

Little Poppets

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY360519
Inspection date	17 January 2008
Inspector	Felicity Gaff
Setting Address	Seaford CP School, Wilkinson Way, SEAFORD, East Sussex, BN25 2JF
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Registered person	Julie Smith
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Little Poppets Nursery and Pre-school opened in its current setting in 2007. It is privately owned and operates from purpose-built premises in the grounds of Seaford Primary School. All children share access to an outdoor play area and the school grounds. Arrangements are also made for them to use the school hall. Children are drawn from the surrounding urban and rural areas. The setting provides care for a maximum of 20 children from two to under eight years from 08.00 to 18.00 on Mondays to Fridays for 51 weeks a year. Children from five to under eight years attend before and after school and during school holidays. Children up to 11 years may also attend. There are 27 children on roll. Of these, 19 receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. There are eight members of staff, seven of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children generally follow suitable personal hygiene habits and staff work effectively with parents to manage potty training consistently. However, staff do not always ensure children understand the reasons for everyday routines such as covering their mouths when coughing. Children sometimes use a communal towel when washing hands before meals, which does not minimise the risk of cross infection. Staff promote healthy eating by sharing suggestions for lunch boxes with parents; they ensure packed lunches are refrigerated to keep them fresh. Staff provide adequate daily opportunities for active physical play both indoors and out throughout the year. They do not plan sufficiently carefully, using the stepping stones, to ensure they provide appropriate challenges to enable all the children to develop their physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in purpose-built premises that are maintained in good condition, and there are effective security measures in place to keep children safe. Staff comply with health and safety requirements and follow clear procedures for keeping children safe on outings. There is a balanced range of good quality, age-appropriate toys and play materials, with suitably sized furniture to allow children to reach activities safely. The lack of accessible storage means that children must ask to use resources other than those staff have selected, and toys are not always well organised. For example, there is no clear area for construction toys so materials become scattered. This does not foster respectful treatment of resources by the children to help them learn to keep themselves safe. There are strong procedures for ensuring staff understand how to protect children from harm or abuse by recognising, recording and reporting any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel secure and at ease in the setting. Staff create close, nurturing relationships with them. They listen with interest to what they have to say and provide cuddles and reassurance if they are distressed. Older children enjoy contributing their ideas and experiences to circle time, but this sometimes last too long. As a result, not all children are fully included, with some losing interest or becoming distracted. Staff offer a range of play activities that are likely to promote all areas of development. However, they do not plan how they could adapt them to meet the individual needs of children at different ages and stages of development. Key workers keep erratic records of what children do and achieve, and so cannot use them to plan specific activities to ensure all children make good progress. Children do not use the available resources to solve practical problems in their play because they are not sufficiently accessible. Children develop good social skills and play harmoniously together. Older children negotiate skilfully as they plan imaginative games and solve minor disagreements.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a reasonable understanding of the Foundation Stage and provide interesting first hand play activities that support all areas of learning. Since moving to the current premises, they are developing some joint activities with the host primary school to enhance the quality of the education they offer. For instance,

they have access to school resources for some physical play and are beginning to share some planning with the reception class. Current planning systems are not always used effectively to identify what staff intend to do or what children are meant to learn. Adult directed craft and worksheet activities rarely challenge children to set and solve their own problems from a variety of attractive, stimulating resources. Staff know the children well as individuals and are interested in what they achieve, but their written records are brief and irregular. They are not linked to the stepping stones and staff do not use them systematically to plan for future learning. As a result children's progress is haphazard.

Children engage in lively conversation at snack and lunch time, although they do not routinely develop their physical skills and self-confidence by preparing snacks, serving each other and pouring their own drinks. They develop their creativity and language as they explore social situations and the needs of others through imaginative role play. They develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through some interesting, first-hand experiences. For instance, visitors are invited to share their enthusiasms with the children, and staff use the school grounds as a rich resource for observing change. Children have benefited from watching the construction of the building they now use, and have detailed photographs to help them remember and discuss it. Staff provide regular opportunities for children to count each other at circle time and children enjoy sharing stories in the book corner. However, they do not plan opportunities for children to develop their reading, writing and mathematical awareness through open-ended imaginative role play scenarios. Children take part in vigorous physical play outside every day, but it is unplanned. Staff sometimes take out too few resources to enable all the children to participate in a range of challenging activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and families are made welcome at the setting and staff create good relationships with them. Parents receive clear written information about the setting when their children join and there are good opportunities for staff and parents to exchange information regularly. This ensures individual needs are understood and enables the setting to provide consistent care. Their views are sought through questionnaires and a suggestion box. Partnership with parents of funded children is good. Parents feel staff are approachable and that they are valued as partners in their children's care and education. There are suitable arrangements to identify additional needs and to ensure children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are included.

Children begin to learn to respect difference by celebrating festivals from a variety of different cultural traditions. However, staff have not established suitable systems to ensure that children who use English as an additional language are fully included and make good progress. Children behave well overall and children respond positively to the unfailingly courteous, gentle approach from the staff, reflecting their attitude in their behaviour towards each other. For instance, an older child made room on her lap for a younger one during circle time. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. However, the overlong group times occasionally result in some unwanted behaviour, which staff sometimes reinforce by increasing the attention they give to restless children and allowing them to leave the group first.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. There are suitable arrangements for ensuring staff are suitable and have appropriate skills and training. There are good systems for identifying staff development needs and staff undertake relevant training to develop their skills. For example, early years staff are attending training in playwork in order to enhance the out of school provision. All the policies and procedures required to support children's welfare and learning are in place and maintained to a high standard. The good adult: child ratios ensure children are very well supervised. The manager does not always organise the available space and time to maximise children's opportunities to engage in extended, purposeful, self-chosen play. Leadership and management of the nursery education are satisfactory. The manager has identified areas for development and has organised staff training to address these. However, she does not monitor how well children are taught by supervising the quality of planning and assessment. As a result, the nursery education is of variable quality and learning is inconsistent.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- improve the arrangements for handwashing before snack and meal times to minimise the risk of cross infection
- plan how all activities will be adapted to meet the developmental needs of children at different ages and stages of development to minimise barriers to inclusion
- improve the organisation of time, space and play materials to provide a rich learning environment that meets the developmental needs of all the children, fosters their independence and promotes their progress in all areas of learning

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 the use of everyday provision to promote children's understanding of and progress in literacy and mathematics
- improve the use of regular observations of what children do and achieve, which are closely linked to the stepping stones, to plan for their future learning

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