



Roperly Pre-school and Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY314044
Inspection date	27 March 2006
Inspector	Susan Hoult
Setting Address	North Marsh Road, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, DN21 2RR
Telephone number	01427 614278
E-mail	
Registered person	Pre-School Learning Alliance
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Ropery Pre-school and Day Nursery has been registered since August 2005. It is run by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. It operates from a purpose built unit within the Gainsborough Early Years Children's Centre, situated close to the town centre of Gainsborough, Lincolnshire. There is a pre-school room for children aged from 2 to under 5 years and a baby room for children up to 2 years. There is a kitchen, utility room, staff room, toilets, nappy changing and storage facilities. There are 2 enclosed

areas for outside play each with a covered area to enable outside play in all weather. The provision serves the local community and surrounding areas. It opens each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year.

A maximum of 33 children aged from birth to under 5 years may attend the provision at any one time. There are currently 113 children on roll, 36 of whom are aged 3 and over. Of these 18 receive funding for nursery education. The provision supports children who have special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

There are 3 full-time members of staff and 13 part-time staff who work regularly with the children. The 3 managers and 4 staff are appropriately trained, 2 staff have completed a NVQ level 3 and are awaiting results and 1 member of staff is working towards NVQ level 3. The provision receive support from the local authority and a teacher and staff from the children's centre.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted well by staff who effectively follow the provision's health and hygiene and sick children policies and procedures. Children understand simple good health and hygiene practices such as washing their hands because of germs that may make them poorly. They are supported well by staff to clean their teeth after breakfast and to independently access tissues which they dispose of in a covered bin after use. Any accidents or allergic reactions are dealt with effectively as there are always staff present who hold current first aid certificates and have attended training on epi-pens. Children are able to rest or sleep according to their needs.

Children's dietary needs are met effectively by staff and parents sharing information. Children gain a good understanding of healthy eating through activities and discussion. Healthy breakfasts are provided and a variety of nutritious snacks including fresh fruit, bread sticks and toast are available morning and afternoon. Children bring pack-ups from home for lunch which are stored and served appropriately.

Children have ample opportunities to take part in a good range of energetic physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle through planning, and use of outside play areas throughout the day. Children have fun whilst developing their large muscle skills, body control and hand-eye co-ordination, for example by using pedal toys, negotiating a variety of climbing equipment, moving to music, throwing and catching and taking part in parachute games.

The staff have a good understanding of the needs of babies and younger children and provide appropriate activities and resources to support the children's physical and emotional development in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Young children particularly enjoy developing their crawling and walking skills on the indoor,

wooden slide with steps and ramp. Children's emotional well-being is fostered by the warm, relaxed relationships they develop with the staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a well maintained, welcoming environment which is safe and secure. The child size furniture in both rooms and the comfortable rocking chair in the baby room helps promote a homely atmosphere. The risk of accidental injury to children is minimised through staff's well organised checking routines, the active supervision of children and the use of clear risk assessments. Impact absorbing surfaces cover part of both outdoor areas providing a safe area for children to use large play equipment.

Children use a wide range of good quality, clean, stimulating and developmentally appropriate toys and equipment many of which are stored at child height for easy access. Children develop their independence as they move freely and safely around the rooms because activities are set out so that clear walkways are maintained. Children in the pre-school room gain great benefit from the free flow between inside and outside areas for much of each day. This ensures plenty of fresh air to promote health and gives children additional opportunities to explore and choose activities. Daily routines, staff skilfully explaining and reinforcing safe practices, such as why children should not run in the rooms, and visits from people 'who help', for example a health visitor talking about 'safety in the sun', police officers and a school crossing patrol develop children's understanding of taking responsibility for their personal safety.

Children are well protected by staff who have a good awareness of child protection procedures and know how to put these into place should they have concerns about the welfare of a child. Children are never left alone with persons who have not been vetted and there are good systems in place to ensure children are only collected by named persons.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The care and play experiences for children are good. Children arrive happily, are confident to leave their parent or carer and eagerly engage in play of their choice. Staff and children interact well with each other. Staff are accessing training and developing their use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to ensure that young children are making good progress in all areas.

Children from birth to two years are cared for in the baby room where they benefit from being in a small group and making strong relationships with consistent staff who know them well. Babies are encouraged to become vocal for example by imitating responsive staff by babbling and testing out different sounds. As they get older, children begin to use gestures to express their needs and start to form recognisable

words. Staff skilfully extend this by being interested and giving children time to make themselves understood and by involving children in stories and rhymes including the use of story and rhyme sacs. Babies and young children enjoy a range of activities which enable them to explore the world using all their senses and consolidate their experiences. For example, having spent time looking and babbling to herself in front of the low level mirror a baby laughs as she investigates a mixture of cornflour and water with her fingers. An older toddler is supported to play with it using wooden spoons, as he doesn't like the feel of it, and really enjoys the experience.

The transition from the baby room to the pre-school room at the age of two is planned well so that children settle quickly. As children become increasingly imaginative, they are able to access a wealth of opportunities to support this and develop their creativity. For example, they dress up using a wide range of outfits, play in the home corner where the theme is changed regularly, freely access a range of craft materials and help make and use play dough. Children benefit from resources and activities that are planned to give them a good range of learning opportunities whilst having fun, both inside and outside. Child initiated play is encouraged with staff being available to support and direct as needed. This promotes choice and independence and supports children's natural curiosity enabling them to explore and experiment freely. For example, children spend time happily on their own and with others working out different ways of using milk crates, guttering, hoops and balls in the outside play area.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make good progress in some areas of learning but progress in other areas is not so strong. Staff have a sound understanding of how children learn but not all staff have a secure knowledge of the foundation stage. Therefore, although planning has been developed well to provide a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences across the six areas of learning it does not identify how activities can be sufficiently and consistently differentiated to enable all staff to fully challenge and support individual children's progress. Assessments of children's progress are linked to the stepping stones and generally reflect individual children's progress towards the early learning goals however, they do not show parental input and therefore are not always effective in planning the next steps in learning for children.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is a strength of the provision. Children have positive attitudes to learning, are keen to get involved in activities and freely choose from the opportunities that are provided for them. They form good relationships with adults and other children and are able to understand that they are part of their families and the provision. They pay attention to staff and are beginning to concentrate for increasing amounts of time. They enjoy chatting to each other and take an interest in each other and their likes and experiences. Staff read stories expressively, capturing children's interest and imagination. Children listen attentively and respond with excitement. Children use talk to negotiate with each other and organise their play. Children enjoy looking at books and handle them carefully. They are beginning to understand that print has meaning. Some children are beginning to write their names, for example, on their paintings, and understand that this is how they will know it is theirs. However, opportunities to practice name recognition and

linking sounds to letters are not sufficiently planned for particularly for the more able children. Children's mathematical development is planned through a variety of activities and resources. For example, children learn about measuring through helping make playdough using cups to gauge the correct amounts of ingredients. They are beginning to count confidently and use mathematical language such as 'smaller' and 'bigger'. However, children are not consistently helped to support their mathematical language, problem solving skills and the idea of pattern across the curriculum. Children have opportunities to observe, explore, question and investigate through first hand experiences in an interesting environment. A child is thrilled when she looks at a lady bird she finds through a magnifying glass. Children use the computer daily and are involved in activities where they learn about a sense of time and place. They have opportunities to design and create models from a variety of materials and explore changes when baking and growing seeds. Children are developing good hand-eye co-ordination through the regular opportunities they have to use tools and equipment to pour, cut, write, paint and build. Staff value children's creativity and encourage them to express themselves imaginatively through art, music, dance , role play and imaginative small world play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel a sense of belonging and all take an active part in the life of the provision. They are proud of the contributions they make to the attractive displays of art which helps them feel respected and valued. Staff know the children well and form good relationships with them. Children develop a positive attitude and a respect for others through the staff being good role models. High staff ratios in the baby room enable staff to have time to recognise and affirm children's individual needs, helping them develop their awareness of themselves and test out boundaries with people they trust. All children are offered a gradual introduction so that they settle happily.

Children increase their awareness of their own and differing cultures through planned activities such as celebrating Chinese New Year and Easter. They access a variety of resources that show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability which helps them make sense of the world around them. Children enjoy visits from people in the local community such as the mobile library with a librarian who reads to them and parents bringing in animals for them to handle and learn about.

Behaviour is good and children are encouraged to be well mannered. They are gaining a good understanding of right and wrong through the positive, generally consistent messages they receive from staff. Children are confident, self assured and can work and play effectively on their own or with others. They are learning to cooperate with each other, take turns during games and share resources. Children are gaining awareness of their own needs and the needs of others for example, an older child helps a younger child use the computer and two children playing together in the role play 'farm kitchen' are kind to a younger child playing alongside them.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents say they are very pleased with the provision, that is has a 'lovely atmosphere' and has 'friendly, caring' staff and

know they are welcome to visit when they wish. Staff form good relationships with parents and exchange information verbally on a daily basis, thus ensuring that changing needs of the children can be met. Parents are kept informed of their children's progress verbally and through requesting to see their child's written assessment. However, not all parents are aware of how they can contribute to the assessments to help staff plan the next steps in learning for the children. Although there is a brochure for parents it does not give accurate, current information about the provision. Nor does it include details of the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals to help parents understand assessments and become actively involved in their children's learning at home. Details of the 'Birth to three matters' framework which staff take account of when planning activities for younger children are displayed for parents to see and are included in information given to parents using the baby room.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is enhanced by the regard staff have for the well-being of all children. Children feel secure and develop a sense of their own self-worth through developing warm, friendly relationships with the staff. However, although policies and procedures are in place, they do not include the recent revisions to the National Standards or fully reflect practice within the provision. There are two part-time managers who work in the pre-school room and a full-time manager who works in the baby room. They share responsibility for the day to day running of the provision and therefore there is no clear line of leadership. This causes some inconsistencies in practice. Staff appraisals are being set up and whole staff team meetings have recently been introduced to help resolve this. Effective recruitment and vetting procedures, and on-going training ensure that children are well protected and are cared by staff who are enthusiastic and keen to increase their knowledge and understanding.

The quality of leadership and management is satisfactory. The managers and staff are all keen to develop the quality of care and education provided for children. They work together well as a team to promote equality of opportunity and provide an inclusive environment where children feel safe and secure. Although monitoring and evaluation systems are in place, they are informal and are not yet fully effective in identifying the strengths and weaknesses of the provision. This impacts on children's progress towards the early learning goals. Training is identified for staff to attend that will further develop their knowledge and understanding and so increase the progress children are making towards the early learning goals. Close links have been forged with the Children's Centre making the transition from pre-school to nursery school a positive experience.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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:

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 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):

- review documentation to ensure it is up to date and fully reflects practice and the recent revisions to criteria within the National Standards
- review management systems to ensure consistency in all areas of the provision

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):

- further develop the use of observations and assessments of children's progress, including information gathered from parents, to plan next steps in learning for individual children
- develop the information given to parents to ensure all parents are aware of the Foundation Stage and how they can become actively involved in their children's learning
- develop monitoring and evaluation systems to ensure planning identifies how activities can be sufficiently and consistently differentiated to ensure children of all abilities are able to gain the most from the activities and learning materials.

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