



Under Fives Roundabout

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221852
Inspection date	07 March 2007
Inspector	Veronica Sharpe
Setting Address	St Lukes Church Centre, Victoria Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB4 3DZ
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Registered person	Under Fives Roundabout
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?

Under Fives Roundabout opened in 1987. It currently operates from two rooms in St Luke's Church Community Centre, which is close to the centre of Cambridge. Two groups operate in parallel, one for children aged three to five years and another smaller group for children aged two years and nine months to three years.

There are currently 50 children from two to four years on roll. This includes 33 children who are eligible for nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who have English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions for the pre-school are 09.30 to 12.00. The session for younger children is from 9.45 to 12.15.

Six staff work with the children, all of whom have appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is working towards higher qualifications. The group has a parent rota and some volunteers also work with the children. The setting is a member of the Pre school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's dietary needs are met through the provision of healthy snacks that take account of their individual dietary requirements and preferences. Children choose from a selection of fruit such as bananas, apples and Satsuma's. They enjoy milk or water and show their growing independence by pouring their own drinks. For older children snacks are available through most of the session so they have good opportunities to choose when to eat and drink, according to their own individual needs. Younger children sit together with practitioners so they benefit from support appropriate to their age and stage of development. A jug of water is available during the session so children satisfy their own thirst.

Children benefit from a generally clean and hygienic environment where satisfactory standards of cleanliness are maintained. They develop independent self-care skills as they wash their hands in the low level sinks, for example, before eating their snack. Policies, such as exclusions for illnesses, ensure parents and carers know about infectious diseases, which helps to protect children from cross infection. Appropriate records are kept of accidents and any medication. Sufficient staff have appropriate first aid training to ensure children receive prompt treatment in the event of an accident.

Children develop positive attitudes to physical exercise as they play in the community centre garden. In fine weather they use a good range of equipment, such as bikes, scooters, balls and bats. Older children manoeuvre their wheeled toys with confidence, whilst younger children learn to kick balls to adults and each other. Indoors, children develop their small physical skills using pencils, scissors, brushes and puzzles. The group room enables older children, in particular, to benefit from active songs and games, where they learn to make use of space and have fun.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a safe environment. The premises are kept secure and staff are conscientious, for example, by ensuring visitors to the community centre close doors and gates as they arrive and leave. Children's safety in a fire is given a high priority, children and staff practise the drill regularly to ensure everyone knows what to expect.

Practitioners work hard to provide a warm and welcoming environment for children and their families. Rooms are cheerfully decorated with children's craft work, posters and photographs, which ensures children feel at home. The rooms are shared with other users, so practitioners work hard to set up the resources and equipment each day. Children benefit from a good range

of activities and have some opportunities to select additional resources to extend their ideas, such as low level storage for art materials.

Children are well protected because staff understand about their responsibilities to protect children. A member of staff is responsible for child protection within the setting and most staff have attended training to develop their knowledge and understanding. This helps to make sure children are protected from harm or neglect. Appropriate child protection policies ensure that practitioners will follow the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy coming to the setting. They part from their parents and carers confidently and settle to their activities. Practitioners settle new children in sensitively, providing a lap to sit on or offering interesting books to distract them. Children make good relationships with each other and look forward to seeing their friends. They enjoy a good range of play opportunities which interest and motivate them throughout the session.

Practitioners spend the majority of their time engaged in play and activities with the children, which helps ensure children settle well and feel secure in their care. Children confidently cooperate with staff and each other as they understand what is expected of them, for example, at snack time or when getting ready to go outside.

Practitioners provide lots of praise and encouragement helping to build the children's confidence. They know the children well and have a good understanding of their individual interests, which ensures children are generally motivated and eager to participate. Children learn to take turns by playing games like 'doctors' and using board games. They play well together negotiating the use of space and resources. Some children attend who are aged under three years, these benefit from the implementation of planning under the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Practitioners have a developing knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. This enables them to plan and provide a varied range of activities and play opportunities that cover the six areas of learning. The short term planning identifies activities and resources within each area of learning and includes outcomes using the stepping stones. Key workers observe the children and record their achievements and regular meetings enable practitioners to share what they know about individual children's development. This ensures children's achievements are recognised and included in planning for children's next steps. Some staff are not always fully aware of how to support children in activities and occasionally lack the confidence and flexibility to help children benefit from activities that are not entirely appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Children benefit from some free flow play, which enables them to choose their own activities and follow their own interests. Practitioners provide children with timely reminders so they know what to expect, for example as they tidy away resources to prepare for outdoor play.

Children form good relationships with each other and play together well, interacting and negotiating with appropriate adult support. Most children are confident communicators, for example, they contribute and offer their own ideas at circle time. Practitioners sit and chat with children about their families which promotes their sense of community. Children enjoy lively story times and join in enthusiastically, showing they know the stories well and anticipating the adventures of a penguin as he befriends a whale. Children regularly practise their mark making skills and enjoy using the varied tools to scribble and practise their emerging writing skills, which helps to build their coordination and confidence. There are opportunities for children to identify initial letter sounds, for example when calling the register and children use their name cards as they begin to include their own names on art work.

Children use mathematical language such as big and small during their play and they begin to develop an awareness of quantity and sequencing. For example, they count themselves as they line up to go outside. Children are encouraged to recognise numbers, for example, as displayed at the 'post office' so they know which door to post the letters in. Younger children are beginning to sequence correctly in stories and songs and know that three follows two in a story about a bus ride.

Art activities are sometimes adult led, which is demonstrated by the amount of work displayed that involves pre-cut shapes and templates. However, to balance this a good number of children's original paintings are also displayed. Staff recognise the importance of allowing children to explore their creativity and make some provision for this by providing accessible media, which allows children to experiment with, for example, feathers and beads.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop positive attitudes to each other and gain an understanding of the wider world through activities and resources that help them understand diversity. They participate in a range of planned activities to enhance their understanding of different celebrations and festivals, such as Chinese New Year and Christmas. The setting supports a significant number of children who come from ethnic minority groups and who have English as an additional language. The staff group reflects the ethnic diversity of some of the children who attend and staff know the children well, which ensures all children feel welcome and comfortable. Information is collected from parents and carers to ensure children's individual needs are met, including any with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are developing confidence and self-esteem and are beginning to develop an understanding of the needs of others. Children manage their behaviour appropriately with support from staff and learn to share and take turns. Caring attitudes are demonstrated, for example, with children helping each other to put on coats and gloves for outdoor play.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are looked after according to their parents wishes and information is shared to ensure children's changing needs are met. A complaints policy is in place, which mostly keeps parents and carers informed about how to raise concerns about the care of their children. The

policies and procedures are available for parents and carers and there is an informative notice board. which tells parents about activities and events. Some parents are fully involved in the setting through the parent committee and the parent rota, which ensures they become aware of the routines and activities of the children first hand. This develops their understanding of how children learn in the pre-school setting. Parents are pleased with the provision and comment on how their children enjoy coming each day and that they can see the progress they have made.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Robust recruitment procedures, such as checking references and applying for criminal record bureau checks helps to keep children safe. The policies and procedures are regularly updated by the committee and generally work in practice to support children's health, welfare and development. Documentation is kept confidential, is easily accessible and regularly updated. Overall children's needs are met.

There is a registration system in place which records children and staff's attendance, although this is not always accessible, for example, when children play outside, which potentially affects children's safety in an emergency. Necessary information, such as emergency contact details and consents, is collected to ensure children are cared for appropriately and in accordance with parents' or carer's wishes.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The committee and staff team are committed to continuous improvement of the setting and are working together well. Staff are developing their awareness of the Foundation Stage and apply their learning in practice to support children's development.

The management committee have recently instigated staff appraisals, which ensures areas for individual development are recognised and supported. This means staff have attended a range of training to benefit their continuous professional development, such as working towards higher qualifications, behaviour management, story telling and child protection. As a result children enjoy varied and good quality activities that encourage their progress.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure that fire drills will take place and to ensure policies and procedures are reviewed regularly to ensure they are implemented effectively. At the nursery education inspection it was agreed that the setting would continue to develop the system of curriculum planning to ensure activities build on what children know.

Adults and children practise the fire drill regularly to ensure they all know what to expect. Drills take into account the different methods and means of escape, such as using the main stairs or negotiating the smaller stairs to the side of the first floor group room. Fire procedures include maintenance of fire prevention appliances, such as extinguishers, which helps to keep children safe. Policies and procedures have been improved and updated since the last inspection. The committee has ensured most policies and procedures meet the requirements and enhance

children's health, safety and welfare. Some minor amendments are needed to meet new legislation and ensure children are well cared for, such as the complaints procedure, and this continues as a recommendation at this inspection.

Staff have worked hard to further develop the system for curriculum planning. Well written plans, which cover all the areas of learning ensure children progress well. Parents are informed about topics and themes and are invited to contribute to the records of their children's learning, both through discussion with key workers and by adding to the written records of children's development.

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):

- enhance children's safety by ensuring the registers are always accessible in case of emergency
- ensure policies and procedures are updated to reflect current regulations, such as the complaints procedure and information given to parents about Ofsted

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):

- continue to develop practitioner's knowledge and understanding of how children learn.

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