



Buckden Pre-school Village Hall Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221840
Inspection date	30 January 2007
Inspector	Gyatri Rupal
Setting Address	The New Millennium Hall, Burberry Road, Buckden, St. Neots, Cambridgeshire, PE19 5UY
Telephone number	0794 167 1999
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Registered person	Buckden 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Buckden Pre-school is run by a committee. It has been in operation since 1969. It operates from a purpose built unit within a village hall in Buckden, Cambridgeshire. The pre-school serves the local area. There are currently 42 children from two to five years on roll. This includes 29 children in receipt of funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group opens five days a week during school terms. Morning sessions are from 09.10 to 11:45, these are for the over three-year-olds. Afternoon sessions on a Tuesday and Thursday operate from 13.15 to 14.45, these are aimed at the younger children who are under three years.

The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. Five staff are employed to work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications to

NVQ level two or three. There are two staff currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher and mentor from the Early Years Development and Child Care partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are effectively encouraged to learn about keeping themselves clean and healthy. The staff consistently teach children about good hygiene procedures within their daily routine. For example, after story time children sing songs about washing their hands. They understand they must wash their hands before preparing snacks and after going to the toilet. After they have finished their snack all children have job cards for their duties which include wiping the tables, moping the floor, and helping with the washing up. Children can access tissues easily and dispose of the soiled articles appropriately. Staff gently prompt younger children about wiping their nose. Through these activities, children learn self-care skills to help them in later life. Planning clearly refers to the 'Healthy child' aspect of the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Children's well being is promoted because the staff adhere to health and safety procedures which work in practice to promote their good health. Sick children are excluded from the provision to minimise the spread of infection and the premises are maintained in a clean state. Tables are regularly sprayed with anti-bacterial spray to prevent cross-contamination. Children receive appropriate treatment in a medical emergency because all of the staff hold suitable first-aid qualifications. The first-aid box is accessible and the contents are checked regularly. The staff record accidents appropriately and ask parents to sign the accident book. However, some times, staff forget to ask parents to sign the accident book which can compromise the children's well-being.

Children enjoy a range of activities, which enables them to develop control of their bodies and improve their physical skills. They have regular access to the outside play area and therefore benefit from being out in the fresh air. Children learn to move their bodies in a variety of ways when singing action rhymes. They participate in weekly planned physical education sessions. Occasionally, children have the opportunity to access an interesting and challenging range of wheeled toys and large climbing equipment. Children enjoy taking part in art and craft activities confidently using different tools and utensils such as cutters and rolling-pins to create shapes with the play dough.

Children benefit from a healthy diet where all snacks are nutritious and prepared on site. They have cheese, fresh fruit, and bread sticks for snacks. The parents are encouraged to contribute to the healthy eating programme by providing nutritional packed lunches for their children. Children further learn the benefits of eating healthy food through discussions and reading books. Children have independent access to drinking water they pour their own drinks and serve themselves. Snack time is a highly effective integrated learning experience for the children, promoting literacy, social skills and independence. For example, children find their name cards on the colour table to show where they are to sit. They count how many children are sitting on the table and how many cups and plates they need.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The pre-school gives high priority to children's safety and welfare. Security systems are robust and thorough. Children are kept safe at the provision because there are procedures in place to assess risks and remove any hazards that might cause them harm. The play rooms and resources are organised to enable the children to move around safely, freely and independently. Sensitive reminders from the staff and focused projects around safety issues reinforces children about how to protect themselves. Children recently completed a project on people who help keep us safe. They visited the local fire station; and then the fire officer visited the pre-school to give a talk on fire safety. Children had fun dressing up as fire fighters. They are aware of what to do if there is a fire as they regularly practise fire drills with the staff. A police officer and road safety officer were also invited to give talks on safety issues. Children are aware of safety rules and take turns to play with equipment in the outside play area.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted. There is a designated person responsible for child protection, all staff have received training in this area. They have a sound understanding of the signs of abuse and are aware of the procedures to follow according to the local Safeguarding Children's Board. The required procedures and documentation are in place to support the safety of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide variety of exciting activities which help them develop their knowledge and skills. They receive adult guidance to give them extra support when it is needed but their independence is promoted as much as possible. Children are content and happy to make choices or try new experiences. Staff have a good understanding of how children develop and are aware of developing the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan a wide range of activities for the development of young children under three.

Through simple songs, discussion and sharing stories, children develop their language and communication skills. They enjoy joining in with the words of stories. They become confident speakers in small and large groups to talk about their experiences or show items they have brought from home to share with the children. Children are developing their mathematical thinking through their daily play and routine. For example, they learn to recognise different colours when they choose a chair or make hand prints with paint. They become aware of their left and right hands as they press them on the paper to make their picture. As they create collage pictures, they become familiar with shapes which they match and sequence to form patterns.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are progressing well, supported by staff that have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage. Plans cover all six areas of learning and there is a good observation system in place which informs the next steps required for each individual child's development. Staff join in with the play and activities and listen and talk to

the children, asking questions to extend their thinking to stimulate them and help them make progress. The level of challenge is sufficient to interest all of the children and more able children's learning is extended. Regular observations of children's work is linked to the stepping stones and reflects the progress made by each child. Children are actively involved in their play and activities. They concentrate and listen and are keen to take part. For example, children enthusiastically make their own sandwiches, recognising a square piece of bread has four corners. They cut sandwiches into triangles. Children learn about different parts of their body as they enjoy singing simple songs with actions such as 'If you're happy and you know it clap your hands'.

Children practise their mark making skills and confidently use pencils and crayons. More able children write their names to label their work. Children are developing an understanding of the sounds linked to letters. They are beginning to recognise their name cards or simple words with pictures. They sing simple nursery songs and listen carefully to guess which word is missing and what it sounds like. For example, children sang 'Itsy-bitsy spider' several times, each time, the staff missed one or two words when singing the song. The staff asked children which word was missing and what it sounded like. Children listen attentively at story time and are keen to hear what is going to happen next. They enjoy looking at books on their own and making up their own stories by looking at the pictures. They are aware that books are to be read from left to right. Children develop simple counting and calculation skills. They join in with songs and rhymes to count in sequence and more able children count beyond ten with confidence during daily routines. Children use mathematical language correctly, for example, they compare the size of their triangle shapes as they colour different sizes of triangles on worksheets, knowing which one is 'big' and which one is 'small'. However, children have limited opportunities to express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings as they do not have regular access to use the range of materials and suitable tools for designing and developing role play. Their learning and understanding in the area of physical development is promoted through a suitable range of activities and play equipment although they have limited opportunities to take part in activities to develop their large muscle skills.

Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through various activities. They explore changes as they plant crocus flower bulbs and watch them grow. Using different programmable toys and using the computer with confidence increases their understanding of technology. They have a sense of time as they talk about past experiences and are aware of the routine of each session. Everyday, they discuss the daily weather and learn about different seasons. Through exciting topics and activities they learn about other cultures and the local community. For example, they visit the local church and places of interests and carry out project work on celebrations of festivals in the world.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as the staff team ensure all children have full access to the activities that are available to them. Children's individual needs are monitored and well catered for. The staff give opportunities to all children to bring their favourite toys from home to share with other children during group discussion times. Staff invite all children to take part in these

discussions. Before the end of the session, staff ask children to put their hands up if they have not had a chance to show their toy. Thus ensuring all children are valued and included in the activities.

Children's self-esteem is promoted because the staff enhance children's independence through praise and encouragement. All children are treated with equal concern, their sense of belonging is achieved as every morning they register themselves by placing their name cards on the attendance board, their work is displayed with their names. Children's birthdays are celebrated in the pre-school and photographs are kept in the scrap-book. Older children's independence is promoted through encouraging them to dress themselves for their weekly physical activity session. All children are encouraged to prepare their snacks and pour their drinks. Staff support the younger children with their tasks. The staff also organise special small group activities to encourage younger children to talk and take turns through simple games and singing songs. All children are given a job to complete such as tidy-up the play room after snack time, which encourages children to be a part of the pre-school and increases their sense of belonging.

Children are becoming aware of the wider world. They use exciting resources which reflect diversity and they take part in activities linked to cultural and religious festivals. They learn about the local community through visiting local places in the village. Children talk happily with staff about their families and home life. All children receive good support. Staff have a caring attitude towards the children supporting them to develop positive relationships with staff and their peers. Children enjoy playing together, talking with each other and share toys happily. There are good procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children behave well all the time as they understand clear boundaries for their expected behaviour. For example, children understand only six children are allowed to play outside at any one time. They wait patiently for their turn to play out. Children respect behaviour rules. Staff are excellent role models, they are calm and friendly which promotes a busy, happy atmosphere in the pre-school. The staff effectively encourage and promote children's manners and social skills as they organise many opportunities for children to work together in groups and learn good table manners. For example, children wait for other children to put their snacks on their plate so they can all start eating together. They say please and thank you when asking for something from each other. Positive behaviour strategies contribute to children working together harmoniously. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive useful information about the provision, including details of the Foundation Stage curriculum. A copy of weekly planned activities are displayed on the notice boards so that parents are aware of what their children are involved in whilst at the setting. There is a strong commitment to involving parents in the setting and in their children's learning. The parents are encouraged to participate in a parents' help rota and are welcomed to join the committee. The parents are provided with regular newsletters which explains the term's main activities and encourages them to provide objects linked to the topics. They have access to the information folder which includes the setting's operational plan, policies and procedures. The parents are kept well informed of their children's progress. There are regular opportunities for discussions with staff, a parents' afternoon session is organised to discuss their children's work and achievements towards the early learning goals.

There are informative notice boards containing information about weekly activities and information on the six areas of learning. The pre-school's good partnership impacts positively on children's learning and well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are very happy and feel secure due to the well-organised daily routine and play experiences. They benefit from a calm, caring and extremely motivated staff team. Staff clearly enjoy spending time interacting and supporting children's individual needs. They make very good use of the available space so that children have plenty of room to move about freely and make choices. The play rooms are bright and colourful, with displays of children's artwork and educational posters. Children can easily make choices from resources set out on tables, as well as on the floor or stored in low-level drawers and baskets. The outside balcony is fenced securely and offers shelter so that children can use the area daily for outside play and get fresh air.

There is a rigorous induction procedure in place for new staff, followed by regular appraisals. Staff are encouraged to access training according to their interests and to the setting's needs. For example, they have attended courses on the 'Birth to three matters' framework, first-aid, special needs, child protection, behaviour management, equal opportunities and food and hygiene. This helps contribute to the children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement. The parents are well informed and are welcome to become fully involved in the setting. They are asked to complete a questionnaire to give their views and suggestions on how the setting can be improved to help their children's care and learning. This impacts positively on the continuity of the children's care and achievement.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager is currently in the process of completing her level three child care diploma, hence as yet she does not have her full qualification. However she is receiving excellent support from her deputy who has good understanding of the Foundation Stage. The setting is aware of their need to continue to develop their learning programmes which they are linking to the stepping stones. The manager and deputy work well as a team thus promoting a positive teamwork ethos throughout the setting. Curriculum planning promotes the six areas of learning and thus ensuring that early learning goals are used appropriately to promote children's progress. Children's progress is clearly tracked and monitored through ongoing assessments of which parents are kept well informed. Staff are committed to improving the care and education they provide they meet regularly to discuss future work whilst using information from assessments to inform their planning for individual children. The staff receive good support from the committee. The committee ensures that parents are fully aware of all aspects of the provision. The staff work well in promoting good relationships and pursuing ongoing improvements in the setting. Overall, all children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, three recommendations were made to improve the care at this setting and three recommendations to improve the nursery education. The pre-school was asked to consider different ways of managing the group sessions with the children. Since last inspection

the pre-school has started to organise separate afternoon sessions for the younger children so that the group can effectively organise play resources and activities suitable for the younger children. This has had a positive impact on the quality of care for these children. They were also asked to make some adaptations to their child protection policy and add the name and address of Ofsted to the complaints procedure. The Child Protection policy has been updated and now reflects the new local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Ofsted's address has now been added to the complaints procedure. The pre-school were requested to continue to develop planning to show how planned activities are linked to the learning intention and how they can be adapted for the more/less able child. This has clearly been addressed all planning is linked to the early learning goals and ensures that all children are effectively challenged and monitored. The setting were to increase opportunities for children to express their imagination through free choice of craft activities and media play. This has been partly addressed, however, there is still a need to further develop the provision for role play. Lastly the setting were to provide planned activities for large physical movement. This has been addressed within planned physical education sessions however, the setting are still to improve the opportunities for children to develop their all round physical skills.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 good.

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 all accidents records are signed by the parents

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 further opportunities for children to express themselves creatively by having regular access to suitable activities and resources
- provide regular opportunities for children to develop their confidence when climbing and balancing

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk