

Peter Pan Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspection date	19/04/2010
Inspector	Catherine Greenwood
Setting address	Alexander Barracks, Brookwood, Woking, Surrey, GU24 0QQ
Telephone number	01483 798264
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Peter Pan playgroup opened in 1992. The group is located at Alexander Barracks in Brookwood, Surrey and is managed by a committee from the Army Welfare Services. Children are accommodated in two separate buildings, according to age. Facilities are available for outdoor play. The group caters mostly for the children of army personnel but will accept children from the local area provided there are spaces available and once necessary security clearances have been made.

The playgroup is registered for 77 children on the Early Years Register. It is also registered on the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. There are currently 70 children on roll in the early years age group. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who have special educational needs and/or disabilities (SEND), and those who speak English as an additional language. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9.15am - 12.30pm.

There are 11 members of staff employed, including the manager, of whom 10 have a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority partnership and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children make good progress in their learning. Key strengths of the playgroup are the well resourced and accessible environment and the positive communication with parents. Good teamwork means there is a unified approach to meeting children's individual needs. Actions taken by the playgroup staff are well-chosen and carefully planned, so that impact is evident in most areas it is needed. The self-evaluation of the provision includes clear objectives for 'staff to have skills and experience that not only meet minimum standards but are being well exceeded, with a staff team that are happy and motivated'. Effective arrangements are in place to ensure children's welfare and safety.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- ensure children, parents and staff are fully included in self-evaluation processes
- review and improve the systems used to consistently link the next steps for children's learning to planning
- take steps to share information about children's developmental progress with other providers delivering the Early Years Foundation Stage and use information from outside agencies such as speech and language therapists to help children make progress

- improve the opportunities for children to listen to stories and look at books independently throughout each session, and improve the planned adult led activities for children to use mathematical language and develop their understanding of number.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The highly motivated manager ably supports the development of the staff team, to initiate effective changes, and is proactive in securing improvement grants from the local authority. Staff have excellent opportunities to attend training organised both within the playgroup and through the local authority. Training records show they have a clear commitment to continual professional development. Children's welfare is safeguarded, due to robust policies and procedures, which are clearly understood by staff and parents. Good communication is established with other agencies such as social services, and army welfare, although staff do not always seek information from speech and language therapists to support this area of children's development. Most recommendations from the last inspection have been met.

Children are given support to help them participate in activities and be included. The playgroup promotes equal opportunities and there are some resources and books that help children learn about diversity, with plans to extend the variety available. A comprehensive self-evaluation includes all areas of the Early Years Foundation Stage, although some aspects of children's learning have been missed and the process does not yet incorporate staff, parents and children's views.

Staff are very sensitive and receptive to families individual needs and circumstances. Strong links with parents keep them well informed of their children's progress, and ensure their involvement in events such as sponsored toddlers, barbeques, and sports days. They are provided with monthly newsletters, and regular opportunities to attend consultation meetings, to share their children's assessment records. Parents speak very positively about the playgroup, and say that 'their children are very happy to go to the playgroup, staff are very friendly and treat children as individuals, and they are kept well informed about children's progress and activities'. In addition to the playgroup, some children attend other early years provision. However, staff have not yet taken steps to share their observations and assessments of children's progress with these other providers to ensure continuity in children's care and learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are extremely well behaved, happy, and animated within their play. They show excellent independence and confidence with choosing their own resources and activities. Children form close friendships and, with staff support, learn how to be kind to one another. They develop their communication skills as they talk freely with staff about things that interest them, such as Egyptian mummies. Staff are

responsive to what children say, and ask questions, offer explanations and suggest activities that sustain children's thinking and enthusiasm, for example, as together they build pyramids from sand. Consequently, children have good opportunities to make sense of their thoughts and ideas.

Children show enthusiasm for drawing and mark making as they use wipe boards and other resources in both the inside and outside play areas. Some older and more able children can write their name with most letters correctly formed. They take pride in their achievements as they show staff their creations, and are taken to the army post box so they can send pictures to their parents who are posted abroad. Children with English as an additional language develop their vocabulary and understanding because staff ensure they are included, and offer additional support, for example at story times. Prompts for objects and routine events in children's first languages are displayed and used to help them settle, although this is not extended to their play. A range of books is made easily accessible in each of the four rooms, and most children enjoy listening to stories as part of a large group. However, children do not often choose to look at books independently, and the timing of large group story times means that some children lose concentration.

Children learn about number through everyday activities such as singing nursery rhymes, and everyday events, such as counting the number of children waiting in line to play outside. They learn about shape through activities, for example, making mobiles, and have access to a good range of resources such as number puzzles, clocks and calculators. Children are encouraged to use mathematical language within their play as they count the number of pieces of 'treasure' they find in the outside play area, and notice when groups of objects are the same. They use scales to measure ingredients during cooking activities, and identify number from displays when it is their birthday. However, there are too few planned activities to promote children's understanding of number.

Children make their own discoveries as they use resources such as magnets, and look at fir cones through microscopes. They show interest in using computers that are located within each group room, and most children know how to operate programmes and use a mouse independently. They show great interest in how things work, for example, as they use real and toy CD players and cameras. Children explore natural resources as they use spades, water and leaves, to mix and dig earth in the playgroup garden. Planned activities such as digging for treasure support children's interest in this area. Children learn about the features of living things as they look at the nursery hamster, and pets staff bring in from home, such as a tortoise and rabbit. They plant seedlings in pot's for Mothers' day, and watch daffodil bulbs grow in the nursery greenhouse. Activities and wall displays show that children have opportunities to learn about diversity, for example, as they make pictures of the world using images of people who are disabled.

Children develop good hand and eye co-ordination, for example, as they use tongs to transfer shapes into ice buckets that are hidden within dried pasta. They enjoy playing outside and develop their physical skills as they use climbing apparatus and see saws. Children laugh with enjoyment as they play imaginatively in a pretend 'pizza parlour', and make excellent use of role play props such as baking trays and

telephones. Staff use these opportunities to extend children's language and communication development by asking them questions. Children use their imagination as they dress up as fire people, pretend to be dogs, and play musical instruments. Displays show that children develop their creativity as they make igloos from papier Mache, use junk resources to make models, and natural resources such as sticks and paper to make tents. Paint and drawing materials are made easily accessible, and children show great confidence as they access them independently to create their own pictures and designs. They use a good range of media, and enjoy playing with water, sand, pasta, shredded paper, playdough, jelly and water. Children sing enthusiastically as part of a large group, and enjoy taking turns to choose the song through selecting objects from a bag.

Staff have a good knowledge of how their key children are making progress and clearly identify the next steps in each child's learning journey. Parent discussion sheets include an overview of observations that staff make about each of their key children. Observations are used to establish patterns and areas of interest such as maps, and plan future activities. Staff incorporate this information within individual weekly planning sheets, although the use of this system does not provide opportunities to consistently promote all areas of learning, particularly in relation to children who attend part time.

Children eat with enthusiasm as they help themselves to healthy snacks such as crackers, fruit and cereal. Different cultural food is incorporated into snack times, for example, as children try noodles for Chinese New Year. Drinking water is accessible at all times. Most staff hold a current first aid certificate. Excellent systems exist to ensure that children are safe and secure.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	3
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	3
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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