

Pixieland Mannamead

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	117141
Inspection date	07 May 2008
Inspector	Leoarna Mathias
Setting Address	162 Mannamead Road, Mannamead, Plymouth, Devon, PL3 5QL
Telephone number	01752 770550
E-mail	
Registered person	Pixieland South West Ltd
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Pixieland at Mannamead is part of a chain of four privately owned nurseries in Plymouth and Cornwall. The nursery is situated in a large building on a main road into Plymouth, in a well established residential suburb of the city. The nursery has sole use of the premises.

Pixieland offers care for children under eight years old. It is open from 07.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. There are currently 100 children on roll, of these 36 children receive funding for their nursery education. The nursery is currently supporting children who have English as an additional language and children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs a total of 18 staff who work directly with the children. Of these, 10 staff are trained to Level 3 in childcare, five hold a Level 2 qualification, and three trainees are working towards a childcare qualification. There are two managers, both qualified to Level 3, on site. A group manager and the owner supervise each of the four nurseries within the chain.

Pixieland is a member of the National Day Nurseries Association. They receive support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is appropriately promoted throughout the nursery. Children enjoy nutritious meals, prepared on the premises, in good quantities. Temperatures are checked using sterile food probes, and those with special dietary requirements have their needs fully met. Staff deploy themselves well during meal times to support the children, enjoying as they do at these times a family atmosphere around suitable low level tables. Younger children have their individual feeding routines properly observed, and staff access appropriate furniture on which to give babies their bottles, although some minor aspects of food hygiene are not yet fully observed when babies are eating solids. The recently appointed cook organises her kitchen efficiently, keeping all areas hygienic, monitoring closely the fridge and freezer temperatures, and storing foods correctly. She is supported by the staff team effectively, 11 of whom are food hygiene trained. All children have access to additional drinks during the day to keep them well hydrated.

Documentary systems which promote children's medical health are in good order. Accidents and incidents are appropriately recorded. Only prescribed medicines are given, and parents are kept fully aware of the times and quantities administered. First aid equipment is readily available in each area, and the majority of staff are first aid trained. Children are also learning to manage their own health and hygiene, as encouragement to wash their hands is consistent, and staff also now employ good systems for managing the spread of cross infection. Daily cleaning and checking systems lead to the premises being maintained to a good standard. Appropriate procedures are followed when children have their nappies changed, and potties are promptly cleaned.

All children access plentiful fresh air and exercise. A pleasant and secure outside area is available to all, and children are often taken out on walks to local parks or places of interest. Older children make good use of the well-resourced play area, and all children are kept safe in the sun.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

A range of measures taken by the whole staff team ensure that children are safe and secure while they attend the nursery. Children are cared for according to their age group in pleasing rooms with separate toileting or nappy changing facilities in each. Temperatures are monitored in all areas, and steps are taken to keep southerly facing rooms cool during warm weather. Children access a varied and interesting range of toys and resources, including many heuristic items, and checking and cleaning systems ensure that these resources are kept in good order at all times. Visitors to the setting are promptly recorded, and the keypad and finger print entry systems ensure that access to children is appropriately restricted at all times. The managers can also monitor each room using closed circuit television monitors at all times. Risk assessments are done daily by staff and monthly by the senior management team, and any hazards arising are now dealt with promptly. Staff also encourage children to learn to be hazard aware, for example, children are enthusiastic about cleaning up spilt water by the water tray, placing a hazard sign in the area. Fire safety is also a clear priority for the staff; equipment is checked regularly, procedures are clearly visible throughout the building, and drills are regularly practised and evaluated. Evacuation cots for youngest children are now in place.

The child protection officer is clear as to her responsibilities, and the whole team are aware of the procedures to be followed in the event of their having any concerns. Staff members also have regular opportunities to attend further training in this area. Documentary systems which support the recording of concerns and monitoring of individual children are appropriate, and as a result of these measures, the welfare of children is effectively promoted while they attend the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and happy during their nursery attendance. Each age group enjoys the care of an established staff team, and improvements to key working systems mean that children now have ample opportunities to enjoy the care of a consistent adult for much of the day. Settling in procedures work well, and staff work hard to ensure that very young children are fully supported as they adjust to nursery life. Genuine warmth and affection can be observed between staff and children, as children readily gravitate to adults for support, comfort and to share their achievements. An appropriate use of the Birth to three matters framework means that an interesting range of activities is planned for all children, accessing their own areas, an inviting outdoor space, and an engaging sensory room. Improvements to observation and assessment systems mean that the developmental progress of all children is now more closely monitored throughout the nursery.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children have an understanding of the daily routines, and settle to activities quickly and with enthusiasm. They concentrate well, and enjoy opportunities to try for themselves, such as mixing scone ingredients or using magnifying glasses in the garden. They respond to staff's consistent encouragement to share and take turns, and disputes are rare and managed appropriately. Children use good manners without prompting, and are aware of the needs of others around them.

Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Using this knowledge, the room leader and her team are growing in their ability to plan an interesting range of activities for the children, though some elements of planning documentation do not give staff sufficient guidance as to the kind of learning that might take place during some activities. For example, plans support the emergence of early writing well, by providing resources in a variety of contexts throughout the setting, but the fostering of children's understanding of sounds and letters, and of music, is less obvious. However, children have opportunities to design and make using a range of resources and equipment, such as Lego, play dough and recycled materials. Information technology is readily available, and children enjoy using role play and home corner areas, which are well resourced. Children also enjoy access to an inviting and stimulating outdoor environment, which is resourced in such a way that children's physical and manipulative skills are well promoted. Organising the session so that children spend the majority of their time in small groups with their key worker is beneficial, allowing children to have consistent support for their learning, and for their learning needs to be more clearly identified by staff. Whether in large or small groups children enjoy conversing and making contributions to discussions, by asking and answering questions, for example. Children enjoy exploring their environment, and on most naturally arising occasions, staff encourage children's interest by providing resources and asking questions. Children readily gravitate to their key worker to discuss their observations and to share their achievements, and in turn, adults respond with warmth, enthusiasm and interest. Some opportunities to engage children in further challenge during these exchanges

are used, but not all, and this can lead children to be, on occasion, allowed to stay within comfortable limits. For example, counting and recognising numbers are a feature of the daily programme, but staff do not always extend children's understanding in order to help them move towards a grasp of simple problem solving. Similarly, children delight in using resources, such as sand, water or soil, but while some engaging conversations are had between children and staff, there are times when children's response to these activities is not fully fostered. Planned observations of how children are progressing are a regular feature of the programme, and key workers are again growing in their ability to use these times to establish what children already know, and to identify what is needed to help each child progress. While good progress has been made in this area, key worker evaluations of children's ongoing needs can lack a degree of sophistication at present. This makes it harder to see, in some cases, sufficiently clear links between what children have learnt, and the targets now being set for them. Nevertheless, when taken overall, and as a result of the support they receive, the whole team are quick to learn, and their positive attitude brings about real benefits to the children in their care.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Appropriate Equal Opportunities and Special Educational Needs policies are in place. They are implemented by a staff team who are growing in confidence and understanding, which leads to good outcomes for children with any particular needs. For example, children for whom English is an additional language are supported through staff research into their home language and culture, and close working with the child's family. The Special Educational Needs Officer has a good understanding of her role, and is proactive in addressing the issues that the children in her care face. Similarly, children are developing a good understanding of how to manage their own behaviour positively, as a result of the efforts of the staff team in consistently encouraging children to give of their best. A useful resource file helps staff to overcome any particular challenges in this area, and when taken overall, children behave well throughout their attendance. Parents of younger children access useful information through both the prospectus and notice boards. They can readily access their child's records and meet with their child's key worker. Staff working with the youngest children provide daily written feedback about each child's day. Thus continuity of care between home and the setting is maintained. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers for nursery education is satisfactory. Parents access weekly planning and a monthly newsletter detailing the programme of activities. Parent's evenings have been recently introduced, during which parents can meet with their child's key worker and access their child's progress records. The staff team working with three and four year olds have begun implementing activities that allow parents to become more involved in their child's educational progress through their continuation at home, and good informal exchanges of information between staff and parents can be observed.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The staff team are suitably qualified and work well together. Effective deployment plans, appropriate ratios of staff to children and improved access to training mean that staff are confident in their roles. All staff are growing in their ability to reflect on practice and to be proactive about introducing beneficial changes. Ratios are well maintained, and the whole staff team has an appropriate understanding of the regulatory requirements under which they

operate. Documentation systems which support the health and welfare of all children are in good order, and policies now better reflect both the work of the setting and the requirements of the National Standards, with only minor amendments to the complaints policy necessary to bring it fully in line with those requirements. The nursery meets the needs of range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The senior management team have worked hard to raise standards in this area, and this is now paying dividends. A consistent and enthusiastic team now work with the three and four year old children, and they are appropriately supported through training and appraisal. Guidance from outside agencies is regularly sought. The recent introduction of evaluation systems are beginning to bring about a cycle of continuous improvements to the nursery education provision, and when taken overall, a proactive approach to the monitoring of this aspect of the nursery is now in evidence.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of the quality of care, the group were required to improve staff deployment to ensure appropriate support for children's welfare, safety and development; to ensure children over three were grouped appropriately with consistent key worker support; and to ensure that procedures throughout the nursery promoted children's health and hygiene.

Across the nursery staff deployment is much improved, and children now enjoy the care of consistent adults who are confident in their roles and responsibilities, and can better meet children's needs. Similarly, children over three now enjoy the care of a consistent and enthusiastic team who understand the importance of key working, and ensure that children receive consistent support throughout the day. A broad range of measures have been introduced to bring about significant improvements to the management of children's health and hygiene. For example, documentary systems for the management of accident recording and medicine administration are now clear and properly used. Meals are of an improved quality and quantity and the management of meal times now allows children to be better supported while they eat. Kitchen areas are now well maintained. Finally, procedures for encouraging consistent hand washing, and appropriate routines for nappy changing are now in place. All of these measures better promote children's health and hygiene throughout the nursery.

At the last inspection of nursery education the nursery was required to improve systems for observing and assessing children's progress, and to better use this information to inform future planning for children; to ensure parents were encouraged to increase their involvement in their child's learning; and to develop monitoring systems so that staff delivering the Foundation Stage curriculum were better supported.

A consistent and enthusiastic team now work with three and four year old children, and they have worked hard to develop their observation and assessment skills. They now set aside regular dedicated time for this task, and are growing in their capacity to make links between what children can do, and the future planning needed to promote further progress. A range of measures have been introduced to encourage parental involvement, such as story boxes and a special bear which can go home with children, and parents now access their child's records more systematically through parent's evening and key worker meetings. Senior management have substantially improved their monitoring of the provision, and through ensuring access to training and ongoing support, have been instrumental in creating a team that will, in time, be very much able to evaluate its own performance and ensure continuous improvement.

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

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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 baby feeding is managed with due attention to hygiene
- ensure that the role of Ofsted in the management of complaints is accurately reflected in the complaints policy

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 improve staff confidence in implementing the curriculum for three and four year olds, particularly through maximising on naturally arising opportunities to challenge and extend children, and through giving stronger coverage to some areas of the curriculum.
- continue to support staff working with three and four year old children in the linking of observational materials to the planning of next steps in children's learning
- continue to increase staff's ability to evaluate their own delivery of the educational programme

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