

Blofield Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253952
Inspection date	17 October 2007
Inspector	Georgina Emily Hobson Matthews
Setting Address	The Margaret Harker Hall, Yarmouth Road, Blofield, Norwich, Norfolk, NR13 4RH
Telephone number	01603 712498
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Registered person	The Trustees of Blofield 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 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?

Blofield Pre-school opened in 1972. It is situated in the village of Blofield in Norfolk and operates from the main room and the committee room within the village hall. Children have access to a small, enclosed outdoor area. The pre-school serves the local area. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school is registered to care for 26 children from two to under five years. There are currently 35 children on roll and this includes 25 children who receive funding for nursery education. The setting offers support for a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also offers support to children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting opens four days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:30 until 12:00 on Mondays and Tuesdays; from 13:00 until 15:30 on Wednesdays and from 09:15 until 11:45 and 12:30 until 15:00 on Thursdays.

The pre-school is managed by a voluntary management committee of parents that employs three full-time and two part-time staff members to work with the children. A parent rota

operates to provide additional adult support at each session. Two staff members have early years qualifications to Level 3 and 4, two others have qualifications to Level 1 and one member of staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted effectively. They are protected from becoming ill as staff members display excellent hygiene practice. Robust systems are in place to prevent the spread of infection and to take appropriate measures if children are ill. Children's welfare is promoted as staff members can respond to accidents appropriately. However, written parental permissions to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment were inadvertently omitted during a recent update of children's registration forms. As a result, this permission has not been obtained for all children in order to ensure their welfare. Four staff members hold current first aid training and a first aid box is well-stocked and easily accessible.

Children actively learn the importance of personal hygiene and to take responsibility for their own personal needs as they wash their hands before snacks and after toileting. Soap dispensers, paper towels and bins are provided for the children to prevent cross-contamination. Staff members talk to the children about how to prevent the spread of germs and praise them as they wash their hands thoroughly and cover their mouths if they cough.

Children benefit from nutritious snacks. They are offered a range of fresh fruit and vegetables and encouraged to try new foods at snack times. Children have regular opportunities to bake and prepare healthy foods such as brown bread rolls, fresh fruit yoghurt and egg sandwiches. They develop a valuable awareness of healthy eating through exciting practical activities. Children had the opportunity to prepare couscous and blackberry crumble with a local chef. They visited a nearby farm to see how vegetables and fruits grow and to taste the produce. Special dietary requirements are identified prior to the commencement of care to ensure that parents' wishes and any religious needs are met and that no child is at risk from a reaction to food. A system is in place to share these details with all staff members and anyone involved in preparing foods for the children. Children have access to fresh drinking water at all times.

The pre-school has access to a small outdoor area and uses this to offer outdoor play in the fresh air with sand, water and paints. Children show an awareness of space and move around with confidence within the setting. Staff members talk to the children about the importance of exercise. Children develop a positive attitude to exercise and have regular opportunities to explore a variety of physical movements. They jump on a small trampoline, ride competently around an area on a selection of small cars, bikes and tractors and learn to throw and catch with balls and bean bags. Children are able to travel around, over and through and to balance on equipment during obstacle courses and to climb on a large frame. They join in circle games such as 'Here we go round the Mulberry Bush' and 'The Dingle Dangle Scarecrow' with enthusiasm. Children handle scissors, rolling pins and cutters safely and with control. Children rest according to their individual needs on comfortable cushions in an inviting book corner.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, child-centred, secure and safe, indoor and outdoor environment. Staff members make best use of the setting to offer the children space for free movement and to spread out activities. There is storage for equipment under the stage of the hall and staff members work hard to set up activities prior to the arrival of the children and to pack these away at the end of each session. Children use an extensive range of developmentally appropriate, safe and suitable equipment.

Children's safety is fostered as staff members carry out an ongoing risk assessment of the setting to reduce hazards and to minimise the risk of accidental injury to children. Emergency evacuation plans are in place, staff members have accessed fire safety training and fire equipment is maintained in working order. Children learn to keep themselves safe as they are provided with clear explanations about safety issues within the setting and outside. Staff members raise the children's awareness of road and fire safety and of how to stay safe in the sun.

Children are safeguarded as staff members are aware of their responsibilities in the area of child protection and update their training on a regular basis. They have a secure understanding of the procedures to follow if they have child protection concerns and have sound systems in place to release children into the care of other adults in the event of an emergency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The pre-school improves outcomes for children under three years. Staff members have an excellent understanding of needs of younger children and provide fun, practical activities and resources to support the children's physical and emotional development. Staff members create a calm learning environment in which children can make choices, play at their own pace and complete activities with independence. Children are happy and at ease and receive sensitive support from staff members. They immerse themselves in imaginary play in a 'garage' as they drive in and fill up with petrol. Concentration is displayed as children play with puzzles and jigsaws. They explore different media such as paint, sand, water, 'gloop' and dough and enjoy joining in circle games and singing songs.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals as the pre-school's supervisors have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They meet together to plan the curriculum each week and share this with other staff members. Plans are displayed so that everyone at the setting is made aware of the purpose of each activity and of how to help children to make progress. A good structure for the assessment of children's learning is in place. Staff members gather information from parents about children's starting points and record observations on individual children's progress. The two key persons transfer these observations to the children's assessment records and sometimes record what individual children need to know next in order to inform their future planning. However, there are limited observations in some instances and therefore a clear picture of each child's progress is not always in place in order to inform planning and to move each child on to the next stage within their learning. Staff members outline the activities available to the children at the beginning of each session and encourage them to become involved and to persevere. They

build the children's self-esteem as they offer them attentive care and ongoing praise and use good questioning techniques to develop the children's thinking skills.

Children are interested in the activities and there is a busy atmosphere within the setting as children play individually and in small groups. They are confident to try new activities such as making bread rolls and to talk in a large group about the weather on the way to pre-school. Children maintain attention, concentrate and listen to others as they talk about items from home and listen to stories. They are able to control their feelings as they separate from their parents and enjoy talking about their home life. Children show empathy for other children if they are feeling sad. They make friends at the setting and are confident in their approach to others. Children behave very well and require little instruction or reminders of routines at the pre-school.

Children use language well. They speak clearly and audibly and are able to negotiate with language during their play and to use this to recreate roles and experiences. For example, as they become customers, attendants and mechanics at the 'garage'. Children enjoy looking at books and pre-reading activities such as exploring sounds. The setting is print-rich and children know that print carries meaning. They recognise their names and words such as 'chair'. Children have lots of opportunities to mark-make and to practise their emergent writing within the pre-school. They recognise numbers in games and say and use numbers in their play as when they count the number of bread rolls each baking tin will hold. Most children can count to 10 and some beyond this number. They sort small animals into different kinds and consider the concept of 'one more' and 'one less'. They use mathematical language such as 'longer', 'shorter', 'heavier' and 'lighter' as they stretch and pull dough.

Children explore and investigate by using their senses as they manipulate different media, listen to music and sounds, smell scents in dough and have tasting sessions within the pre-school's 'Senses Week'. They find out about living things as they observe other children's pets in the setting such as ducklings, rabbits and fish. Children investigate through first hand experiences as they make sail boats and use fans to create a wind to move the boats across water. They build and construct using a variety of resources and use remote controlled toys, tape recorders and keyboards. A sense of time is considered as children talk about past events and look at photographs, and they gain a sense of place on outings within the village. Children develop their creativity in a variety of ways at the pre-school. They love singing and moving to music. Children learn to recognise repeated sounds and sound patterns as they use musical instruments and play along to music with visitors such as a grandparent playing an accordion. They use their imagination as they paint and in complex imaginary play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children feel a sense of belonging in the setting. They arrive happily with parents and carers and hang their outdoor clothing on named coat pegs. Staff members create a welcoming, pleasing environment for them. Attractive displays of the children's work, photographs of them at play, many bright posters and familiar activities help children to feel secure and to settle quickly. Their individual needs are identified prior to the commencement of care and they are valued and treated with equal concern. Children are developing positive attitudes to diversity as the pre-school includes images of the different people that make up our society within its resources and celebrates festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year with the children. Children become aware of the local community on visits to the post office, the library and at events such as the nativity play at the local school. The pre-school takes the children on outings,

for example, to the Castle Museum and the Sea Life Centre. Staff members have an awareness of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children behave very well and can distinguish between right and wrong. Staff members have a good knowledge of child development and use positive behaviour management strategies that are appropriate to each child's level of understanding and maturity. They act as good role models, treat the children with respect and offer them lots of praise and encouragement. Children share resources, take turns, negotiate and co-operate with each other during their play. They show concern for each other, for example, as one child strokes another's arm when he is upset. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are supported well in the transition between home and the pre-school in order that they are secure and make good progress. The pre-school has a strong partnership with parents. They are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning and are keen to accept roles on a parent rota and on the pre-school's committee. A comprehensive 'welcome pack' covers all aspects of children's care at the pre-school. Detailed and informative information about the setting's policies and procedures is displayed on notice boards in the hall and the committee room, where parents arrive each morning. Regular newsletters inform parents of future activities. Parents' satisfaction with the pre-school is reflected in their extremely positive feedback.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early education is outstanding. Parents receive detailed information about the Foundation Stage, the six areas of learning and of how their child learns and develops through play. They are invited to complete an initial profile of their child and to contribute to their child's assessment record. Parents are encouraged to take part in their child's learning. They have access to a selection of books that staff members use for planning the curriculum and are provided with ideas of how to support their child's development at home. This strong partnership allows parents to play a full part in their child's development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the care of appropriately vetted, qualified and experienced staff. Robust recruitment procedures are in place and an induction system and regular appraisals provide mechanisms for the support of a committed team of staff. However, there is no system to assess the ongoing suitability of staff to ensure children's welfare. Children are never left alone with anyone who is not vetted. Documentation to promote the welfare and care of the children is well-organised and stored securely to ensure confidentiality. However, the pre-school's current system does not show the hours of staff attendance on a sessional basis in order to ensure children's well-being.

Staff members generally organise the setting effectively to accommodate children's play. They are able to move around easily and safely and to access equipment in a well-prepared environment for most of each session. Overall children's needs are met. However, 15 minutes before the end of each session some staff members and the children move to the committee room for stories. During this time children do not have access to additional choices. At the end of the session, children put on their outdoor clothing in this room and sit as their parents arrive downstairs. Due to access restrictions to this area, there is a delay before all children leave the committee room and as a result some children are sitting for 10 minutes before they are able to leave.

The leadership and management of early education is good. The pre-school delivers a broad and balanced curriculum to the children and evaluates the provision of education in order to improve outcomes for children. Children's progress is enhanced as staff members access ongoing training to improve their knowledge and practice.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the pre-school was asked to develop their procedures for the induction of new staff and to make some minor amendments to some policies. An induction process has been introduced and the policies are under regular review in order to ensure the well-being of children. In addition, the pre-school was asked to link the planning of early education to children's assessments. New systems have been developed to address this issue and staff members continue to make progress in this area. Further development has been identified within this report in order to provide a clear picture of children's progress within the assessments.

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 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):

- obtain written permission from all parents to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment
- consider the organisation of the session from 11:45 onwards in order to provide children with additional choices
- develop systems to ensure the ongoing suitability of staff members and to show the hours of staff attendance on a sessional basis.

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 the children's assessment records to provide a clear picture of their progress.

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