



Brandon Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251423
Inspection date	14 March 2006
Inspector	Sally Ann Hubbard
Setting Address	Forest School, Market Hill, Brandon, Suffolk, IP27 0AD
Telephone number	01842 810913
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Registered person	Brandon Pre-School Playgroup
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

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?

Brandon Pre-school Playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children attending the pre-school. It opened over 30 years ago and operates from a classroom in the old Brandon Forest School situated in the town of Brandon. A maximum of 18 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings from 09.00 until 11.25 and on Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday afternoons from

13.00 until 15.25, during term time only.

There are currently 52 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these, 34 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local area. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs and who have English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six staff. Three are appropriately qualified and all have relevant experience. They receive support from the Suffolk County Council support teacher and the special educational needs support teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is generally promoted because staff implement appropriate hygiene procedures, ensuring surfaces and tables are clean before food preparation and snack time. Children learn about keeping healthy as they wash their hands after toileting and can look at pictorial posters to remind them about personal hygiene. They dispose of tissues, once they have used them, by putting them straight into the bin. However hand washing facilities that children use before they eat snack are not appropriate as they all use the same water, which could expose them to a risk of cross-infection.

Children are suitably protected from risk of illness as they do not attend when they are sick. Staff are trained to administer first aid enabling them to respond to accidents appropriately. However despite having a system for obtaining permission to administer medicines and recording when they are given, the policy for administering medicines is not clear or detailed enough. Therefore children are placed at risk because staff may not record information appropriately to pass on to parents.

Children can independently access fresh drinking water during the session and they enjoy a nutritious, healthy snack of three different kinds of fruit with a choice of milk or water to drink. However they are not learning about healthy eating as staff do not talk to them about their snack and why it is healthy to eat fruit. They choose when they come to have their snack and sit together in a small group with their friends, enabling them to relax and eat at their own pace. Children who have allergies are protected because staff ask for sufficient information about individual dietary needs and this is shared between all staff.

Children enjoy using a range of equipment to develop their physical skills. As children do not have regular access to outdoors, staff plan different physical experiences and challenges for children at every session that enable them to develop their confidence. Children skilfully and confidently use the balance beam, the basket ball net and they laugh excitedly as they hide in the tunnel. They are enjoying having space to move freely around the hall using the different equipment. Children learn about appropriate clothing to wear for different weather, as they have discussions with staff during the

focussed activity.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children arrive to welcoming, well prepared and safe premises; staff get out activities and resources and check the rooms for safety before the children come. The corridor and rooms are clean and decorated with attractive posters. Within the room children independently access a safe and suitable range of toys and resources, choosing what they want to play with and any additional equipment is safely stored in cupboards that children do not have access to.

Children's safety is appropriately promoted because staff complete daily safety checks on the premises and the equipment as it is being put out. Thorough security procedures ensure children are collected by a known adult and the premises are always kept secure during sessions. Children are well supervised at all times; staff are vigilant and aware of what children are doing in all areas of the room to further promote their safety, responding quickly if needed, such as when a child caught his foot in the rocking horse stirrup.

Children are appropriately protected from risk of harm because staff are aware of the child protection issues; they know what signs and symptoms would cause them concern and are aware of the procedures to follow. The referral information and contact number is readily available for staff and information is displayed on the notice board so that parents are aware that the pre-school has a duty to report concerns. The protection of the children in their care is the main priority for staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive very confidently and are very well settled; they immediately start playing and get involved in the activities, with the water and role play area being very popular. They develop independence as they choose what they would like to play with, selecting something different if they want to, from the low storage units. Children particularly enjoy spending time completing and discussing the puzzles with staff.

Children have good relationships with staff who involve themselves in children's play and help them learn from the activities. They have an appropriate range and balance of activities that cover all areas of learning. Staff know the children very well and are sensitive to their individual needs, giving them appropriate support and encouragement.

Staff are beginning to look at the 'Birth to three matters' framework and will use this to help them meet the developmental needs of the younger children at pre-school.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff know what they are wanting

children to learn from the activities and most have satisfactory knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. They are developing their system for planning which covers all six areas of learning over a period of time, the planning is completed by two staff members and others are able to give ideas. However not all staff are sufficiently involved in the planning process and therefore they are not able to fully develop and extend activities to get the maximum learning benefit for the children.

The short term plans show how activities are to be implemented and the expected learning outcome. However the assessments of children's progress are not yet linked through to the planning and as a result some children may not make the best possible progress.

Staff talk to children as they play and ask them simple questions about the activities enabling children to demonstrate what they know. They manage children well and expect good behaviour from them. Staff provide good role models, as they are respectful, calm and patient; as a result children are polite and respond well.

Children's learning is generally effective because they are very well settled and able to feel comfortable and at home. They are personally greeted by friendly staff and they immediately start playing with activities and making tea and food in the role play area. Children develop good independence skills through pouring their own drink, washing and drying their own hands.

Children are learning to communicate well with each other and adults and are beginning to use language well. They have examples of print around the room to help them to learn that written words have meaning. Children appropriately develop their early writing skills as they use the different mark making resources, such as chalk, pencils and paint brushes. Children enjoy listening to stories both individually and in a group.

Children learn about number and shapes as staff help them to count and recognise numerals and name shapes. They are learning about information and communication technology as they use a variety of electronic toys, a computer and a calculator. Children look at some of the festivals celebrated by others to help them learn about other cultures and religious beliefs.

Children enjoy using the paint at the easels to create their own paintings, one child is pleased and says when he has finished, "that is a beautiful one" and the staff member responds positively giving him praise. They spontaneously select the musical instruments and happily dance around with these.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are all treated with equal concern because staff enable them to play freely with any of the resources, they are encouraged to share equipment and be fair to each other, taking turns appropriately. Children have good relationships with each other and adults in the pre-school. They learn about other cultures and the wider

society as they look at some of the different festivals celebrated by others and have positive resources to support their learning, such as different play figures, some with disabilities, puzzles and books. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with special needs are effectively identified and supported. There are appropriate procedures in place to promote their welfare and development and staff work in partnership with their parents and other relevant parties. Staff understand and can implement the code of practice. Children with special needs are effectively supported and included in activities and have one to one support if necessary.

Children are learning about appropriate behaviour, they are provided with good role models. Staff are positive and deal sensitively and fairly with any incidents that arise, for example, when two children argue over a toy a staff member talks to them both about sharing, and resolves the situation calmly and as a result both children are happy.

Children generally behave well and understand the boundaries because these are explained and staff give them regular reminders about the rules, such as telling them "we always walk in pre-school". Staff are consistent and appropriately respond if any arguments or disputes over toys occur, giving children good explanations to help them understand. However, at times some children become boisterous and begin to treat the toys inappropriately, and although staff remain calm and effectively diffuse these difficult situations they re-occur because children are not challenged sufficiently.

Staff have good relationships with parents. They work closely with them and regularly exchange information enabling them to get to know children and care for them according to their individual needs. Parents are made aware of how they can make any concerns they might have about the pre-school known, as clear procedures are available.

The partnership with parents is good, they are provided with an information booklet about the pre-school and details of the curriculum are displayed on the notice board and around the room for them to see. Parents share what they know about their children as they complete a detailed booklet when their children first attend, and daily exchanges of information ensure staff keep up to date. The settling in procedure is flexible enabling parents to ensure children feel secure in the pre-school before they leave them.

Regular newsletters give parents information about topics and special events. Parents know that they can discuss any issues with any member of staff and are aware that their children's progress records are available. They give permission for these to be passed on to the next setting by the pre-school. Parents make positive comments about having confidence in the pre-school and how their children are happy and well settled.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The manager is suitably qualified and all adults in the pre-school have Criminal Records Bureau disclosures in place. Children are protected because staff ensure that any person who has not been checked is not left alone with the children. Some staff are appropriately qualified and all have experience of working with children, which enables them to care for children and meet their needs. Staff organise the space within the room well to provide different areas for activities. They are generally deployed well throughout the session and are aware of their roles and responsibilities because they have discussions about what will be happening before each session starts.

Records that contribute to the safe management of the pre-school are readily available. The policies and procedures are filed together with other documentation to form the operational plan, this is new and will be updated and reviewed as necessary. It is accessible to staff and parents during sessions. Overall the range of children's needs are met.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The pre-school has clear aims and staff make it their priority to ensure that they develop and maintain good relationships and communication with parents, and they ensure that children are happy and well settled so that they can enjoy their time at playgroup and learn through their play. Staff are able to access appropriate training to help them develop their knowledge and skills.

Some evaluation of activities is undertaken and staff have time to discuss activities as they prepare for the sessions. Occasionally someone from the management committee will spend time in the pre-school, but there is no formal system in place for monitoring how staff are performing. A self assessment has been completed, staff recognise and know where they can make improvements and want to provide the best care and education for the children they look after.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the pre-school was asked to include procedures to be followed if a child goes missing and to include contact details for Ofsted in their complaints procedure, both policies have been appropriately updated. They were asked to ensure that children have an appropriate range of resources to reflect equality of opportunity. The pre-school have developed these and children have a range of different resources that positively promote equality of opportunity.

At the last nursery education inspection the pre-school were asked to continue to develop the process of planning and assessment, and to develop ways to involve parents and carers in the day-to-day activities of the playgroup. The pre-school have not completed the development of their planning and assessment process and this will remain as a recommendation. Parents are able to involve themselves in the pre-school by helping out on the rota and can contribute to topics.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted 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.

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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):

- provide children with appropriate, hygienic hand washing facilities
- develop the policies and procedures for administering medicines in line with the National standards and guidance.

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):

- improve the planning to make it clear and easy to understand for all staff so that it helps them to confidently challenge children and extend their learning
- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage
- improve the use of assessments to identify the next steps for children's learning and link these to the future planning
- formulate the process for monitoring and assessing staff performance.

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