

Long Eaton Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Sheena Gibson

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Registered person Long Eaton Pre School Playgroup

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 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?

Long Eaton Pre-School Playgroup is a committee run group. It opened in 1966 and operates from the Long Eaton Baptist Church. It is situated in the town centre. The playgroup serves the local community. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday during school term time. Sessions are from 09:00 to 12:00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 46 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, five children receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The playgroup employs six staff. Three of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's good health is suitably supported in the setting as there are some effective hygiene procedures. For example, staff follow appropriate procedures for nappy changing, food preparation and maintaining a hygienic environment. A sickness policy is shared with parents and encourages parents to keep poorly children at home. As a result the risk of infection is satisfactorily minimised and the good health of children is therefore maintained. Children are beginning to learn about the importance of good hygiene practice through conversations with staff. They talk about the importance of washing their hands before touching food so that 'we don't get germs in our tummy'. Children receive appropriate care and attention if they have an accident. All staff are trained in administering first aid and permission has been sought to seek emergency medical advice or treatment, ensuring their needs are met.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to be active and have physical exercise both indoors and outdoors, which successfully promotes the development of their physical skills. The very appealing outdoor area offers space for children to use wheeled toys, play with bats and balls, climb and slide. They use their imagination when outside in the play house and enjoy popping up and down in the play cubes. Indoors they dance, play parachute games and enjoy music and movement. Children are suitably nourished and their health and dietary needs are satisfactorily met because practitioners work together with parents. The setting provides snacks of either fruit or biscuits. Information is gathered from parents to ensure that children are offered only snacks that meet with their dietary requirements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming environment, which helps them to feel secure and comfortable. They are greeted warmly by staff. They are keen to enter and begin playing in the bright and colourful playroom. The main play room is creatively organised with many photographs, posters and examples of children's craft placed around the room, helping children to feel acknowledged and have a sense of belonging. There are areas for sitting comfortably and quietly, such as on the carpet in the book corner, and also areas to do messy play and table top activities. The larger room offers a spacious area where, for example, physical activity can take place. The security of the setting benefits children's safety. Children select from a wide range of toys and equipment that are safe and suitable. Activities are set out prior to children arriving, encouraging them and creating an inviting environment; the ability to make choices effectively promotes their independence.

Children's safety is suitably supported through checks carried out by staff to reduce the risk of exposure to hazards. For example, some written risk assessments are in place and benefit both staff and children. Steps are taken to maintain children's safety in the event of an emergency. For example, fire procedures are displayed and staff regularly practise the emergency evacuation drill with the children. Children are beginning to understand about keeping themselves safe. The staff talk to them about, for example, staying safe on 'bonfire' night and when riding their bikes on the playground. They are suitably safeguarded because most staff have a satisfactory understanding of 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 are happy and settled. Most are becoming confident to make decisions, explore and investigate their surroundings. The staff know the children well and have formed close relationships with them, effectively supporting their comfort and security. They are confident with each other, with staff and in the environment. For example, they assertively approach staff if they need to use the toilet or want a drink. They enjoy taking some responsibility within the setting. For example, they are keen to help to tidy away the toys and resources, which effectively promotes independence and a sense of belonging. Children have sufficient opportunities that effectively support their development through a wide range of activities. Positive steps are taken to plan and implement activities for children, considering 'Birth to three matters', and this benefits their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some staff have a sound understanding of how to deliver the nursery education and understand some of the different ways children learn, therefore children make satisfactory progress. Some staff's knowledge and understanding of implementing the nursery education curriculum is less strong, which impacts on children's learning. Children do not receive an effective initial assessment in relation to the nursery education, which means that their starting points are not known. The on-going assessments provide some valuable information about how children progress. However, these are sometimes not clear and the information on children's next steps is not effectively used to inform planning. Planning is generally well written and indicates a suitable coverage of the curriculum. However, some aspects of the areas of learning are covered infrequently and planning does not state how an activity is extended for older and more able children. As a result some activities lack sufficient challenge for children and staff are not always clear of the intended learning objective.

Some staff use a range of suitable methods to support children's learning, such as modelling. There is a combination of incidental learning and structure, which suitably supports children's learning as, in some areas, they consolidate their learning through play. Some children concentrate for a period of time, for example, when listening to a story. They are curious about visitors and are confident to approach and ask questions. They work well together and happily co-operate during tidying up time. They are beginning to develop valuable self-help skills. For example, staff encourage them to put their own coat on before going outside.

Most children are confident communicators and use language frequently. For example, they enjoy chatting on the pretend mobile phone, 'talking to mummy'. They also confidently communicate their needs such as asking to go to the toilet or for a drink. They enjoy talking with staff about, for example, what they did at the weekend. They enjoy listening to stories and joining in with different animal noises; they access books independently and know how they work. Letters and print are seen around the room, with children having free access to a mark-making table to practise their skills. Children's mathematical skills are suitably promoted. They count routinely. For example, they count pieces of banana at snack time. They talk about number when playing in the shop and see printed numbers around the room, such as on the number line. They are beginning to problem solve during games when grouping conkers, discussing more and less than. They enjoy a matching picture domino game, when they also use some positional language; they discuss big and small when sorting bears.

Children enjoy using a magnifying glass to explore and investigate their surroundings. They look at small living things and talk about, for example, the lifecycle of a frog. They use their senses to look at differences and also when carrying out activities such as leaf printing. They design and build vehicles using some interesting assembling and joining materials such as masking tape and straws. They are beginning to familiarise themselves with technology through using the computer and playing with everyday items such as a role play till and mobile telephone. They have some opportunities to learn about the passage of time. For example, they talk with staff about journeys, past and present. They consider their own community when visiting the library and having local people to visit.

Children have access to an inviting outdoor area that helps them to develop physically. When using wheeled toys they negotiate their way around the path on the playground and 'park' in an allotted space. They use a variety of equipment that develops their skills in climbing and balancing; they also use a range of small equipment capably, such as tools for dough, and enjoy threading activities. Children have some opportunities to explore colour. For example, they use a variety of colours to paint with. They enjoy working with different materials, for example making models from potatoes or dough. They join in with singing rhymes and songs, sometimes using musical instruments to enhance their enjoyment and learning of rhythm. Children are keen role players and have many opportunities to be imaginative. For example, they enjoy buying food at the role play shop, making 'tea' for staff in the kitchen and dressing up.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's needs are suitably met and positive steps are taken to fully include them into the setting. Some detailed information is obtained from parents and carers at the point of registration and this enables staff to know, for example, children's likes, dislikes and medical needs. Children's craft work is acknowledged and their efforts valued as pictures are displayed around the room. Children are beginning to learn about other people in the world. They access resources that depict positive images of different people and enjoy celebrating different cultural festivals. For example, during Diwali they enjoyed having a visitor who brought in traditional sweets for them. Children who have a learning difficulty and/or disability are given appropriate care and support. Staff are encouraging of both parents and children in relation to accessing further advice and support where relevant.

Children are beginning to understand appropriate behaviour. For example, they sit calmly and listen to the story and know when the music plays that it is tidy up time. Praise is regularly given to them, which successfully fosters their self-esteem, and they generally behave well. A behaviour management policy is available for both parents and staff to read although these differ, which results in a lack of clarity. Most methods used for managing behaviour are suitable although not always appropriate for a particular incident or the developmental stage of the child, potentially impacting on their well-being.

Children have their individual needs sufficiently met by adults as they have a beneficial partnership with parents and carers. Staff have a well-established relationship with parents that enables them to work closely to benefit children's care and development. Some useful information is displayed for parents on the notice boards and tables. For example, information on activities, various photographs, information relating to toilet training and transition to school. Parents are confident to approach staff to discuss, for example, children's progress and this benefits children's care and well-being. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Informal discussions give parents some information about the nursery education. They talk to staff about children's progress and are asked to contribute to the children's assessments through completing the parents' record form in the assessment folder. Activities are listed on the notice board; however parents are not given information about how they can effectively support their children's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by adults, most of who are appropriately vetted. Suitable qualifications and experience of the staff mean that they have a sound understanding of the development and care of children. Recruitment procedures are adequate. For example, the manager is fully aware of the requirement of staff to undergo Criminal Records Bureau checks. However, procedures for ensuring the initial and on-going suitability of staff are not robust and the induction process is not totally effective as some staff are not confident in, for example, understanding the setting's policies and procedures. The regulator has not been informed of changes to committee members, which potentially impacts on children's welfare. Most of the staff team are well established. This provides security for children and parents, as families are often very familiar with the setting and are able to feel very comfortable approaching staff.

The adult to child ratio positively supports children's care. Key worker groups have been established for continuity of care and to enable children to feel comfortable. There is ample space provided for children's care and enjoyment. However, sometimes the way that children are grouped is unfavourable towards the children who receive the nursery education and this impacts on their concentration and learning. Staff share information at regular meetings and continue to update their knowledge through training, which positively impacts on children's care and learning.

Policies and procedures adequately support practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. However, there is a lack of consistency and the policies informing parents sometimes differ from those that guide staff practice. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager has a wealth of experience and is very established within the setting. The staff team work together to plan and provide the nursery education; staff meetings mean that staff are all involved with the planning, which provides some consistency for the children. Staff have completed some evaluations on practice, demonstrating a commitment to improve. Monitoring and evaluation of the nursery education is informal and not totally effective, therefore weaknesses within the planning and implementation of the nursery education are not always effectively identified and addressed.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was given recommendations around: ensuring that the system of registering children and staff presence shows the hours of attendance; continuing with developing a system for planning and implementing a suitable range of activities for all children which is appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs; developing staffs' knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures in the

event of an allegation being made against a staff member whilst a child was in their care; ensuring confidentiality is maintained with reference to accident and incident records.

These have been suitably addressed. There is a satisfactory system in place for recording staff and children's hours of attendance; a suitable system is in place that considers 'Birth to three matters' and suitably plans a range of activities for children; staff have undergone training in safeguarding children and demonstrate a sound understanding of what to do if there is a concern. The setting's policy describes the procedure followed if an allegation is made about a staff member, and confidentiality is adequately maintained in relation to accident and medication documentation as most documents are kept on a shelf out of direct view. The playroom door is lockable and this effectively supports confidentiality in relation to documentation.

At the last nursery education inspection key issues were raised around: continuing to develop the already detailed assessment procedure so that it includes all the early learning goals, incorporates information gathered from parents and informs the formal planning for the next steps of their learning according to individual attainment; continuing to develop the formal planning procedure so that it shows how the children will be taught all the early learning goals, how staff will be deployed and ensuring an effective balance between activities chosen by the children and those directed by staff.

These have been satisfactorily addressed. Positive steps have been taken to develop the systems for assessment and planning. The assessment includes all aspects of the nursery education. Staff include a form for parents' comments, and children's next steps are included on their assessment, although it is not evident how information is used to formally inform planning regarding children's next steps; the planning procedure shows how the areas of learning are covered over a period of time, there is some indication of staff deployment and there is a suitable balance between activities chosen by children and those directed by staff. However, the planning and assessment systems are not robust and totally effective and therefore this is a recommendation at this inspection.

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 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 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 behaviour management policy is clear and understood by staff to effectively guide practice, making sure that techniques used for managing behaviour are always appropriate for the age and developmental stage of the children
- develop further the procedures for the ensuring the suitability of staff to ensure that they are robust, consider an effective induction and a system for ensuring the on-going suitability of staff
- develop further the policies and procedures to ensure that they are clear, consistent and used effectively to guide staff practice
- ensure that any significant changes are reported to the regulator.

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):

- develop further the knowledge and understanding of staff in relation to the planning and implementation of the nursery education curriculum
- continue to develop the systems in place for assessment and planning to ensure that assessments are clear, children's starting points are considered, children's next steps are used to effectively inform planning, that all areas are planned for frequently and ensure that all children receive sufficient challenge
- develop further systems for sharing information with parents to ensure that they are able to effectively support their child's learning at home
- consider the grouping of the children to ensure that the nursery education is effectively delivered
- develop further the systems for monitoring and evaluation the nursery education.

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