

Play Place Little Angels

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 957401 |
| Inspection date | 07 December 2007 |
| Inspector | Cheryl Walker |
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| Registered person | Play Place Childcare Services 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 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?

Little Angels Pre-school is one of five provisions run by Play Place Childcare Services Ltd. It opened in 2001 and operates from three rooms within a church building. It is situated in Sanderstead, a suburb of the London Borough of Croydon. A maximum of 36 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday 09.00 to 15.00, term time only. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 63 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these 15 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre school employs six staff; of these four staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications, and two members of staff are working towards their Foundation Degree and one is studying the Diploma in Pre-school Practice.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted at the setting. The environment is kept clean and hygienic because staff share responsibility to keep toys and equipment clean, reducing risks of cross contamination. Children learn about good hygiene practices through good daily routines and topic work. They are supervised when accessing the toilets and remember to wash and dry their hand afterwards, particularly enjoying use of the hand dryer.

Children's minor accidents are appropriately managed because a sufficient number of staff have up to date first aid training and first aid equipment is kept on site. Permission for emergency treatment has been obtained, ensuring that parental wishes are known in the event of an emergency. Well maintained accident records are in place, showing that parents are consistently informed of any accidents that may occur. Clear sickness procedures ensure that children who are infectious do not attend and protect children from cross infections.

Children are encouraged to think about foods that are healthy for them through discussion, food tasting and interesting activities. Staff talk to them about food at snack time. Children are able to respond with sound ideas about healthier options. Children enjoy snacks of fruit and have the option of milk or water to drink.

Children's physical skills are promoted appropriately through a range of indoor and outdoor activities which allow children to be active and develop their co-ordination. Regular outdoor activities enable children to enjoy fresh air and exercise and have opportunities to practise their large motor skills. They competently ride wheeled vehicles, kick a football balance and climb. Their fine motor skills are encouraged through writing and drawing activities, puzzles and small construction toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, suitably maintained environment. They have access to two rooms, which are regularly checked for safety. Their work is displayed on the walls, helping them to gain a sense of belonging and showing them that the staff value their achievements. Children have access to a good variety of toys and play materials that are kept clean and in good condition, which ensures they can play safely.

Children learn to keep themselves safe when staff remind them not to run inside the building and to refrain from climbing indoors. Their risk of accidental injury is minimised as staff have clear boundaries and rules in place to ensure their safety. Daily visual checks take place to ensure the environment is safe for children to play. Comprehensive, written risk assessments take place annually, where any issues are highlighted and acted upon.

Security in the building is good and effective systems are in place for the safe arrival and departure of children. Children and staff learn how to evacuate the building safely through regular fire drills, but have not yet experienced the sound of the fire alarm, as this is currently done through verbally informing the children that it is time to leave the building.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel welcome in the setting as they are warmly greeted into a calm and nurturing environment, by the friendly and professional staff team. They are well supported during the transition from parents or carer to the preschool setting. Children gain confidence quickly at the preschool and become familiar with the daily routines, for example they settle to play before meeting together with their friends on the mat to take the register, where they greet their friends and staff warmly. All staff interact with enthusiasm in all aspects of children's play and children in turn, respond well.

A suitable variety of activities enable children to make progress in their learning and play. The routine allows children to make choices and decisions, though their independence and self help skills are not consistently promoted, for example when staff serve the snacks and pour children's drinks.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound understanding of the expectations for children's learning in the Foundation Stage, and are clear about what they want children to learn from the activities provided. Focus activities are appropriately planned and show expected learning outcomes and the adult role within activities. Systems to record children's progress are in place, although children's profiles are not currently kept up to date which means that individual children's next steps have not yet been clearly identified and documented.

Staff plan a range of activities for children, but these are flexibly implemented, taking into account children's interests and enthusiasm. Children learn about being respectful to others through the staff's interaction with each other and with parents, showing courtesy and respect at all times. The routine allows time for sustained concentration, although the current snack arrangements mean that children have to stop what they are doing at a set time during the session, which potentially interrupts their learning.

Children are becoming confident in their use of numbers and can count correctly past 10. Staff are skilful in holding children's attention during story time and choose books that encourage their interest. Children have suitable opportunities to practise mark making, though the writing area is poorly resourced and uninviting to the children, resulting in few children accessing this area. Their opportunities to write for different purposes are hindered because writing materials are not consistently available in all areas of learning.

Children become confident speakers and gain in confidence when they talk about things they've brought from home. Some are able to stand in front of a small group of children and describe the characteristics of the items they have brought. They can recall and predict events, for example, one child talks about his pending trip to Lapland and thinks 'there will be really deep snow there'.

Children thoroughly enjoy the role play room, which has been transformed into a house. They use their imaginations to role model the different jobs they take part in, washing up, preparing dinner or dressing up. Staff positively engage with the children to extend their play by offering ideas and suggesting alternatives.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the setting and valued as individuals. Staff are sensitive and responsive to children's backgrounds and needs because clear discussion takes place with parents before the placement begins. Children's individual needs are well recorded. Staff seek appropriate support and guidance from parents and external agencies where required, in order to ensure all children are effectively included. Children begin to learn to value diversity when they talk about their lives and experiences, play with toys that reflect the wider community, and celebrate different cultural festivals. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children behave well because there are clear and consistent boundaries in place to enable them to feel secure. Staff manage children's behaviour in a positive way. They are calm and reassuring, taking time to explain to children the reasons why certain behaviour is not acceptable, in a way that will understand. The consistent approach staff take helps children begin to learn to manage their own behaviour and play harmoniously together.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are suitably informed about the setting and the Foundation Stage curriculum, but they are not kept up to date with regard to children's progress because record keeping systems are not up to date. Staff are friendly and approachable and ensure they exchange information on a day to day basis so that children experience consistent care. Clear information is available for parents should they wish to make a suggestion or complaint.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Effective recruitment procedures ensure that children are cared for by an appropriately qualified and suitably vetted staff team. The team are well established and work skilfully together, with clear roles and responsibilities. Good adult to child ratios mean that children are well supported. The welfare and care of children are appropriately promoted by comprehensive policies and procedures. All are available for parents to keep them well informed. Children are kept safe by the good range of documentation, most of which is up to date and stored on site in an accessible yet confidential manner.

Leadership and Management are good. Management and staff work well as a team and there is a shared commitment to early years care and education. Although new to the post, the new manager is known to the group. She leads by example and is clear about her role. She has been able to quickly identify the group's strengths and weaknesses and has plans in place to effect change, in order to address the recording system for nursery education. Appraisals identify staff strengths which are utilised effectively. Training needs are highlighted and supported well. Staff are well trained and enthusiastic. Most of the staff have been in the setting for a number of years which provides children with stability and a wealth of experience. They are deployed effectively and communicate well to meet each child's needs. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to improve children's access to outdoors and the organisation of resources. Both of these recommendations have been addressed, enabling

children to more easily self select resources and to access the outdoor area on a daily basis. They were also asked to develop the observations and planning. These systems have been improved, but are not currently up to date.

At the last inspection for nursery education the setting was asked to make improvements to a number of areas. The group have made suitable changes to meet the recommendations raised and work towards continued improvement to ensure they meet children's individual learning needs.

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

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 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):

- practise fire drills which enable children to hear the fire alarm
- further promote children's independence at snack time, for example by encouraging them to serve and pour their own drinks (also applies to 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):

- review the routine of the session to enable children's play to be uninterrupted, allowing them to see their activities through to their natural conclusion, for example, by enabling children to access a drink and snack at a time of their choosing (also applies to care)
- extend children's interest in writing and mark making, for example by reviewing the organisation and resources available in the writing area and by encouraging children to write for different purposes, by ensuring writing materials are available in all learning areas
- ensure children's progress records are brought up to date to identify targets and next steps for each individual child

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