

Fosse Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	226907
Inspection date	20 November 2007
Inspector	Kate Bryan
Setting Address	Mantle Road, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE3 5HG
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Registered person	Leicester City Council
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?

Fosse Pre-school is a Leicester City Council provision and was registered in 1997. It is situated in the Newfoundpool area of Leicester and operates from a large room in a neighbourhood centre. It serves the surrounding area.

The playgroup operates daily from 09.30 until 12.00 and on Wednesday and Thursday afternoons from 13.00 until 15.30. It is registered to look after 18 children and currently has 16 children on roll, of whom six are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The setting offers support to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for children with English as an additional language.

There are four staff members who work with the children, all of whom hold childcare qualifications. The setting receives support from the local education authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected from the risk of cross-infection as they use liquid soap and paper towels to wash their hands. They are also in routines, such as washing their hands before meals and after using the toilet. They understand why this is important as staff talk to them about germs and being healthy. Staff are good role models as they show children how to wash their hands and use anti-bacterial spray to wipe down tables and door handles. Good systems for recording accidents and medication, and a high number of staff with first aid qualifications, contribute to children's immediate safety and welfare. A policy for dealing with sick children ensures all children's health is well maintained as an exclusion period of 48 hours is in operation for infectious diseases.

Children do not have access to an outdoor play area although indoor play is well supported. They have access to a ball pool, tunnels, bikes, a balancing beam and push-along toys. The group have also taken the advice of a physiotherapist to help young children's development. Children's small hand skills are supported as they use rolling pins, a mouse, cutters and a variety of paint brushes.

Children enjoy snacks of fruit such as apple, grape and banana, and drinks of milk at snack time. Water is also available for children to access throughout the day. Staff ensure they take account of all children's dietary requirements and are vigilant about children's allergies so their health needs are well maintained. Snacks are social occasions and staff sit with children and talk to them about healthy options and why fruit and vegetables are good for them. Children also enjoy practical activities such as making soup which supports topic work on healthy eating. Workshops have also been completed with parents so healthy eating can be promoted at home.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in a warm and clean environment with lots of natural light. Their work is also displayed on the walls so the environment is welcoming and child friendly. Children's safety is well maintained because staff ensure that they cannot leave the room unsupervised. This is managed as staff monitor access to the room and the door has both high and low handles. Children are also escorted to the toilet so they are always within sight or sound of staff. Casual staff and students receive a clear induction that emphasises how children learn to be responsible for their own safety. For example, if children run in the group they receive positive explanations about keeping themselves safe. Children use a good range of quality resources which are checked daily to ensure they are safe for use. These are easily accessible and support children's learning in the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. Risk assessments are completed on the premises and equipment which helps staff to prevent any accidental injury.

Children's welfare is well promoted because staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues. They have all undertaken training in this area and are fully familiar with the setting's policies and procedures. Clear reporting procedures are in place and appropriate contact numbers are readily available.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

A good range of activities are in place to ensure children can learn through play. They can make choices from activities such as a mark-making table, home corner, water play, ball pool area and book area. Emphasis is placed on children learning to use their senses and to achieve this they can access an interest table which has items such as pine cones and logs which give them experiences of different textures and smells. Children are settled at the group and staff maintain a calm atmosphere in which children can explore their environment. For example, the large room is divided into two distinct areas and children are allowed free access between the two so they experience a variety of activities. Young children make good progress at the group because staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework well. Activities are planned to cover all areas and children's progress is assessed. Staff ensure children are competent in areas before they move onto the next stage so that challenges are appropriate and children can succeed in learning. Staff have a good understanding of the importance of communication and use phonics to encourage language development. Children also enjoy lots of singing so they become familiar with sounds and words.

Children enjoy their time at the group and are well supported by staff who interact positively with them. This means that children feel confident to approach staff and involve them in activities such as pretending to be doctors. Staff are skilful in encouraging children to participate and successfully engage them in activities such as sitting in the ball pool and pretending to go on a space flight.

Staff have a good awareness of the needs of children and are deployed effectively to ensure all children benefit from their time at the group. For example, children were split into two groups for story time so they all had the same opportunities to enjoy looking and listening. Children receive lots of praise from staff, for example when they know what the day is, so they learn well through positive reinforcement.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of using the Foundation Stage to progress children's learning and as a result they are making good progress in most areas. The curriculum is interesting and as a result children are engaged in activities. Staff are also clear that if children are engaged they can continue with activities so they derive the maximum benefit from this. Staff use their knowledge of the Foundation Stage well and have a clear understanding of what they expect children to learn from activities. For example, an activity involving painting was used to support the theme of autumn.

All staff are involved in planning which effectively covers all areas of learning. Future planning is informed by the evaluation of sessions so that children's learning is always moved forward. Good observations are linked to assessments so staff are always aware of what children know and can do and how their learning needs to be developed. Staff use good questions to encourage children to remember what they have done and also link activities so they gain the most from experiences. For example, children were asked if they remembered the story of the Gingerbread Man and this was used to help children to remember to share at break time.

Children are happy at the group and confidently make choices from a good range offered in free play. This includes the home corner, mark-making area, water play and a computer. Most children can listen attentively to stories and actively participate in these by the good use of

props such as figures. This encourages all children to persevere with sitting and listening. The home corner is used effectively to provide opportunities for children to mark-make. For example writing prescriptions when the area is used as a doctor's surgery. Children also write in their daily diaries so there are good opportunities to practise pencil skills. Staff read to children and they are learning to use books for pleasure as they have a comfortable area in which to sit and look at these, they also make their own selections from the book bus. Visitors to the group, such as a farm group and a policeman, help children to learn about their place in the community.

Children are developing a good awareness of information technology as they have regular access to a computer and programmable toys. They are also developing a good awareness of how things grow and change as they grow daffodils and complete work on the seasons. Children are learning about mathematical concepts as staff talk to them about size and they sing songs using numbers. However, opportunities are missed to use counting and basic addition and subtraction in routine activities such as lining up. Children make pictures using a variety of media such as pasta, sponge, fabrics, junk materials and glitter. They also have a good repertoire of songs and use a range of musical instruments to explore how sounds are made. Children have opportunities for exercise but resources and opportunities are not in place to ensure children can access large equipment in the fresh air. This means challenges are not in place to help children to progress as effectively as possible in this area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff use admission details well to ensure children's specific needs are met appropriately. For example, staff members can speak a variety of languages that help children to settle and they also use key words and pictures so children feel included in the group. A good range of planned activities ensure that children learn about festivals such as Eid, Diwali and Christmas. They have also raised funds for Children in Need so they learn effectively about contributing to the wider world. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive an individual service as the group works closely with other professionals to meet their individual needs, for example speech therapists. Staff work hard to include all children and spend time with them so they feel valued. For example, staff sit with children and tell them what objects are, such as a knife, to encourage them to talk and become familiar with words. Staff also work closely with parents and visit local schools with them so children's transitions are managed effectively.

Staff work hard to encourage children to behave well and this is achieved by the use of praise and stickers. Children are also reminded to use good manners at the group. Simple rules, such as helping each other, are displayed as pictures on the walls so all children learn effectively about what is expected of them. Staff use age-appropriate strategies to manage behaviour, such as distracting children from activities and sitting with them until they have calmed down. Children help to make a positive contribution to the group as they tidy away toys.

Parents can speak with staff daily and are included in six-weekly meetings to talk about children's progress and set targets for their development. A key worker system also ensures parents have a known point of contact and this is particularly helpful for those with English as an additional language. To ensure children settle as quickly as possible parents can stay with their children until they feel secure. Parents receive a good range of written information about the setting, this includes newsletters and a Welcome Pack which contains information about policies and procedures. Parents have the opportunity to be involved in the group as they can also participate in workshops, for example 'Winter Magic', where they can join in activities with their child.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is good.

Staff ensure parents can be involved in their child's learning as an ideas sheet suggests ways in which they can work with their child. For example, by making fruit kebabs. Parents receive a good range of information about the group which includes the six areas of learning, and planning is displayed so they know what their child will be learning. A baseline assessment is completed with parents so staff have a good awareness of how they can build on children's strengths and interests. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children learn effectively about a range of cultures and beliefs and are beginning to understand about working together to ensure the group runs smoothly. Their personal, social and emotional skills are well supported as they learn about the needs of others and how they can help them.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's safety is well promoted because robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure they are cared for by staff who are suitable and vetted. Staff have a good awareness of the operational plan which is divided into the five outcomes for inspection. These are regularly reviewed so all staff can deliver a consistent service to children. The group is organised so that children can freely and safely move around whilst always being under the supervision of staff so their safety is maintained.

All staff at the group have a childcare qualification which means children are cared for by staff who are up to date with practice. Training is well supported and includes first aid, food hygiene, child protection and phonics. Regular staff meetings are also used to cascade training so all staff benefit from courses. Good procedures are in place to cover for staff absences and to ensure that staffing levels are maintained. Staff and children adapt well to contingency staff and induction procedures ensure they can deliver a consistent service. Most legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being are in place. However, a record is not kept of the hours of children's attendance which means their safety may be compromised.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The manager is an effective lead at the group and is working towards a level four qualification. This shows her commitment to progressing the service and her own professional development. She is clear about what the group does well and what needs to improve to make sure children make the best progress. The manager works closely with staff to ensure that nursery education is delivered effectively and has attended training in the use of video recordings to enable staff to reflect upon their practice. Staff training is well supported and annual appraisals are in place to ensure staff receive appropriate training such as Foundation Stage modules. This ensures all staff continue their professional development. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to: maintain policies in relation to medication and sick children; include contact names and numbers in the child protection statement; provide evidence of up-to-date public liability insurance cover; implement an operational plan, and develop a system of recording what children can do to help plan the next steps in their learning. All records are in place to maintain children's safety and also public liability insurance. The

operational plan is effective in ensuring a consistent service is delivered and planning shows what children can do and what they need to learn next.

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 that the hours of children's attendance are recorded

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 more opportunities for children to become familiar with numbers in routine activities
- make sure children have access to equipment and an environment that challenges them and promotes their physical development.

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