual needs are met.

Partnership with parents is good. They receive detailed information from staff about the care and educational programme offered. Keyworkers are available to talk to parents about how their child has been throughout the day and parents' evenings are arranged so that children's progress can be discussed. Parents are supportive of the staff and are encouraged to be involved with the parent's forum which operates for all the Milton Keynes Council nurseries. Parents are able to access all the nursery's policies and procedures and are given contact details for Ofsted should they need to raise any concerns.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

There is a rigorous recruitment and interviewing procedure and staff have relevant training and qualifications. They update this with additional training as required. Regular staff meetings are held and there are clear roles and responsibilities delegated. The operational plan includes effective policies and procedures for staff to follow which ensures the health and safety of children attending.

All necessary documentation is in place and required records are maintained. Relevant children's information is obtained and retained for the required timescale. Paperwork is kept secure to ensure children's details remain confidential.

The leadership and management of nursery education are satisfactory. Staff plan activities in advance and use interesting themes to link them together. For example whilst following the theme of autumn children count conkers, observe the change in trees and do hand prints using autumn coloured paints. Staff plan focussed learning activities which are designed to deliver specific learning aims and which are evaluated. However the plans do not indicate how the activity can be adapted for differing abilities and the evaluation is too general. It does not always indicate if the activity had taken place, if the desired learning aims had been achieved, or if the children found the activity too easy or too challenging. This does not help staff plan

effectively for children's ongoing learning, or help them ensure all aspects of learning have been delivered.

Overall the nursery provides for the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspections for care and nursery education staff were asked to review their complaints and lost child procedures. This has been done and both now carry up to date information and are available in written form for parents to view.

They were also asked to provide more planned activities to encourage children to gain an understanding of shape and pattern and practise the correct formation of letters. Staff now offer a daily focused activity as well as a planned programme of other activities. More able children now demonstrate they can form recognisable letters and all children take part in activities which help them gain an understanding of shape and pattern.

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 the water fountain is filled daily and there are cups available so that children can access water as required
- explore ways of managing children's behaviour so that younger ones recognise the need for group rules and older ones are able to complete tasks. (recommendation also in Nursery Education)

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):

- explore ways of managing children's behaviour so that younger ones recognise the need for group rules and older ones are able to complete tasks (recommendation also in Care)
- ensure focused activities deliver the intended learning aims, take into account the differing learning needs of children taking part; and their evaluation is used to ensure all aspects of learning are covered
- ensure children's progress records clearly identify achievements and/ or learning needs, and are used to inform future planning.

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