

# Linton Granta Playgroup And Toddlers

Inspection report for early years provision

---

|                                |  |
|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 221759   |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 15 April 2008  |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Emma Bright  |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | The Portacabin, Linton Village College, Cambridge Road, Linton,<br>Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB21 4JB |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 07806 744864 (PG hours)  |
| <b>E-mail</b>                  | info@lintongrantaplaygroup.org   |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | Linton Granta Playgroup And Toddlers   |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated   |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](http://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?

Linton Granta Playgroup and Toddlers is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the setting. It opened in 1977 and operates from the portacabin in the grounds of Linton Village College, in Linton. A maximum of 25 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open five days a week from 09:30 to 12:00 offering a lunch club from 12:00 to 13:30 during school term times. All children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 55 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 44 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area.

The playgroup employs eight staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a good understanding of the importance of good personal hygiene, which they learn through regular routines and sensitive reminders from practitioners. For example, children confidently explain 'you have to wash your hands because you get germs'. Children learn about leading a healthy lifestyle through everyday, practical experiences which ensures they receive plenty of exercise to promote their growth and development. Children move independently between the indoor area and the veranda throughout the session and take part in lots of active play in the pre-school garden. They access a wide range of activities that develop their growing physical skills. For example, they practise throwing and catching balls, speed along on tricycles and carefully climb large apparatus with increasing coordination. This helps children to develop good muscle control, feel relaxed and develop a sense of overall well-being.

Children's nutritional needs are very well met; they competently serve themselves, selecting from a variety of breadsticks, fresh fruits and vegetables, some of which they help to prepare. Children thoroughly enjoy the social aspect with their peers and adults during snack time, which is provided on a 'rolling' basis so that they can choose when they want to eat. This allows them to continue their activities and enhances the flow of the session. Parents provide their child's packed lunch, which is suitably stored so that food remains fresh. A healthy eating policy has not been fully developed to share with parents to further promote children's health. Children help themselves to water, both indoors and outside whenever they need it so that they remain well-hydrated. Children are very well cared for if they become unwell or in the event of an accident because clear and detailed information is gathered and shared with parents; accurate details of children's medical needs are recorded so that practitioners can act swiftly in an emergency.

### Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are developing a good awareness of keeping safe; they explain that if you climb on the steps 'you might fall and bump your head' and they understand that they hold the 'donut train' in order to 'be safe' when they walk to the garden. The wide range of written policies and procedures are clearly implemented, such as risk assessments and daily checks and this further promotes children's safety. Children are well protected and kept safe from harm as all practitioners have a clear understanding of their role in child protection. They regularly access training to ensure their knowledge is up-to-date and in line with local procedures. A designated person ensures that any concerns are dealt with effectively, so that children's welfare is fully safeguarded. Parents are well informed about the setting's responsibilities through a clear and detailed policy, which is readily available.

Children move freely between indoors and outdoors, accessing equipment and they confidently select resources to support and develop their own play. High emphasis is given to making sure that the environment is welcoming and well prepared with a range of activities, which stimulates children's interest and enhances their development. Children's pictures and work decorates the walls and this contributes to their sense of belonging. Resources have been carefully selected to support children's play. They are cleaned and checked regularly to ensure that they remain

safe and in good condition. Thorough safety policies and procedures are clearly implemented by staff to ensure children's safety.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

All children relish their time in the stimulating and well-resourced environment. They arrive with eager anticipation, separating happily from their parents and carers, and settling readily into their activities. Children actively pursue their own interests and are motivated by the exciting learning experiences on offer. They are confident and independent as they busy themselves, becoming absorbed in their self-chosen activity. Children's experiences are enhanced by the skilful interaction of practitioners who clearly enjoy working with them and use their good understanding of child development to support children's learning. For example, practitioners use very good questioning skills to encourage children to share what they know and develop their natural curiosity as learners.

Children play competently on their own or with others and form strong friendships with their peers, confidently inviting others to join in their play. They enjoy warm and affectionate relationships with practitioners and this increases their sense of trust and helps them to develop a sense of self. Practitioners sensitively respond to children's needs and consistently interact with them to extend their learning and play and this helps children to acquire new knowledge and skills. Children confidently offer their comments and ideas, which practitioners treat with respect and this develops their self-esteem. For example, children observe changes in the weather and confidently explain that there are no shadows 'because the sun has gone behind the cloud'.

#### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from the practitioners' good knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage; practitioners understand how everyday activities support children's learning and they plan a balanced programme of activities and experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. A flexible approach to this planning means that there is a good balance between adult and child-led activities which allows children to learn at their own pace. Practitioners monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals through assessment records so they can build on what children already know and they plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning. As a result children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are very independent; they competently put on their coats and boots in preparation for outside play and manage simple personal needs. The free-flow of stimulating activities, both indoor and outdoors enables them to begin to share responsibility for their learning. Children confidently initiate their own games, such as devising treasure hunts and explain that 'you write numbers on the paper then hide them so people can find them, but don't tell anyone'. In addition, they learn practical skills, such as preparing their own food for snack and washing up the cups and plates afterwards. Children are developing very good speaking and listening skills; they confidently make valued contributions to discussions and enjoy sharing what they know. A word rich environment means that children's early literacy skills are developing very well; they demonstrate understanding that print carries meaning as they dictate captions for their work or write their names on their pictures so that 'everyone knows it's mine'.

Children express their imagination in role play as they re-enact familiar scenarios with the wealth of resources on offer. For example, they sit in the playhouse at the table which is laid out with plates, cups and 'food' and announce 'we're having teatime. We're having beer and chips and bread'. A strong emphasis is placed on developing children's self-expression; they freely produce their own drawings, pictures and models to represent their ideas and these decorate the room. Children learn to care for living things; they plant sunflower seeds and know that it needs water to help it grow. Children demonstrate a very good understanding of numbers, counting and calculation which they use in everyday routines. They readily use numbers in their play, for example, they count how many pieces of fruit they have for snack and remark that 'two people have the same name'. In addition, they readily announce that 'zero means none'. Older children talk knowingly about numbers and competently write numerals. For example, they write a nine and a 10 explaining 'if you put a tail on the zero it says 19'.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of early education is good. Parents meet regularly with practitioners to discuss their child and they know that they can view their child's records at any time, which means parents are informed of how their child is progressing and developing. However, the system for gathering initial information from parents prior to children starting is not yet fully developed and parents have fewer opportunities to support their child's learning at home.

Practitioners respect and value children's individuality and work well with parents to ensure that the needs of all children are met. For example, small group activities enable children to make good progress and participate at their own pace. Good settling-in procedures that are based around children's individual needs helps to support them in the transition between home and the setting. Parents receive information about the setting so they know about activities and events, and have daily opportunities to discuss their child with practitioners. This contributes to children's well-being in the setting. All documentation is in place to share information with parents and carers so that they know about the setting's policies and procedures. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well and practitioners work closely with parents and other agencies to support these children's needs, which ensures that they are fully included in the life of the setting.

All children have many opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through a range of well-planned activities. They play with a good range of resources that promote a positive view of the wider world and they enjoy talking about their own families, which helps them to understand about their differences and similarities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Their behaviour is very good and they interact confidently with practitioners and each other. Children are learning to consider the needs of others and to work together co-operatively. For example, they help each other to tidy up and are beginning to negotiate for resources. Children are learning to take turns and play harmoniously together because practitioners use effective strategies to manage their behaviour and they use positive language to help children understand what is expected of them.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a very well-prepared environment that enables them to enjoy and achieve during their time at the setting. They are happy and content as practitioners have developed warm and caring relationships with them and this contributes significantly to their enjoyment at the setting. Rigorous recruitment procedures ensure that practitioners have experience and the necessary qualifications to carry out their role; all practitioners are rigorously vetted to ensure that they are suitable to work with children.

All required documentation is in place to underpin the good practice in promoting positive outcomes for children. Practitioners' knowledge and understanding of these documents clearly contributes to their implementation to ensure that children are safe and well cared for. Good settling-in procedures ensure that parents feel secure in the care provided and children settle readily and become confident members of the group.

The leadership and management of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. The management committee have worked very hard since the last inspection to ensure that the quality of the provision improved. The new Lead Practitioner manages the provision very well and has a clear vision of high quality childcare and education; she effectively monitors the quality of the nursery education and this means children benefit from the high quality learning experiences. All practitioners work very well together as a cohesive team and demonstrate a real commitment to continuously developing the setting's practice. Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the quality of care was judged as inadequate. The setting needed to improve security; ensure that clearly defined procedures for lost and uncollected children are in place; update the child protection policy; improve the organisation of the session; update the behaviour management policy and improve staff knowledge of appropriate behaviour management strategies; update the complaints procedure; provide new staff with induction training and ensure that all records and policies are up-to-date and available for inspection at all times.

Children's welfare and safety has been improved because the premises are secure; procedures for lost and uncollected children are in place and the child protection policy has been updated. The behaviour management policy is up-to-date and staff use effective strategies to help children understand about appropriate behaviour. All policies have been updated and were available for inspection, including the complaints procedure so that parents are informed about the setting. New staff receive a thorough induction so that they are clear about their roles and responsibilities which assure children's well-being. The organisation of the provision has been improved which means that children can independently access resources and their individual needs are met.

At the last inspection, the quality of the nursery education was judged as inadequate. The setting needed to improve the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum; the systems for planning, assessing children's progress and the monitoring and evaluating of the nursery education, and the partnership with parents.

Staff have attended training on the Foundation Stage curriculum which is ongoing; this means children benefit from a staff team who use their knowledge about how children learn to provide

an effective early years provision. Planning is in place and provides a good range of activities over a period of time so that children access appropriate learning opportunities. Children's assessment records have been developed and continue to evolve which enables practitioners to plan for the next steps in each child's learning. Effective systems are in place to evaluate the nursery education provision and this enables children to make good progress. Parents receive good information about the Foundation Stage and they have some opportunities to take part in their child's learning, but this needs further development.

These measures have had a significant impact on the quality of the care and nursery education which is reflected in this report.

### **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):

- further develop the healthy eating policy to share with parents.

#### **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):

- continue to develop systems to gather information from parents to be used as starting points for care, teaching and learning and develop further opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning (this also applies to care).

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)