



Peter Pan Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	120157
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Setting Address	Alexander Barracks, Brookwood, Woking, Surrey, GU24 0QQ
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Registered person	Army Welfare Services
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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

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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 satisfactory. 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?

Peter Pan playgroup opened in 1992. Busy Bees crèche was incorporated into the registration in 2006. 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 three 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.

It is registered for 77 children under five years of age, of whom not more than nine may be under two. There are currently 53 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, 39 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are procedures in place to support children who have special needs or who speak English as an additional language. The crèche facility is not yet in operation.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.15 - 12.30.

There are 12 members of staff who work with the children, five of whom have a recognised early years qualification. There are eight members of staff who hold a current first aid certificate.

The setting receives support from the local authority partnership and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow appropriate procedures to help prevent cross-infection and ensure good hygiene. For instance, they clean tables before snack-time and wear gloves when changing children's nappies or serving food. They notice if children need to wipe their noses and respond by suggesting that they fetch a tissue and thus, encourage them to become independent in this area. Premises and equipment are generally clean. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene as part of the daily routine. Older children are independent in routine self-care skills, for example toilet visits and washing hands. They understand that it is important to wash their hands to make sure they are clean before they have snack. Younger children receive appropriate support and supervision as they develop these skills.

Since the last inspection, the playgroup has introduced a snack bar system for all children and is promoting healthy eating practices by offering a varied selection of items, such as fruit, crackers, cereal and cheese. Parents are encouraged to contribute fruit and salad items each week and are therefore included and involved in the promotion of eating healthily. Children are aware of the routine and follow this well. They make their own decisions about what they would like and use spoons to serve themselves. In some rooms, children also pour out their own drinks and spread their crackers with margarine. They develop control and balance as they carefully carry their plates over to the table where they are going to sit. Children are offered a choice of drinks at snack-time. Some children have free access to drinking water at all times. This arrangement is not in place in all rooms although jugs of water are provided when children have finished playing outside. They recognise they are thirsty

and need to drink. Thus, children start to gain awareness of the importance of drinking to maintain good health, especially after exercise. Food is stored appropriately and staff ensure that they seek relevant information about children's individual dietary needs.

Children spend time outside in the fresh air each day. Younger and older children have their own separate outside play areas which are equipped with age appropriate resources. The presence of a gazebo in each area means that children can play in the shade on warmer days or take shelter if they are feeling chilly. Staff resource these areas with such items as playdough, books, and drawing materials. Children enjoy being outside. They have opportunities to engage in vigorous activity as they explore the different play equipment available which allows them to develop their physical skills and gain control over their bodies. They climb, manoeuvre wheeled toys and practise their ball skills. The playgroup also has its own enclosed play-park with a variety of fixed play equipment which offers scope for greater challenge and skill progression.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a secure and generally safe environment. They have sufficient space to move freely around their base-rooms and sit and play in comfort. Children's work is presented well. This helps to create a warm and welcoming environment for everyone and helps children understand that their efforts are valued. Children use a varied range of age appropriate resources, furniture, and equipment. These are regularly checked to ensure everything is safe and ready to use. The provision of low-level open storage units in all rooms aids children's self-selection of items.

The buildings used by the playgroup are included in a general risk assessment which is undertaken by the safety officer for the army camp. However, there is no risk assessment in place specifically for the playgroup although staff do undertake weekly and daily safety checks of the premises and equipment to identify and minimise most areas of risk. Currently, systems for monitoring the temperature of heaters are not sufficiently robust. Whilst these are protected by means of a guard which prevents children from actually touching the heater itself, the metal on some of the guards is too hot to the touch and therefore presents a potential burning hazard to children. Staff supervise children well but they do not always ensure that spilt water in the toilet area used by older children is wiped up to avoid the possibility of children slipping. Children participate in regular fire drills which helps them understand the procedure they should follow in the event of an emergency and the need to evacuate the premises. This contributes to children's overall safety within the setting.

However, existing arrangements to ensure the safety of the fire exit in the building occupied by two-to-three year olds are not fully effective.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe through the input of staff as they respond to situations that arise. For instance, they stop children from running around indoors and explain why they shouldn't throw sand. Outside, they encourage children

not to pedal wheeled toys backwards in case they knock someone down.

Children are protected because staff have a satisfactory awareness of issues relating to child protection. There is a detailed policy statement in place and a member of staff has recently taken on the role of designated person with responsibility for child protection and has attended relevant training. The playgroup manager is not however fully secure in her awareness of the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff although this information is available in the policy statement. Children benefit because a high percentage of the staff team hold a valid first aid certificate which means that they are cared for appropriately if they have an accident.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and comfortable within the environment of the playgroup. They enter well, separate easily from their parents and quickly settle into the routine, as they make choices about what they wish to do. The organisation of resources throughout the setting means that children can self-select play materials. This allows them to make their own decisions about what they do and become more independent. Younger children enjoy a happy, relaxed atmosphere and display good levels of confidence in their surroundings and with each other. They are well supported by staff who sit and play with them. For instance, they enjoy singing, playing with sand and playdough and, with support, begin to co-operate with others, for instance as they play with cars. They enjoy some interesting activities such as shaking containers that have different items hidden inside and try to match the two that sound the same. Staff have recently introduced the Birth to three framework of good practice to promote young children's learning and development. Their use of the framework is still evolving and staff are developing their skills through training and the sharing of information. Staff undertake regular observations to monitor children's achievements and progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Children are confident and lively. They enjoy warm, friendly relationships with their peers and the adults caring for them which helps them feel settled and self-assured. They are secure in the playgroup environment and know their way around, for instance, as they independently take themselves to the toilet and return to their base-rooms afterwards. Children become engrossed in the activities that interest them, with some children concentrating for long periods as they play with sand or create collages using the range of materials available to them. Children develop their language skills as they chat to others and talk about their home lives or places they have visited. They enjoy story time sessions and independently choose to spend time looking at books. They handle these with care. Children have access to different mark-making media and some children are able to write their names themselves. However, their opportunities to explore emergent writing are restricted as staff tend to write their names for them and there are no writing materials provided in role-play areas. Some

staff encourage children to link sounds and letters although there is not a consistent approach to this. Children enjoy imaginative play with others. They make use of the props available to them to enhance their play and act out scenarios, for instance, as they pretend to be hairdressers or doctors. Staff show interest in children's play but do not effectively extend this or exploit learning opportunities. Children use appropriate mathematical language as they discuss their ages, they identify numerals and recognise and name colours. They explore capacity and volume as they play with water. Children count and develop their problem solving skills through whole group and focussed activities, for instance as they join in with number rhymes. However, they do not consolidate and extend their skills through their self-chosen play and daily routines because staff do not take full advantage of the learning opportunities available. Currently, children have little opportunity to develop their knowledge and understanding of technology as the setting does not have any resources to support children's learning in this area. Children show curiosity and interest as they look for mini-beasts hiding under flowerpots in the outside play area. They practise and develop their fine motor skills as they complete puzzles, cut with scissors, roll out playdough, explore construction toys and manipulate glue-sticks and paintbrushes.

Staff working with funded children have varied levels of knowledge, experience and understanding of the foundation stage curriculum and this means that the quality of teaching is variable. Some staff support children well, for instance as they build on children's interest in mini-beasts by naming the different insects they find. However, this is not consistent throughout the setting. In particular, children's learning is not effectively enhanced or consolidated through their self-chosen activities or the daily routine which impacts on the progress they make. There have been lots of changes to the way planning is undertaken but the playgroup's procedures for planning, observation, evaluation and assessment are now developing well. All staff working with funded children contribute to planning with everyone taking on the responsibility of organising a focussed activity for children to participate in. These link to each area of learning. Some focussed activities are interesting and support children's learning well although others lack challenge. Staff have recently introduced the Surrey Child Profile system of monitoring children's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals and have worked very hard to transfer their observation records of children's achievements to this. These now provide a clear picture of which stepping stones children have reached and identify the next steps in their learning. Staff are very aware that the next stage in the process is to use the information gained to inform their future planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are acknowledged and affirmed because staff show interest in them. They have the confidence to approach staff, for example to share their pictures and are secure in the knowledge that staff will want to see these. When they are outside, children often stop what they are doing and talk to staff about the soldiers marching past. Children are introduced to their own and other cultures through planned topic work throughout

the year. For instance, children celebrate St George's Day, they make Welsh cakes for St. David's Day and taste Chinese food and make Chinese dragons for Chinese New Year. However, children have access to few resources that reflect positive images and different aspects of diversity on a day-to-day basis within the learning environment. Children show care and concern for others for example as they invite a child to join in with their game of ring-a-ring-a-roses and call a child over to see the spider they have found because he likes spiders.

The setting works in partnership with parents and other agencies as necessary to support children with special needs and those who have English as an additional language. There is a designated Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) in place who is developing her knowledge with the support of the Early Years Partnership although she has not yet undertaken any training relating to the post.

Overall, children behave generally well. They take turns and share, for instance as they use the bikes or play ball. Staff intervene as necessary to support children's developing skills. On occasions, children's behaviour becomes a little exuberant and the noise level in some rooms rises at these times. Children's self-esteem and confidence is fostered by the staff's use of praise and positive language.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. The playgroup prospectus contains detailed information about the Birth to 3 framework of good practice and the foundation stage curriculum to inform parents of how their children will learn. They receive newsletters that contain general information about the playgroup and plans are displayed on noticeboards although, in some cases, these are not easily visible. This means that parents are not always aware of the current theme or what the letter, colour and shape of the week are and thus, they cannot easily share in their children's learning. Children are however encouraged to take home library books from the playgroup to share with their parents at home. Staff are looking at ways of developing their partnership with parents further to ensure that they are fully consulted and informed about their children's progress. They have recently held meetings to talk to parents about changes to planning and to introduce the new system for tracking children's progress and intend building on these. Staff seek written consent for all aspects of children's care.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are comfortable and settled within their base-rooms and they enjoy their time at the playgroup. There is a strong focus on children being able to make their own choices about what they do from the available range of resources and rooms are arranged with this in mind.

There are detailed policies and procedures in place that cover all aspects of the provision. Staff and parents are required to read these and copies of policies are displayed on the noticeboards of each building. This means that they are easily accessible at all times. Regulatory documentation and other records that contribute to children's health, safety and welfare and the overall organisation of the provision are

generally well-maintained. A record of accidents and existing injuries is maintained, although staff do not adopt a consistent approach to this element of record-keeping as some staff do not always record all incidents.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There are appropriate recruitment, vetting and induction systems in place to ensure that staff working with children are suitable to do so. There is generally a continuous turnover of staff at this setting due to its military connections which does cause some difficulties in ensuring that there are sufficient qualified staff in post at all times. Currently though nearly half of the staff team are suitably qualified and some are on relevant training courses. Staff are developing their skills through training and the sharing of information. Overall, the staff team is generally well deployed to ensure children are supported appropriately and the session flows. However, currently there are gaps in the procedure for monitoring some aspects of the provision. There is no appraisal system in place to monitor staff performance, and identify areas for development. The role of evaluating the educational provision to ensure all aspects are sufficiently covered and consistency of good practice in delivery of this at all times has yet to be fully developed. Consequently, some aspects of children's development are not fully promoted.

Improvements since the last inspection

Areas identified for improvement at the setting's last inspection related to providing children with opportunities to socialise with others in different groups and to play outside. The playgroup was also asked to review its hand-washing procedure and to improve ventilation in the brick building. Two key issues were identified in respect of the nursery education inspection. These required the setting to further develop opportunities for children to explore and use books, and to extend opportunities for children, especially the four-year-olds, to engage in play and develop relationships with children outside of their own keyworker group.

The measures taken by the playgroup to address the issues identified, benefit children in positive ways. There has been a major re-organisation of the available accommodation and children are now grouped differently. Children aged two-to-three years of age are accommodated in one building and have access to each of the rooms available. These are arranged to cater for the different components of the Birth to three framework. Children in receipt of nursery education funding occupy a separate building. Each of the three rooms in the building is arranged to provide a separate base-room for a group of up to sixteen children, and is equipped with a range of accessible resources. Children are encouraged to make their own decisions about what they do. As group sizes are larger, children are able to socialise and play more easily with other children. Outdoor play forms part of the daily routine. Younger children make decisions about whether they wish to play inside or outdoors and staff take resources outside.

All children are able to help themselves to books as these are easily accessible within their base-rooms. Children choose to look at books, both independently and in small groups and approach staff to read to them.

Children independently wash their hands after using the toilet and before snacktime. This forms part of the daily routine and children are fully aware of this. They have access to liquid soap and paper towels. Currently, the brick building is not occupied by children. The playgroup manager is aware of the need to ensure suitable ventilation is in place when this building is utilised.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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:

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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):

- develop a risk assessment for the setting and implement systems to monitor the temperature of the heaters and to ensure that flooring does not pose a hazard to children. Improve safety of the fire exit in the building used by two to three year olds. Develop greater knowledge of the procedure to follow in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a member of staff
- expand further the range of resources and other items that reflect positive images to help children gain awareness of the wider world in which we live
- develop and implement a staff appraisal system and consolidate further the health care and safety records of children within the setting by ensuring greater consistency in the recording of all accidents and existing injuries.

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):

- provide more opportunities for children to use numbers and develop their problem solving skills, in particular as part of their self-chosen activities and daily routines
- provide more opportunities for children to explore emergent writing and link sounds and letters and investigate ways of enabling children to explore communication and everyday technology
- investigate ways of providing parents with more easily accessible information about what children are doing
- improve systems for monitoring and reviewing existing practice within the playgroup to ensure all aspects of children's learning and development are fully promoted and consistency of good practice in delivery of nursery education.

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