

Lets Play Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113577
Inspection date	05 February 2008
Inspector	June Fielden
Setting Address	Three Bridges Community Centre, Gales Place, Crawley, West Sussex, RH10 1QG
Telephone number	01293 616289
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Registered person	The Trustees of Let's 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?

Let's Play Pre School is run by the Trustees of the Pre-School. It opened in 1985 and operates from the Community Centre in Three Bridges, Crawley. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 09:10 - 12:00 Monday - Friday during school term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 31 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 26 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities. It also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and tidy setting. The accident and medication records are well completed, and staff obtain written permission for the emergency medical treatment of children. Sick children are excluded to protect others from infection and effective hygiene routines are in place to maintain their good health. Children use liquid soap and paper towels when they wash their hands to prevent cross-contamination, and the tables children eat from are cleaned with an antibacterial spray to avoid the risk of infection.

Parents bring their own snacks for children. Staff encourage them to provide healthy options, and children mainly eat fruit, cheese or a sandwich at these times. They have a drink with their snack, and water is available at all times to ensure children are not thirsty. These are made into sociable occasions for the group, as staff and children sit down together to eat and talk.

Children exercise in the outdoor play area when the weather is fine. They use the wide selection of outdoor equipment available to them, including small vehicles to ride around on to strengthen their muscles. There is a small trampoline, a climbing frame and a parachute which children use to practise a variety of movements, including climbing, crawling and scrambling. However, when it is wet outside children are not always provided with sufficient opportunities to develop their physical skills, as normally only one piece of apparatus at a time is set inside up for them to use. If children are tired there are pillows and blankets available at the end of the hall where they can lie down for a rest.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move around freely in the spacious hall which they use, selecting the resources they wish to play with from the wide range of good quality toys and equipment provided. Toys are rotated regularly to ensure children do not get bored. The hall is divided into different areas and colourful posters and children's work is displayed to create a warm and welcoming environment for all.

There are efficient measures in place to ensure children's safety. Smoke alarms, fire extinguishers and a fire blanket are easily accessible in case of an emergency, and regular fire drills are conducted by staff. There is a secure system for the arrival and departure of children and written permission from parents is obtained for all outings. However, children do have access to the kitchen unaccompanied, which affects their wellbeing.

Children are protected from harm, as all staff have had training in child protection, which is regularly updated. Staff understand how to record their worries and have the necessary telephone numbers at hand to enable them to seek advice. They know how to report their concerns to the appropriate authority when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The setting has an effective settling in procedure for new children, which enables them to become familiar with the pre-school before they start attending. Consequently, children separate

easily from parents when they arrive at the group. Staff greet children in a friendly manner when they call the register in the morning, making them feel welcome at the setting. They are offered plenty of choice, as the setting provides a wide selection of activities for them to choose from. Younger children participate in the same tasks as the older ones, but at their own pace. They receive greater support from staff and tend to stay close to them if they require assistance. Staff ask younger children questions to develop their language skills, and they confidently approach staff to show them their work, as they know that they will receive attention and praise. As a result, this raises children's self-esteem, and makes them feel valued by staff. The Birth to three matters framework is referred to when activities are planned for younger children and staff make observations of them to assist them in recording their achievements.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children learn through whole group teaching, focused activities and free play. Staff speak clearly to children when giving them instructions, and question them to assist them in completing activities and to keep them on task. They are patient with children and show an interest in what they say. Staff participate in children's play and approach any who are on their own, to encourage them to participate in the activities. The pre-school are currently in the process of adapting their planning to improve outcomes for children. The medium and short term planning is in place and is quite detailed. They check that all aspects of each area of learning will be covered in the long term. The weekly planning sheets show how activities will be differentiated to meet individual children's needs. They also complete focus activity sheets for some of the tasks which all children complete.

The planning is evaluated by staff either weekly or fortnightly, depending on how long it takes for all children to complete activities. These evaluations provide guidance on what children need to do next. Staff keep a development record for each child to assess their progress. Regular observations of children are made by staff. These are either snap shots of anything they happen to see on a daily basis or extended observations that are completed on each child every few weeks. These are also used to inform future planning. For example, if staff find that a child is achieving well at cutting and sticking, then they will make a note to extend this activity for them the next time it is used. Children's records show that they are making good progress in the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Staff discuss children's feelings with them, and assist them to concentrate on what makes them happy, such as a sunny day. These discussions are then linked to a focus activity, like painting a happy face. Children talk about home life with members of staff, as they make them feel relaxed and show interest in what they are saying. They are encouraged to develop their independence by assisting, as they wash the plastic beaker they have used at snack time. Staff talk to children while they complete activities to develop their language skills. Objects around the room are labelled to assist children in recognising simple words and alphabet charts are displayed around the setting. Staff share books with children, modelling how they are used, and provide them with the opportunity to take a different book home each day to share with their parents.

Children are regularly engaged in counting through every day activities, such as working out how many are present each day at registration. They become familiar with shapes through the charts displayed around the walls and by using matching card games. Staff introduce children to basic calculation when they feel they are ready, through activities such as putting together the number of boys and girls sitting around the table to find the total. Children develop their information technology skills by playing with a programmable floor robot, directing it to different

shapes they have identified on a floor mat. They have good computer skills. For example, children use the mouse effectively to drag and drop items where they wish to place them during a game which raises their awareness of recycling. They explore and investigate through activities based on topics such as mini-beasts, and by using resources such as a large magnet, binoculars and magnifying glasses, which are made available to them.

Staff develop children's understanding of colour names as they talk to them about the different shades they are using on their paintings. They also play games with them, using dice with different colours instead of numbers. Children develop their imagination as they participate in roll play, engaging in conversations with others as they pretend to lay the table. Children begin to sing songs from memory, and play with the wide variety of musical instruments available to them. They learn how to tap out the rhythm set by a member of staff. Children use their small muscle skills as they play with the small tools to shape the play dough, or while make patterns on a peg board.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are all treated equally by staff. They encourage children to take part in all activities and intervene when necessary, to ensure that they all get their turn. Staff communicate effectively with parents when their child starts at the setting to find out about their likes, dislikes and fears. This information is then recorded on children's forms for staff to refer to. Staff raise children's awareness of festivals celebrated by different cultures around the world and they have appropriate resources to promote their understanding of diversity. They effectively support children with learning difficulties and disabilities and are experienced in caring for them and meeting their needs.

Children attending the pre-school are well behaved, as staff always promote good conduct through praise, and stickers are sometimes used as a reward. Staff are consistent in their approach to behaviour management and developmentally appropriate strategies are used. When necessary, parents are informed of children's inappropriate behaviour to enable them to work with staff to ensure continuity of care. Children are friendly and co-operate well with each other during their play. The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents is good. There is a welcome pack for new parents to provide them with all the necessary information about the pre-school and a contract is signed with them when they register their child at the setting. The detailed parents folder is always available and includes copies of the settings policies, staff qualifications and examples of the paperwork they keep on children. There is a written complaints procedure to make parents aware of how any concerns will be handled by staff, and a complaints record is in place. Parents have their own notice board, which has copies of recent newsletters. Letters from parents show that they are pleased with the care provided for their child.

Parents are effectively informed about the nursery education their child is offered, as the notice board has information about the Foundation Stage curriculum. There is a list of the activities normally provided by the pre-school to cover many aspects of the six areas of learning. Parents are also provided with details about the curriculum in their welcome packs. Staff are always available to speak to parents at the beginning and end of sessions. They involve parents in the setting by asking them to bring in items for displays, and if they have a particular skill they are welcome to share this with the group. If children are experiencing any problems staff will discuss

these with parents to see how they can work together to resolve any difficulties. Staff make children's records available to parents at the end of each term, when they can speak to their child's key worker and other members of staff about their progress. Staff ask parents for information about their child's achievements at home, and where appropriate, this is added to their records. Parents can have further involvement in the group by offering to assist as a parent helper for a session later in the year, when all new children have settled.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's safety is assured when visitors are present, as they are required to sign the visitors book and a member of staff remains with them at all times. Most staff are well qualified and have been with the pre-school for several years and know the children well. There is an efficient recruitment and induction procedure in place. The supervisor and a committee member together carry out the interview process and check the applicants health and employment history. Children's records are stored securely to maintain confidentiality and are available to parents on request. Successful contingency arrangements are in place to cover for staff absences. The certificate of registration is on display to inform parents of the conditions under which the group operates.

The leadership and management is good. Staff work together efficiently as a team, cooperating well with each other and taking over the duties of any member of staff who is absent. Staff communicate effectively with each other, as staff meetings are held every half term, and they generally talk together informally on a weekly basis. The supervisor also cascades information to staff as they set up the activities in the mornings. Planning is discussed at the staff meetings, and all staff are involved in this. Although at present, they do not always include effective opportunities for physical exercise. The supervisor is responsible for the day to day running of the group, liaising with staff and the committee, and handling any problems that arise. She ensures that all paperwork is kept up to date. The committee are very supportive of the group and handle the administrative tasks and fund raising. Appraisals are currently held informally, when staff have an opportunity to give their opinion about the setting and to discuss their future training needs. Staff are encouraged to undertake as much training as possible. The supervisor delegates responsibility for the setting to her deputy in her absence, and other duties are rotated between all members of staff to broaden their experience. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended that the pre-school include the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer in their child protection policy and include the regulatory body of Ofsted in their complaints procedure. The setting has since amended its child protection policy to include the necessary procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer, to ensure children's safety. The pre-school has made Ofsted's details available to parents, to make them aware of how to contact the regulatory body.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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 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 the kitchen is inaccessible to 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):

- increase opportunities for all children to develop their physical skills (also applies to care).

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