

Littleton Pre-school Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	511090
Inspection date	03 December 2007
Inspector	Alison Jane Kaplonek
Setting Address	The Hall Way,, Littleton, Winchester, Hampshire, SO22 6QL
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Registered person	Littleton Pre-School Playgroup
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 satisfactory. 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?

Littleton Preschool Playgroup opened in 1975. It is registered to care for no more than 26 children from two years to under five years of age. It operates from Littleton Memorial Hall. The Preschool serves the local area. There are currently 27 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 12 children in receipt of Nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children with special needs and English as an additional language are welcomed into the setting.

The group opens four days a week during school term times. Sessions are available on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday mornings and are from 09:15 until 11:45.

Five part time staff work with the children. Two have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYCDP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's physical needs are sufficiently well met because staff follow satisfactory procedures. They consult with parents about the children's health needs and keep records of accidents which occur. They check the cleanliness of the shared areas of the building and keep clear records of accidents or any medication which they administer. Although they accompany children to the shared facilities, they do not often remind children to use the toilets and accidents occur. Children are not fully protected from the spread of infection as they wash their hands in a communal bowl of water before they eat.

Children are provided with a varied range of healthy snacks, such as breadsticks or fruit. However, the quantity of the snack is not always sufficient to keep children nourished until they go home. Children are regularly offered drinks during the sessions and at other times they can help themselves to the water jug which is in easy reach.

Children are beginning to develop physical control and improve their manipulative skills whilst taking part in a range of activities, both indoors and outside. They learn to scoot, pedal, balance and crawl. Children are gaining an awareness of the space around them as they move carefully between activities. They practise their hand-eye coordination as they use a range of equipment, tools and materials safely, as they paint, play with dough or build high towers with the wooden blocks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a reasonably safe, secure, warm and welcoming environment. Appropriate use of the large hall area, enables them to move freely between activities, accessing well maintained toys and play materials. Staff remind children not to run and lay out the equipment so that children have to move carefully between resources. Visual risk assessments are carried out each day before the session starts, as the building is often used by other groups. Staff are aware of the areas which need supervision, such as the communal toilets and the outside area, and accompany children in these areas at all times. Children do not regularly practise the fire evacuation procedure, but they know to stop and listen for instructions when the supervisor blows the whistle.

Children are protected by staff who have a sound understanding of child protection procedures and keep local contact numbers accessible. They record any concerns they may have about the children in their care. Parents can access information about the pre-school's child protection policy from the folder provided.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a reasonably good range of resources and a sufficiently well balanced selection of activities, although the organisation of whole group times such as snack and show and tell, does not ensure that all children are able to be involved in the learning opportunities available. Children are supported by staff who are interested in what they say and do, and talk to them about how to complete a puzzle or build a tower.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making reasonable progress in all areas of learning. They have access to an appropriate range of good quality resources which are laid out in various areas of the pre-school, for example role play in the home corner, a book area with cushions and a writing table. Activities are planned by staff linked to the six areas of learning and include a focused activity for one area each day. Unfortunately, the continuous curriculum of activities, which children access most of the time is unplanned and lacks challenge. Some staff, who lack knowledge and understanding of the Foundation stage curriculum and how children learn, miss opportunities to extend children's learning, as they are unclear of the intended learning outcomes. Staff do not ensure that activities are evaluated to assess whether learning outcomes have been achieved.

Children enjoy listening to stories and use books carefully. Many children talk confidently, to each other and to the staff, talking about their favourite colours as they paint or feel the gloop. Some children are beginning to recognise their names as they self register on arrival. Children practise pencil control at the writing table as they write letters and draw pictures to take home. Children count well, many up to nine. They talk about more than or less than, as they count the number of boys and girls present at the session, although they are not confidently supported by staff if they go wrong. Planning shows that they take part in activities to explore shape and size and that they sort and match. They learn about quantity during practical activities such as sand and water play.

Children explore with sand, collage materials and paint. They make and design with malleable materials, such as dough, and with construction kits and are beginning to learn how to use electronic toys to support their learning. They talk about their families and events in their lives and are also beginning to learn about the different cultures of others. They explore colour and texture and use their imaginations, as they complete a collage or paint a picture. They enjoy singing familiar songs, such as the Grand old duke of York, as they march along outside.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to understand the routine of the sessions and become involved in the life of the pre-school, for example helping to tidy away the resources or put on their own coats. They can independently access the resources available to them, making choices about which activity they will take part in. However, some opportunities to promote children's independence, such as laying the table, pouring drinks and tidying up, are missed, because of the organisation of daily routines. Some children confidently talk with staff about their families and events in their lives, such as their birthdays or Christmas. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or English as an additional language are welcomed and included at the setting. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are able to gain information about the policies, procedures, and topics covered, via newsletters, information boards and folders which are freely available. They are encouraged to stay until their children are settled and find the staff approachable. They talk to their children about items they can bring into pre-school for show and tell time.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most children are reasonably well settled and happy in the pre-school environment. The premises are not ideal as toilets, the kitchen and outside areas are sometimes shared with other users, but staff make the most of the large hall to enable children to move freely around the learning environment. Children are unable to access a huge range of resources because of storage and display restrictions, but staff ensure that they have sufficient activities to choose from each day to cover all areas of learning. Appropriate essential records are kept for each child and shared with the parents, ensuring that children's welfare and care are of a satisfactory standard. Staff know the children reasonably well and complete daily registers at each session. They do not however, display the registration certificate as required.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. There is a clear management structure within the pre-school and staff are well supported by an active committee of parents. The supervisor monitors the provision for nursery education to ensure that all areas of learning are fully covered. However, insufficient evaluation of activities does not ensure that learning intentions are always achieved. Children benefit from staff who work directly with them, often joining in with singing or playing with the construction kits. Overall the pre-school meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the pre-school were asked to develop the systems for induction of new staff, ensuring that they have access to all written policies and procedures upon commencement of employment. New staff now have an induction procedure where they read policies and familiarise themselves with procedures.

The pre-school were also asked to ensure that children are unable to access the kitchen or storage area without adult supervision, and that sufficient staff are working directly with children at all times. Staff are now more aware of keeping the kitchen and storage cupboard doors shut and make sure that they are providing support for children during the session.

A further recommendation was raised to ensure that the registration system clearly records the times of arrival of all children, staff and visitors to the group and that written permission is sought from parents to allow emergency medical treatment or advice to be obtained. These records are now in place.

Staff were asked to provide children with further opportunities to access drinks and children now have access to a jug of water during the session.

To improve the provision for Nursery education, the pre-school were asked to ensure the organisation of the sessions allows staff to support children's learning appropriately. Staff now deploy themselves in various areas of the room to support children during activities.

They were also asked to further develop the systems for assessment of children's progress and the educational programme, ensuring that the information gathered is used to clearly inform the planning and identify the children's next steps in learning. Assessment systems are now in place and used to inform some of the planning.

Lastly, the pre-school were asked to develop staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage to ensure that staff are able to confidently make better use of planned and incidental

opportunities to extend children's learning further. New staff have joined the pre-school and this remains an issue at this inspection.

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):

- evaluate and restructure snack time to ensure that children's needs are met regarding toileting and hand washing and that they are provided with adequate food to sustain them until they go home.
- ensure that fire evacuation is practised regularly with staff and children.
- reorganise the whole group activities such as snack and show and tell time, to ensure that children are not sitting for long periods of time, and that they are all able to be involved in the learning opportunities available.
- ensure that the registration certificate is displayed.

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 staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn, to ensure that they are able to confidently question children and make good use of planned and incidental opportunities to extend children's learning further.
- enhance the continuous curriculum to extend the learning opportunities available for all children and provide further challenge for the older or more able children.
- ensure that activities are evaluated to assess whether learning outcomes have been achieved.

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