

Lindridge Pre-School Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205271
Inspection date	12 December 2007
Inspector	Rachel Wyatt
Setting Address	Lindridge C of E Primary School, Lindridge, Nr Tenbury Wells, Worcs, WR15 8JQ
Telephone number	01584 881466
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Registered person	Lindridge Pre-School Group
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Lindridge Pre-School is managed by a committee of parents. The group opened in 1992 and operates from a demountable building in the grounds of Lindridge C of E Primary School. It is located approximately five miles from Tenbury Wells just off the main Worcester to Tenbury Road. A maximum of 20 children may attend the group at any one time. The group is open each week day during term time only. Sessions are from 09.00 to 15.00 on Wednesday and Friday, and from 09.00 to 12.00 on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. All children share access to an enclosed spacious outdoor area.

There are currently 19 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, eight children receive early education funding. Children come from a wide catchment area in this rural environment. Support is available for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for children who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs two staff who hold appropriate level 3 early years qualifications. The setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and has achieved the highest level in the

organisation's Accreditation scheme 'Aiming for Quality'. The pre-school has support from the local authority and attends providers' forums and early years partnership meetings.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because they are cared for in premises that are comfortable, warm and clean as a result of appropriate daily cleaning routines. Children's medical, care and dietary requirements are clearly understood and met because the group works with parents to obtain all relevant information.

Children receive prompt appropriate treatment in the event of an accident or if they become unwell. Staff have current first aid qualifications and follow the setting's robust health and safety procedures. These ensure everyone is aware of how to minimise the risks of cross-infection, including dealing with medical emergencies and outbreaks of infectious diseases. Effective accident and medication record keeping, and prompt feedback to parents mean they are well aware of any health matters concerning their children.

Children develop a sound understanding of good hygiene. They are confident to visit the child-friendly toilet area on their own, staff discretely offering help where needed. Children know when and why it is important to wash their hands properly, and staff sensitively monitor hygiene procedures during, for example, snack times and cookery sessions. Younger children's comfort is assured through regular nappy changes, and calmly managed toilet training is introduced when children are ready.

Children develop an awareness of how their bodies work and the importance of physical exercise and fresh air during regular outside play and walks. Children competently handle a variety of wheeled toys and different physical play apparatus, and benefit from opportunities to join in the adjacent school's 'Forest School' activities. Children are also able to rest as the setting has developed a cosy book area for relaxation, and quieter activities are planned in throughout the day.

Children clearly understand the importance of a good diet as they talk about healthy foods, for example, when they make a poster of their favourite snacks. They demonstrate their awareness during play, so that when making 'meals' in the home corner, children decide carrots and porridge are good options for themselves and a toy donkey.

Children are well nourished and have plenty to drink. Fresh drinking water is readily available at every session and children really enjoy café style snack times when they help themselves to pieces of fruit and toast. Snack and lunch times are relaxed social occasions, adults gently encouraging children to eat well. Children receive meals that have been suitably stored and prepared because staff have undertaken food hygiene training and implement good practice in the setting.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children use premises that are suitable, welcoming and well maintained. Hazards are minimised as the committee and staff regularly monitor the safety of the premises in line with the setting's

comprehensive health and safety procedures, including a regularly reviewed risk assessment. Prompt action is taken to follow up any concerns and to remove identified hazards.

Children use good quality, well-maintained, equipment and furniture which is suitable for their ages and stage of development. This includes child-height furniture and accessible, safe low-level storage where children can help themselves to toys and resources. Staff and parents work together to check and clean toys and equipment.

Children's safety is promoted by the staff's effective supervision and their sound knowledge of the group's comprehensive health and safety procedures. These ensure children and adults' safety on the premises, during outside play and walks, and whilst on outings. Children and staff are effectively prepared for emergencies because there is clear evacuation procedure which is practised regularly. The setting's emergency procedure also covers other circumstances such as flooding.

Children learn to take some responsibility for their own safety. For example, whilst children help to decorate the Christmas tree, staff discuss safety aspects with them. On walks they learn about basic road safety and keeping together. Children understand about the correct use of tools such as scissors and knives and how to store these safely. Helpful information is available for the staff's reference to help them to be good role models, for example, when lifting equipment.

Children are safeguarded because staff understand their role in child protection. They have a sound knowledge of the symptoms of child abuse and they take prompt appropriate action if they have any concerns about a child's welfare. The setting has a clear child protection policy and various safeguarding children guidelines which are readily available for staff, committee members and parents to refer to. Children's welfare is promoted during well-managed drop off and collection procedures, and the setting has clearly devised arrangements to cover situations such as an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer, a child being uncollected or a child being lost. In a reassuring environment, staff encourage children's confidence and ability to make choices in order to help them to express their views and assert their rights in difficult situations. During personal hygiene routines children are encouraged to respect each other's privacy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and busy as there are plenty of worthwhile activities and toys to play with. Their progress and development is effectively supported because staff plan appropriate activities linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. Children benefit from the support of a key worker who effectively promotes their care and play, assesses their progress and has regular contact with parents.

Young children become competent learners as they have worthwhile opportunities for exploring different materials such as clay, play dough, soil, sand and water. They express themselves imaginatively during enjoyable small world play and role play. They confidently represent their ideas during drawing, painting, craft work, construction and role play.

Children have positive relationships, often playing well together. They chat easily to one another, confidently expressing ideas and feelings, for example, when playing in the home corner. Children also competently use language to work out problems or to negotiate with their peers.

Children readily recall and talk about important aspects of their lives or describe what they have brought in to pre-school. During stories, songs and rhymes children listen carefully and enthusiastically respond. They often recreate aspects of stories during their play and discussions.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's play and learning is enriched by the many worthwhile topics, activities and experiences planned by the staff. Topics and themes reflect the Foundation Stage six areas of learning. Medium term topic plans include relevant learning objectives for children which broadly reflect their differing needs. However, short term plans lack clear learning intentions so it is not clear how the aims and expectations of the medium term plan are followed through or how particular activities promote children's learning and development. However, children make good steady progress. Robust assessment procedures ensure staff know children's individual abilities, interests and ongoing learning needs well. Parents are able to contribute their views about their children and appropriate targets are agreed with them to help children to move on to the next stage. During activities and routines children's skills and understanding are capably promoted and extended by staff.

Children settle and soon become engrossed in activities, benefiting from the adults' input. Staff are alert to children who find it more difficult to join in, gently encouraging them and capturing their interest, for example, by introducing some favourite toys. Children's choice, independence and thinking are positively encouraged. For example, staff question and prompt children to help them solve problems such as how to fit a roof on a toy farm building or where to draw lines to cut along when making a paper lantern, but they ensure children complete these tasks themselves. Children respond positively to these challenges. They are confident, self-motivated and purposeful learners. They are interested in activities and play cooperatively with their peers, for example, when making Christmas puddings and decorating the tree. They are eager to discover things for themselves as they explore different materials such as clay, dough and sand. They work out how things fit together during construction play or change during cooking. Children are physically adept, competently handling different tools during art, craft and cookery.

Children are attentive listeners and articulate, confident speakers. They describe their observations and experiences, for example, during 'show and tell' sessions. They use language to develop their ideas, including negotiating roles and developing scenarios, resulting in sustained, involved imaginative and creative play. Children are adept at reasoning, readily answering questions and making suggestions as they solve simple number or practical problems. Staff actively encourage children's contributions so there is a consistent flow of meaningful conversations.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Every child is helped to achieve their potential. The group's ethos outlined in the positive equal opportunities policy is reflected in practice. Children's individual care, health and learning needs are clearly understood from the outset, as parents are encouraged to provide detailed information about their children. Thereafter staff continue to work closely with parents and carers regarding their children's care and progress.

Children who need additional help are effectively supported. The staff's close liaison with parents and the group's robust assessment procedures ensure any concerns regarding a child's development are promptly identified and suitable strategies agreed. The managers generally

understand their responsibilities in supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, including developing positive contacts with other agencies. However, they have not accessed all current information to help them with their shared role as the pre-school's Special Educational Needs Coordinators.

Children develop confidence and positive self-esteem because they are valued as individuals. Their efforts are celebrated, their views and interests acknowledged and their choices encouraged. For example, children help themselves to many toys and resources, their independence is effectively promoted, and they respond eagerly to worthwhile opportunities to express their ideas and to discuss important events in their lives.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are introduced appropriately to aspects of diversity through books and toys reflecting positive images of race, gender and disability. They enjoy meaningful activities such as making Rangoli patterns and diva lamps during Diwali. During activities leading up to Christmas they decorate the tree, make their own decorations, participate in festive cooking and enjoy the nativity story, replicating aspects in their play.

Children's positive behaviour is promoted very much in line with the pre-school's behaviour management policy. This offers practical guidance on fostering good behaviour such as sharing, taking turns and being polite, kind and helpful. Staff create plenty of worthwhile opportunities for children to work and play together. For example, children happily take turns and help each other during cooking activities, when playing games or completing puzzles or during special activities such as decorating the Christmas tree. Children are routinely encouraged to make choices and to work out problems for themselves.

Staff sensitively support those children who are ill at ease or finding joining in difficult. Good use is made of visual prompts and puppets to encourage children's attentive listening and turn taking when speaking. Throughout the day, children understand what is expected of them as staff tell them what is happening next during the session, including highlighting any safety issues such as the need to listen carefully and keep together before going out for a walk. Should children misbehave they understand the consequences of their actions as staff explain these clearly. Appropriate consistent strategies are agreed with parents regarding any child's persistent challenging behaviour.

Children's needs are effectively met as their parents are well informed about how the pre-school is managed and organised. Comprehensive parents' leaflets and the recently updated prospectus give parents valuable information about all aspects of the pre-school. Parents are encouraged to read the setting's operational plan and policies, and other helpful early years information is displayed in the setting.

Children's play and learning is supported by their parents' involvement. Their views about their children's skills and interests are encouraged from the outset. Whilst a child attends the pre-school, parents and staff regularly exchange information about their routines, activities and abilities. Parents' views help staff to identify and assess children's developmental needs and to agree targets to help each child to make steady progress. Parents are also encouraged to contribute in practical ways to the setting and their children's care and education. Several serve on the committee, they help to develop resources such as making soft furnishings to improve the book corner or providing plants for the outside area. Parents also come in to talk to the children about their work, and regularly help their children to provide items for topics and interest tables.

Parents have regular feedback on their children's activities, including the use of a daily diary for younger children. Information in newsletters, the use of displays and opportunities to attend open mornings give parents further insight into the range of experiences offered to their children. Parents are encouraged to express their views and expectations regarding the setting, for example, when they complete a questionnaire and consent form when their child first starts. Should parents have any concerns about the pre-school, their children are safeguarded because there is a clear complaints procedure in place which outlines parents' rights, complaints recording requirements and includes Ofsted's details.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children receiving early education funding make good progress because their parents make valuable contributions to their learning. Information from parents, helps staff to plan suitable activities and to agree achievable targets for children to work towards. Parents have a sound understanding of the types of activities their children are involved in because the Foundation Stage is explained well in the prospectus, and examples of activities, including plans and samples of children's work, are displayed. They have opportunities to contribute items for activities and interest tables, and they attend open mornings. Parents are well informed about their children's progress through discussions with staff, seeing examples of their children's work, and by attending formal meetings with their child's key worker. Parents are able to follow up activities at home, for example, by borrowing one of the group's delightful story sacks.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are broadly safeguarded by the setting's employment and vetting procedures. Staff have appropriate skills, qualifications and experience. Their ongoing suitability and effectiveness is promoted by effective monitoring of their practice and generally sound personal development and training procedures. However, information has not been accessed to support the staff in specific areas of their work relating to behaviour management and the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The setting fulfils its responsibility to notify Ofsted of personnel changes and to initiate relevant checks. However, delays in completing a minority of committee members' checks means that children's welfare is not fully supported.

Children receive good care because the two staff, who also share the manager's role, clearly understand what is expected of them and carry out their responsibilities calmly and professionally. Staff are supported by a committee who take an active part in the smooth running of the pre-school, for example, taking on responsibility for certain aspects of monitoring, safety and funding. Children have time to develop their play and be absorbed in what they are doing as staff work well together and making good use of their time. As a result children are supported and sessions are rewarding and enjoyable. Children's care and play is of a high standard because, with the committee's involvement, staff regularly review their practice, evaluate activities and consistently monitor children's progress. Children are looked after in an inviting play room, benefiting from recent changes in layout such as a well resourced, designated maths area, a reorganised, cosy book area, and from new resources such as a new computer.

Children are well cared for because all necessary records are in place, and relevant consents are obtained from their parents to ensure their wishes are understood. Records are securely stored and the group's practical confidentiality procedures are adhered to. The staff, committee and parents have ready access to very comprehensive, helpful operational guidelines, including the group's policies and procedures which are regularly reviewed.

The leadership and management of funded children is good. The committee and staff have a clear vision to ensure children are happy, eager to learn and confident to move onto the next stage in their learning when they leave to go to school. This vision is reflected in the way children make good progress and enjoy the many worthwhile activities and experiences provided by the capable and caring staff who have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn.

Children consistently access good quality nursery education as the staff plan worthwhile activities. These take account of children's individual needs identified by the setting's robust assessment procedures and incorporate findings from the staff's generally effective evaluation of activities. Staff also consistently monitor and review their own practice in the light of their observations of each other and their attendance at training and good practice sessions. Children benefit from the improvements made to the layout of the room, the introduction of new toys and equipment and changes to activities and routines. For example, the introduction of a café style snack routine has given children time to complete activities, fosters their uninterrupted play and enhances their independence as they choose when and what they want to eat. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to an action to devise procedures to be followed in the event of a child being lost, and to a recommendation regarding staff's first aid qualifications and the use of sun screen lotions. Children's welfare and health are promoted by the improvements the group has made. A comprehensive lost child procedure is in place, which includes details of appropriate preventative measures. The effectiveness of these procedures were checked by the staff during a recent practise exercise. Children's well-being is promoted as the setting ensures a first aid qualified member of staff is in attendance at every session, including outings, and parents' consents have been obtained to the use of sun cream.

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:

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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):

- improve vetting arrangements for committee members so that Criminal Records Bureau checks are completed promptly
- improve knowledge of staff with responsibility for behaviour management and for the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

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):

- improve planning to show how learning outcomes identified in medium term plans are followed through in short term planning, and further develop monitoring procedures in order to more effectively evaluate the effectiveness of planned activities in promoting children's 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