

Belgrave Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	226861
Inspection date	24 May 2007
Inspector	Hayley Lapworth
Setting Address	Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre, Rothley Street, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE4 6LF
Telephone number	0116 2221004
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Registered person	Belgrave 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?

Belgrave Playgroup opened in 1979. It operates from the first floor of the Belgrave Neighbourhood Centre in room number seven. The playgroup serves the community living in the Belgrave area of Leicester.

There are currently 26 children from two to three years-of-age on roll. This includes 21 funded three-year-olds. The setting supports a high number of children who have English as an additional language, and has experience of working with children with special needs.

The group opens five days a week during school term times from 09:15 to 11:45. Children attend a variety of sessions. The playgroup also operates a summer play scheme for three weeks in the school summer holidays.

Four staff work directly with the children. All of which hold early years' qualifications to NVQ 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the Leicester Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted because good hygiene routines are encouraged. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before snacks and meals and after using the bathroom. Many children visit the toilet independently and know why they are washing their hands. Therefore, they are learning skills in their personal self care.

Children are actively learning about how to keep healthy. For example, each day they choose between a healthy selection of attractively displayed snacks. This includes large quantities of fresh fruit, toast and yoghurts. Staff show a good understanding of nutritional values of foods and share their knowledge with the children. This is best demonstrated at snack time when they discuss 'good foods' that keep their bodies healthy and make them grow. Drinks are always readily available and children help themselves when they are thirsty. As a result, children understand the importance of healthy food and make choices for themselves.

Staff are qualified in first aid. Children benefit through efficient accident and medication procedures ensuring they receive appropriate treatment. This is achieved through records which detail any action taken and the care they received. Following administration of medication or a child being involved in an accident parents are asked to countersign the records. Therefore, parents are always fully informed on matters that promote children's health.

Children receiving funded nursery education are developing skills in manoeuvring their bodies. Some older children have fun and develop their own games. This includes games where they chase one another and play 'tag'. This shows they are at ease and confident in their surroundings which supports them in developing their own ideas. Many children move freely about the setting, manoeuvring around to prevent collision with each other, with tables, chairs and sand and water trays.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The setting is very warm and welcoming to parents, children and visitors. The temperature within the setting is comfortable and well monitored. This is achieved by staff who respond to changes in weather by opening and closing blinds and windows accordingly. Children's independence is beginning to develop because the storage of resources allows them make choices from what they can see. Many children are confident in accessing resources whilst keeping themselves safe.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised. This is because the staff have taken many steps to provide a safe environment. For example, they regularly communicate with one another about their movements. This means the children are well supervised and adult to child ratios are maintained. In addition the staff talk to the children about keeping themselves safe, they discuss safe shoes for climbing on equipment and this information is also shared with the parents. For example, including safety issues in the monthly newsletter, recommending safe types of shoes to ensure children's safety whilst accessing large equipment such as the climbing frame. This helps to protect the children from having accidents.

Overall, security of the setting is good. All visitors are met at the door by a member of staff and invited in where appropriate and are asked to sign the visitors record. In addition the arrival

and departure of the children is well managed by a system that records their attendance immediately as they arrive. As a result, the children's safety is effectively promoted.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded by staff who have good working knowledge of abuse and neglect. They are aware of local referral procedures and their general responsibilities. There is a thorough child protection policy in place which is easily accessed by parents and visitors.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All of the children are happy throughout their time in the setting. They arrive keen to play and are pleased to see their friends. Most children are independent in making choices. For example, they browse around the activities which are attractively displayed and select what they would like to do. This enables them to develop confidence and make decisions for themselves.

Children are at ease with the staff and their peers and are building relationships. They talk to one another during their play and some children initiate conversations with adults. Staff are affectionate and warm towards the children. For example, they comfort children who are less confident in the presence of visitors. Many children enjoy song and rhyme time. They are actively involved using actions and some are eager to sing a 'solo'. This demonstrates they are beginning to develop confidence in group situations. Staff ask the children questions when they are playing which make them think. These include asking names of colours, shapes and characters in books that children self select. Therefore, children's learning experiences are extended helping them to make progress.

Children's experiences are enhanced by the staff's good understanding of child development and making learning fun. As a result, children laugh during their play and access a good variety of activities that relate to children's age and understanding. For example, running inside a circle of friends slower then faster and stopping as their friends use hand signals and shout 'stop'!. The group are effectively using the 'Birth to three matters' framework as a reference tool to provide a range of activities. This means that younger children access valuable experiences that contribute towards their development.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Some staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. They plan experiences which involve the children working on an individual level and as part of a group. Good planning has been devised which includes opportunities for the children to develop in the six areas of learning. However, on delivery of some of the activities the learning intentions and some opportunities for learning are missed. This means that children's learning at times is compromised. Activities for older children are a variety between allowing children opportunities to learn from one another and being adult led. Staff are in the early stages of beginning to consider how to extend learning for more and less able children. However, at present this is not fully effective. This means that some children they are not benefiting from additional challenge. Children's achievements are regularly monitored by staff who make observations and link them to the stepping stones. These are then used to inform children's individual assessment records, which show that they are making suitable progress towards the early learning goals.

Children have good opportunities to explore and investigate and are beginning to initiate their own ideas and develop their own play. This is because they have access to randomly placed objects which children find interesting. For example, tape measures and keys and padlocks. They role play locking doors and share their home experiences with the child care inspector. For example, 'I have some keys, my keys are at home for my door'. This demonstrates the children are making links between the setting and their home environment.

Children are developing good listening skills and show early signs of respect for one another. This is demonstrated by the way they listen when children and adults are speaking and follow instructions from staff.

Children are becoming aware that print carries meaning, for example, some older children name characters in a book and confidently copy staff who link the written name to that of the character.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff are aware of children's individual needs and backgrounds. They work effectively with parents to ensure that the needs of all children are met. This is achieved through the settling in procedure where parents are encouraged to stay and spend time with their children in the setting. This allows the children to become familiar with their surroundings and the staff to form relationships with the parents. Parents receive a pack of information about how the group is run, in the form of policies and procedures. Communication at the start and end of the day ensures parents are kept informed about their child's care and provides a consistent approach. Parents who made comment are very happy with the care their children receive and the service provided, they say, staff are friendly and approachable and above all their children are happy.

Most staff have a good knowledge base and experience of working with children with special needs. They form working relationships with other professionals that contribute to their care. They have secure understanding of monitoring concerns, making assessments and the referral process. Children with special needs are included in all activities and appropriately supported by staff. Therefore, that they are able make progress.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are beginning to learn about their own lives and others around them. This is best demonstrated through the diverse range of language used by the staff and accessing resources which depict positive images. For example, books in a variety of languages and their involvement in celebrating cultural festivals such as Christmas and Divali. This makes them culturally more aware and enhances their understanding of the world around them.

Children's behaviour is generally good. This is because staff have a good understanding of managing children's behaviour. They are confident in implementing the group's strategies and help children to learn right from wrong and behave well. Children are praised for good behaviour, for example, when they use manners and follow instructions from staff. This develops self confidence and enables them to feel good about themselves.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education is good. Staff work with parents to form a settling in plan, which is reviewed periodically. This helps the staff get to know the children and their levels of attainment on entry in some areas. Along with initial assessments made by staff this information is then used to ascertain their starting points

and inform planning. Therefore, generally the planning relates to children's level of development. The group hold consultation meetings with parents three times per year. Children's key workers are effectively used to discuss progress made, ensuring that parents are formally informed of their child's stage of development. Staff share their written observations and records that link to the early education curriculum. An attractive display of information is made available to parents about the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning. As a result, they understand what their children are learning and are able to contribute to this learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from an environment that is well organised. This ensures they have access to good learning opportunities inside and outdoors. Staff work together as a team and communicate well keeping one another informed about the children's individual care, for example, conversations with children's parents. Staff are effectively deployed into areas to support children in their play. Consequently, this ensures the children are supervised at all times and makes them feel secure in their surroundings. The setting has a good operational plan in place, made up of policies, records and procedures. This contributes towards the smooth running of the service. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that the staff are appropriately qualified and have experience in working with young children. Staff are keen to access training and grow in their chosen profession. Equal opportunities is applied in relation to training of staff, which means that all staff have chance to develop. All the staff team hold early years qualifications, which contributes towards the quality of the service and provides the children with appropriate care.

The leadership and management of children in receipt of funding for early education is good. Management create a setting steered by clear aims, objectives and job descriptions. They are clear about their roles and responsibilities and provide a hands on approach to the children's care and education. Planning of activities has been devised and always available to staff and the child care inspector. Management and staff are developing the setting's practice to ensure that all children have access to learning experiences that relate to the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals. Systems have been implemented to look at the effectiveness of the provision and evaluating practice. This includes involvement from the parents through questionnaires. Leaders are involved in providing some aspects of nursery education, this is achieved through the support they provide to staff. Management of staff is effective, staff receive regular informal supervision which looks at practice issues and staffs strengths and weakness' identifying future development needs. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection a number of recommendations have been addressed. These included to develop a system to assess children's progress towards the early learning goals which clearly links to planning. Ensure plans cover all aspects of the six areas, which are revisited to secure children's learning. Systems have been devised and implemented to assess the children's learning. Planning is appropriately linked to the early learning goals and covers all six areas of learning and areas are revisited to secure learning. This means that they are making suitable progress towards the early learning goals. To develop ways to involve parents in their children's learning. Parents are invited to be take part in their children's learning through open days, helping out as a volunteer and encouraging children to learn at home with activities provided by the group. As a result, parents feel involved and know what their children are learning. Ensure that children's personal independence skills are fostered through planned and routine

activities. Children are encouraged to gain skills in their personal independence through a number of activities such as pouring their own drinks, being involved in cleaning tables after snack and putting on their own coats. These means they are becoming increasingly independent.

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.

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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):

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):

- make sure that all staff delivering activities relating to the six areas of learning are clear about the learning intentions from the onset, that they have a good understanding of how to use opportunities to develop and enhance children's learning and ensure that planning includes challenges for more and less able children.

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