

Great Expectations

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY362002
Inspection date	14 July 2008
Inspector	Elaine Marie McDonnell
Setting Address	Great Expectations Pre-School, 32-34 Grange Road, MIDDLESBROUGH, Cleveland, TS1 5AU
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Registered person	Greater Expectations 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Greater Expectations Ltd. trading as Great Expectations Pre-School is a privately owned nursery. It opened in February 2005 and was re-registered in August 2007 due to the provider name change. The nursery is located in the centre of Middlesbrough and is close to all local amenities. Up to 90 children under eight years may be cared for at any one time and of these, up to 24 children may be under two years at any one time. The provision operates each weekday from 07.30 until 18.00, all year round with the exception of public holidays. There are currently 36 children aged from nine months to three years on roll. Of these, four children receive funding for early education.

Children from a wide catchment area attend, with many parents working in central Middlesbrough. The nursery supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and also some children who speak English as an additional language. There are 12 members of staff employed to work directly with the children, including the nursery manager. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications at level two or above and several members of staff are currently working towards higher qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow good hygiene procedures to ensure that the premises and equipment are kept clean. Children are beginning to understand the importance of simple, good hygiene practices, such as hand washing, as this is promoted throughout the daily routine. Comprehensive accident and illness procedures are in place to protect children's overall health and parents receive written information about exclusion periods for common childhood illnesses. Suitable first aid boxes are available and medication and accident records are maintained. However, not all accidents are sufficiently recorded to contain all relevant information.

Children are well nourished and receive varied and nutritious meals and snacks. They have their health and dietary needs met because staff work well with parents to obtain written information about individual requirements and family preferences. Children have good opportunities to enjoy physical activity both indoors and outdoors. They share access to an enclosed outdoor play area and also participate in action rhymes and physical activities indoors. Children rest and sleep according to their needs and individual routines.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Some good steps are taken to ensure that children are cared for in a safe environment. For example, the premises are kept secure, risk assessments and room safety checklists are conducted and a record of visitors to the setting is maintained. However, older children are not always supervised whilst sleeping and the sleeping area poses a hazard due to the items which are stored there, such as bags and coats. Open windows also pose a hazard to some children as they try to climb up and look out of them. Cleaning sprays were accessible to children at the time of the inspection but were promptly removed when pointed out to staff.

Good steps are taken to ensure that children are kept safe when playing outdoors and when on outings. For example, the outdoor play area is kept secure and good written outings procedures are in place including outings checklists. Children learn to keep themselves safe when involved in fire drills, which are recorded.

The environment is warm and welcoming for the children with a varied range of activities and resources set out for them. They have suitable access to toys, equipment and furniture and staff ensure that resources are safe and suitable for children's use with regular checking and cleaning routines.

Children are appropriately protected because staff understand their role in relation to child protection issues and are able to put local procedures into practice when necessary. Comprehensive child protection procedures are in place to safeguard children's welfare and different staff demonstrate a satisfactory or good understanding of the main areas of abuse and possible signs.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are involved in a good range of activities that covers all areas of development. For example, younger babies have access to various activity toys and treasure baskets. Older babies enjoy role play with dolls and different sized and shaped bags. They also use various musical instruments and have access to water. Older children enjoy listening to stories and participating in singing activities. They play well with farm animals and make the sounds of different animals. Pre-school children enjoy outdoor play and also participate in physical activities indoors. They use jigsaw puzzles, play dough and drawing and painting utensils. Appropriate activities are planned for all children and take into account their needs and interests. Children's abilities are appropriately observed and recorded and information is used to inform future development and activity planning. Staff demonstrate a satisfactory understanding of 'Birth to three matters' framework and it is appropriately implemented.

Children develop confidence and self-esteem well when being praised and encouraged by staff for their efforts. They show a lot of interest in what they do and enjoy the activities and resources available. Children have opportunities to be independent and use their initiative, for example, when helping themselves to their own drinking cups, and older children have opportunities to serve their own lunch. Older children respond to challenge and concentrate well when involved in physical activity exercises. Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about wider society and begin to appreciate their own culture and the cultural traditions of others. For example, they participate in activities relating to Chinese New Year, tasting food from other cultural backgrounds and activities relating to Easter and Christmas. They also have access to resources which positively reflect wider society, such as books and jigsaw puzzles.

Nursery education

Children are making good progress in relation to the stepping stones towards the six areas of learning. They show increasing independence when selecting and carrying out activities and display high levels of involvement in activities such as physical exercise games. Children separate from their main carer with confidence and demonstrate a sense of belonging in the nursery. They confidently initiate interactions with other people, and relate to and make attachments to members of the group. Children demonstrate a sense of pride in their own achievements and show adults when they have successfully completed jigsaw puzzles. They listen to favourite nursery rhymes, stories and songs and respond appropriately to instructions. Children learn to differentiate sounds when using a listening board game and can distinguish one sound from another. They handle books correctly, holding them the right way up and turning pages carefully. Children engage in many activities requiring hand-eye coordination and use one-handed tools well, such as pencils and paintbrushes. Children show an interest in numbers and counting and are beginning to count up to 10; some can count beyond this. Some children can recognise numerals up to five. They know and can name and identify some common shapes. Children are beginning to learn about simple calculation, such as when discussing how many chairs, plates and bowls are needed during lunchtime routines.

Children participate in activities on the white board, but do not make regular or independent use of the computer. They investigate construction materials and realise that tools can be used for a purpose. Children have opportunities to explore and investigate using their senses, for example, when baking and when exploring live 'mini beasts' which have visited the nursery recently. They also have opportunities for visits outside of the nursery, such as when going to the beach on a train or to the museum. Children learn about healthy living and older children

know that the sun can burn their skin if they do not have sun cream on. They move around freely with pleasure and confidence within the available space, respond to rhymes and music with gestures and movement and manage their bodies well to create intended movements, such as when involved in a 'tumble tots' activity. They join in with favourite songs and show an interest in how musical instruments sound. Children enjoy making three dimensional structures, such as model cars, and some children participate in role play well and imitate what adults do, for example, making food and cups of tea for others.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. The learning environment and programme of activities are well planned to provide a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences across the six areas of learning. Activities are suited to the needs and interests of the children and are based on observations of children's play and learning from the previous week. Teaching of different areas of learning interests children and helps them to become focused and persist for some time, for example, children thoroughly enjoy the 'tumble tots' activity which staff also participate in with them. Methods of teaching, expectations and questions challenge and support children's learning.

The inclusion of all children is actively planned for and monitored; activities are planned for individual children and are based on what they can already do and the next stage in their learning and development. Staff use time and resources well to enable children to make progress. Assessment of children's ability and progress is appropriate and information gained is well used to help move them onto the next stage in their learning. Records give a fairly clear picture of children's progress, however, these do not currently contain dates. Children are encouraged by staff to answer questions to aid their learning and understanding.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Equal opportunities are well promoted within the setting as all children are included and involved and their individual needs are being met. Good procedures are in place for identifying and assessing children with learning difficulties or disabilities, or those who speak English as an additional language. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They enjoy being in the nursery and enjoy the activities available, they are settled and happy and form positive relationships with adults and peers. Children are well behaved and behaviour is appropriately managed by staff.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are kept informed about children's day through regular discussions with staff and daily sheets. However, parents are not kept fully informed about their child's development and progress as access to assessment records is inconsistent. Parents receive good quality information about the provision, including the educational programme. They receive newsletters about current topics and themes but are not currently included or involved in their child's learning or assessment. Appropriate consent forms for parents are available and parents receive a copy of the nursery's operational policy.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Recruitment, vetting and induction procedures are rigorous and robust enough to ensure that children are well protected and cared for by staff with relevant experience, knowledge and skills. Most staff members have appropriate first aid certificates and this ensures that there is

always someone on duty, or on outings, with an appropriate qualification. Several members of staff also have food hygiene certificates.

Attendance records and observation indicate that adult to child ratios are effectively maintained throughout the day. Group size and deployment of staff contributes positively to children's care, learning and play and the manager is not included in ratios so that she is able to cover staff lunch breaks.

All records and documents required for the safe and efficient management of the provision are available, well kept and up-to-date. Policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of the policies and procedures of the setting. They have high regard for the well-being of all children and as a result children receive good adult support and attention. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery education are good and contribute to children's progress towards the early learning goals. The provision is well managed and the manager has a clear vision for nursery education with a strong focus on the personal development of all children. The leader sets clear directions, leading to improvements in the organisation of nursery education and the outcomes for children, and monitors and evaluates the curriculum to identify strengths and areas for improvement. The leader motivates staff and children, builds committed teams and acts as a good role model. Staff have good access to ongoing training and development courses and several members of staff are currently working towards higher qualifications.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable, as this is the first inspection since registration.

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):

- ensure that accident records are fully completed to include all relevant information
- ensure that appropriate procedures are in place to promote children's safety when they are in the sleeping area
- ensure that cleaning sprays are stored out of children's reach and that open windows do not pose a hazard to children.

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):

- encourage children to make more regular and independent use of the computer and other programmable toys
- introduce consistent procedures for involving parents in their child's learning and assessment and for sharing information relating to children's individual development and progress with parents.

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