

Community Centre Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	226383
Inspection date	12 September 2007
Inspector	Sally Elizabeth Lee
Setting Address	Station Road, Stoney Stanton, Leicestershire, LE9 4LU
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Registered person	Rita Sheehan
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 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?

The Community Centre Playgroup was established in 1972 and is attached to the Manorfield Primary School in the centre of Stoney Stanton.

The playgroup has use of a large hall, an adjacent smaller room and associated facilities and shares a secure outside play area with the school. A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time. The provision is open each weekday morning in term time from 08:30 to 11:30 and on Monday and Wednesday afternoons for older pre-school children between 12:30 and 15:00. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 40 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 35 children receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup serves families from the village and surrounding rural area. The setting is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as well as children for whom English is an additional language.

The playgroup is privately owned. There are six members of staff who work with the children and all hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives support from the mentor teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy and are protected from infection because staff incorporate clear hygiene procedures within the daily routines of the playgroup. Children wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet with the liquid soap and roller towel set up for them. Staff provide good role models, ensuring they wash their hands and wear disposable gloves when changing nappies. Any medication administered to children or accidents they may have while they are at the setting are carefully recorded and parents sign these records which ensures they are kept fully informed of these aspects of their child's care. However, the setting has not requested consent to emergency medical treatment which does put children's overall health at risk.

Children are well nourished by the healthy and nutritious snack they have during the morning session. They enjoy the fruit and biscuits they eat and the drinks of milk or squash. The cafeteria style organisation of the snack time helps to develop personal independence and minimises disruption of the play opportunities on offer. Drinking water is available throughout the session and children access this readily, ensuring they are well hydrated at all times. Any special dietary needs are recorded before care begins and transferred to a list which is readily accessible to all staff to ensure children's individual needs are met.

Children thoroughly enjoy the varied and exciting opportunities they have to develop their physical skills. They play outside whenever possible, often for the majority of the session. In the outdoor area they push, pull and pedal wheeled toys. They climb, balance and slide. They delight in developing precision in their throwing and catching abilities. They are able to use the school pool once a week for a swimming session. Indoors children benefit from weekly dance and music and movement sessions where they pretend to walk tightropes, become penguins and dress up as clowns. Small physical skills are developed with the sound range of tools and resources available to them.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in premises which are clean, light and well maintained. They provide sufficient space as well as all the necessary facilities to enable children to have all their care and learning needs met well. In addition there is an outdoor play area which the children can access freely. The children benefit from the appropriate range of equipment, toys and play materials available to them. These conform to all the necessary safety standards and are checked regularly by staff to ensure they are safe, clean and suitable for the children to use.

Children stay safe because staff are generally vigilant and are able to assess and minimise risk. All the appropriate safety equipment is in place within the setting, for example, a safety gate to prevent access to the kitchen and electric socket covers. However, risk assessments are not comprehensive or regularly updated and staff do not always supervise children closely in the outdoor area. These aspects of safety at the provision put children at risk of harm. Children learn to keep themselves safe by practising the fire evacuation procedure regularly.

Children are protected because staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures and they are aware that the welfare of the child is their first priority. However, although staff are aware of the appropriate procedures to be followed in the event

of an allegation being made against a member of staff, these are not included in the child protection statement and this puts children at risk of harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at playgroup and settle well. They come in eager to play and are confident to take part in the activities which are already set up for them. They contribute happily to group time and are developing high levels of personal independence, for example they go to the toilet by themselves, find an apron for messy play, make decisions about whether to play inside or out. They have made good relationships with staff and with the other children and are beginning to show concern for others.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are confident within the group and will eagerly talk about their lives at home. They are developing a sense of themselves as part of the wider community as they take part in school and village activities, for example, the village carnival and school harvest festival. They enjoy books and stories and will eagerly listen to, join in and act out favourite stories. For example, they play a very active role in the story 'We're Going on a Bear Hunt', relishing the long swishy grass, the squelchy mud and the splashy river. They shriek as they find the bear in his cave and squeal as they run away. They make marks with a variety of media both inside and outside in the outdoor play area. They use chalk, paint, crayons and water. They are learning to recognise their own names and some children are beginning to write their names.

Children are learning to count in daily activities and routines, particularly enjoying the counting songs and rhymes. Older children can count and recognise numbers to 10 and in some cases beyond. They are learning about volume as they fill and empty containers with wood shavings and measure ingredients for cookery activities. They are learning about size and shape and beginning to solve problems as they make and paint their junk models. Children very much enjoy making music with the instruments and have weekly opportunities to take part in the excellent music and dance sessions, where they move imaginatively and sing along to the piano. They make pretend meals in the role play café and enjoy playing in the dens and tents in the outdoor area. However, the opportunities to use their imagination in art and design are limited and although some art and craft materials are made accessible to the children, these are in closed drawers and children are not yet confident to access them freely. Free painting and collage is not made available to the children routinely and this limits their experience in this area.

Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. They have developed appropriate systems to assess children's progress and plan a range of activities to ensure they take the next step in their learning. The activities provided cover all areas of play and learning. Staff organise the time within the sessions very well to ensure children have opportunities to develop and further their play and re-visit activities if they wish to. They have long periods of time when they are able to choose to play indoors or out and staff are generally well-organised to ensure children have support and help when appropriate. However, the learning environment both inside and out does not always stimulate and engage the children and this limits their overall learning and development. Staff generally manage behaviour well. They are quiet and calm with the children and explain why certain behaviour is not acceptable and in this way children are learning the difference between right and wrong.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled at the pre-school. They have their individual needs met because staff have developed a good relationship with parents and talk to them before care begins as well as through daily contact. Any special dietary or medical needs are recorded and staff are careful to ensure these are met. Children learn about the wider world from the sound range of festivals celebrated within the setting and from the positive images of race, gender and disability provided in books and resources. They are able to take part in special occasions within the school and village community which helps them to develop a sense of belonging.

The setting provides good support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure all children are included in the activities and have their needs met. There are currently no children attending for whom English is an additional language but staff are able to access resources to enable them to support these children appropriately.

Children are learning the difference between right and wrong. Staff talk to the children about taking turns and sharing in their circle time, for example, explaining that there are only two special tractors and 25 children, and asking the children to imagine what would happen if all the children tried to ride the tractors at the same time. Staff generally manage behaviour well. They are quiet and ensure they have eye contact, talking to the children and explaining why their behaviour is unacceptable. Children are praised for being kind and sharing and are beginning to show concern for one another. They have made good relationships with staff and with other children in the group. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive clear written initial information about the setting and this is continued with termly newsletters. However, there is no formal procedure in place to ensure parents are kept informed of their children's progress or ways of involving parents in their children's learning which has an impact on the partnership with parents. However, parents are very positive about the setting and value the approachable staff and welcoming atmosphere. They are very relaxed and comfortable in the pre-school. Daily verbal feedback is given by staff about their child's care and achievements while at the pre-school.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Children benefit because staff are very experienced and work well together as a team. They are committed to meeting the needs of the children and their parents and providing a community resource. The manager and deputy work closely within the team and are able to monitor the standards of the nursery education and the children's progress on a daily basis. Planning the curriculum provided forms part of the termly staff meetings and all staff contribute to this process, although each member of staff has responsibility for one particular area of learning. Each member of staff monitors the progress of the children within their key groups. The staff work closely with the mentor teacher from the local authority to improve standards in the setting.

There is a clear recruitment and vetting procedure in place which protects children and all the staff are experienced, qualified and undertake regular training. All the appropriate

documentation which contributes to children's care, learning, health and safety is in place and is kept in an efficient and confidential manner. Overall the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to ensure children had free choice from a range of resources and that staff were deployed appropriately to support children's play and learning. Some progress has been made since the last inspection and children have more independence in their access to resources although access to art and craft resources is still limited and remains a recommendation. The setting was also asked to review hand washing procedures and mealtime practices. Snack time has been completely changed and children are now protected as they routinely wash their hands prior to snack time.

In addition, the setting was asked to ensure the child protection policy included the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. This has not been done and children continue to be at risk.

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):

- ensure children are supervised carefully in the outdoor area
- include in the child protection statement the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff
- request at the time of the placement written consent to the seeking of any necessary medical advice or treatment in the future
- ensure risk assessments are comprehensive and are updated regularly.

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):

- ensure children have free access to a wide range of resources which foster their creativity
- develop the learning environment both inside and out to engage children at all times
- encourage parents to become involved in their children's learning and to share what they know about their child.

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