



Little Imps Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205708
Inspection date	06 December 2005
Inspector	Kathryn Margaret Clayton
Setting Address	Messingham Village Hall, Wendover Road, Messingham, Scunthorpe, North Lincolnshire, DN17 3QU
Telephone number	07737 221561
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Registered person	Little Imps Playgroup
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?

Little Imps Playgroup is a privately owned facility which operates within the village hall in Messingham, North Lincolnshire. Children attend the playgroup from the local and wider community.

It is registered to care for 32 children aged from 2 to 8 years. When only one of the play rooms is available numbers are limited to 22. The facility is open from 08.30 until 18:00 every weekday all year around apart from bank holidays and Christmas week.

Sessions for the playgroup are from 09.30 to 12.00 and 12.45 to 15.15 during term time only. A breakfast, after school club and holiday care is offered for children aged over 3.

The village hall is shared with other community groups. The playgroup has the use of the large hall and a meeting room. They have shared use of the kitchen and toilets. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area, with a safety surface, and children can also use the open grassed area around the village hall. There are currently nine staff employed, seven of whom hold or are working towards relevant qualifications.

At present there are 95 children on roll, including 35 children in receipt of nursery education funding. Children with special educational needs also attend the setting. They receive the support of the local authority. The group has successfully completed the first two stages of the local quality assurance scheme, 'Steps to Quality'.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy an appropriate range of physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Younger children benefit from taking part in a well planned programme that includes a variety of experiences, such as using the trampette, seesaw and slide on the soft surfaced play area. Older children enjoy ball games and using a good range of equipment on the large grassed area.

Mainly healthy and nutritious snacks are provided. Children who attend the play group enjoy a variety of snacks and drinks during the session including, for example, fruit and biscuits, milk and water. Older children eat some healthy options such as soup, yoghurt, and sandwiches as a snack tea. The staff take into account the likes and dislikes and preferences of children when planning menus. Children's dietary requirements and individual needs are accurately recorded and taken into account.

Some aspects of personal hygiene are well managed, for example, children are appropriately encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after going to the toilet. However, sometimes only cold water is used for hand washing and as there are times when all children dry their hands on the same towel after toileting, there could be a risk of cross infection.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming, bright and attractive environment. The area used is well organised to allow children good freedom of movement and easy access to activities. Children have a good choice of toys and play materials. A high priority is given to children's safety. There is a designated health and safety officer in place and all areas used by children are risk assessed and checked before they arrive.

There are suitable procedures in place to monitor all visitors to the setting, for example, checking identification and keeping an accurate record. Children are well supervised at all times, for example, when they go to the toilet, but they also have the chance to start to gain an early understanding of keeping themselves safe; for example, when they are involved in regular evacuation of the premises. Children remain safe because staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities with regard to child protection, therefore, any concerns are likely to be dealt with correctly.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident in the playgroup. There are established routines that help children to settle easily. They enjoy an interesting range of activities, for example, water play, making Christmas decorations, small world play, a book area, puzzles and a shape game. Many concentrate well and show pride in their achievements. Children talk confidently to staff and their friends about their own families. They benefit because staff are encouraging at all times, they listen and talk to children appropriately as they play. Very good opportunities are provided for children to play imaginatively.

Older children who attend the out-of-school club are actively involved in planning and evaluating the activities they are involved in. They have free choice and are able to explore their own interests. Some activities that take place are ball games, ring games, table tennis and parachute play. Children enjoy baking, undertaking craft activities and being involved in outings, for example, to Central Park and Normanby Hall.

Nursery Education

The teaching and learning is good and children progress well. They are supported by staff who have a good knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum. The well organised programme of activities, generally successfully supports children's learning, although their different abilities are not always taken into account in planning or when selecting resources.

Children are interested in learning and are actively engaged at all times, for example, when investigating a magnet game, or constructing with duplo and wooden blocks, or in role play. They concentrate well as they play in sand or with puzzles. Children's behaviour is good; many start to make friendships and join together in small groups to play. Children listen attentively to stories. Staff enthusiasm helps to enhance children's enjoyment of stories and appropriate opportunities are taken to expand their vocabulary. Many children speak confidently and clearly and enjoy suitable opportunities to make marks in a meaningful way, for example, when 'writing' an order for building materials in role play.

Children are skilful in their use of number. They enjoy counting as a group and individually, for example, when preparing reindeer food. There are good opportunities for them to be aware of numbers in the environment. Many children use simple mathematical language correctly in play, for example, when building. Children enjoy

good opportunities to explore the natural environment through first hand experiences, such as a visit to a local park to see the animals and notice seasonal changes. They learn about the importance of caring for living things when they talk about feeding birds during the winter.

Children skilfully handle tools and equipment and enjoy regular well planned physical play opportunities, for example, climbing, sliding and balancing. They enjoy singing as a group as they practise for the Christmas concert. Children are very expressive and imaginative in play, as they travel on a bus or play in the building area. They respond with interest to what they see and hear, for example, during circle time as they listen to bird songs. Staff systematically assess progress made by children and acknowledge their special achievements. This helps them to successfully plan the next step in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued as individuals and cared for in a mutually respectful atmosphere. They have access to some resources that reflect diversity, although there are few positive images in place to help children to learn about the wider society. The individual needs of children are carefully recorded and taken into account to ensure all children are fully included in activities. This helps children to feel valued. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately. By working closely with outside agencies, the setting effectively supports children with special educational needs.

Good behaviour management strategies are used to encourage children to behave well, for example, praise and encouragement when children help to pack away. Any minor instances are effectively handled by staff by using explanations; therefore this helps children to learn about acceptable boundaries and the needs of others. All children's details are recorded and stored confidentially. The setting have no systems in place to record, investigate and report on complaints made by parents that relate to the national standards.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents receive very useful information about the setting, including details of the foundation stage curriculum. Open days, daily discussions, and times when children's assessments are available to share with staff, all help to keep parents informed about their children's progress and achievements. Children benefit because parents are encouraged to help in the setting, they are involved in their children's learning by bringing in items to support the theme and occasionally sharing home activities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by a well qualified staff group who undertake

ongoing training and have a high regard for their wellbeing. Management make sure that staff receive an effective induction into the setting and have good systems in place to evaluate staff strengths and areas for improvement. Staff effectively organise their time, and the resources available, to meet the needs of the children who attend. The leadership and management is good. Most issues raised at the last inspection have been addressed. Staff work well as a team, and receive good support and encouragement in their work. Management are effective in evaluating the nursery education provision and motivating the hard-working staff group. The provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the safety of children has been improved. Staff are more confident and aware of how to deal with child protection concerns. Children's information is now stored confidentially in lockable cabinets, and all of the required information is available for inspection. Children benefit from having access to a wider range of stimulating activities and experiences. The opportunities available for children to consolidate their understanding of mathematics have been improved. An example of this is when every day opportunities are taken to encourage children to count and to use the language of size when building with duplo and wooden bricks. Children now have the opportunity to write for a range of purposes within the setting, for example, when they 'write' orders in the builder yard. However, children do not have many incidental opportunities to start to link sounds and letters.

Complaints since the last inspection

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. There have been no complaints since the 1st April 2004.

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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 children follow suitable personal hygiene routines
- devise and implement a system to record, investigate and report on complaints by parents relating to the national standards.

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):

- ensure children's differing abilities are considered when selecting resources and planning activities.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk