

Lindal Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	955268
Inspection date	25 February 2008
Inspector	Sandra Elizabeth Williams
Setting Address	Lindal & Marton Primary School, Lindal, Ulverston, Cumbria, LA12 0NB
Telephone number	0783 5950502
E-mail	
Registered person	The Trustees of Lindal 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?

Lindal Playgroup opened in 1968 and is managed by a management committee. It is situated in Lindal and Marton Primary School in the centre of Lindal-in-Furness, Cumbria. The provision consists of a large hall, library, toilet facilities, kitchen and outdoor play area. The playgroup serves children from the local area.

A maximum of 18 children aged from three to under five years may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 16 children on roll aged from three to under five years, all of whom are in receipt of funding for nursery education.

The playgroup is open on Monday and Friday mornings from 13.00 until 15.30. The playgroup also operates at Buccleugh Hall on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday mornings from 09.15 until 11.45. This is separately registered.

Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties. There are no children for whom English is an additional language.

There are three members of staff employed to work with the children. Two hold appropriate child care and education qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing good physical skills as they engage in a range of physical activities which contribute to their good health. They are learning about the importance of exercise to keep fit and healthy and they understand the importance of warming up their muscles and breathing deeply to prevent getting injuries. They move with control and coordination as they march and stretch during their movement to music sessions. They also enjoy fresh air during their outdoor play sessions and they develop their climbing and balancing skills during their physical education sessions. Children develop their fine motor skills as they use rolling pins and cutters for making different shapes in the play dough. They confidently use a good range of mark making equipment to create cards and paintings to take home with them.

Children begin to learn about healthy eating as the staff provide healthy snacks such as apples, water and milk. They develop their independence skills as they pour their own drinks from the jugs. Snack times are enjoyable and social occasions and children take turns in being the helper for the day and help to serve the fruit to their friends. Children's special dietary needs are known to the staff who work very closely with the parents to ensure children's needs are met appropriately. Children learn the importance of washing their hands before eating their snacks, after using the toilet and after playing outside. They are reminded to do this by the staff and this is reinforced by the posters on the wall in the washrooms. The ability of the staff to attend to the children's health and medical requirements is good as their training in first aid is up to date. The contents in the first aid kit are also up to date and therefore staff are fully equipped to respond appropriately in an emergency. Accidents are recorded in the accident book, however, not all entries have been countersigned by parents, nor is there a system for recording the administration of medication.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children learn to keep themselves safe because staff explain acceptable boundaries. For example, children know that they must take turns when playing on the climbing castle and that they must not run in the setting in case they fall. The children learn about fire safety as the staff regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure with them. The staff are watchful and vigilant at all times, ensuring that the children are safe as they play. The thorough risk assessments help to minimise the hazards to children. The door is always kept locked and secure and children are always supervised when playing outside.

Children's safety is taken very seriously by the staff who organise the playroom well to enable children to move around safely from one area to another. There is ample space for them to easily and safely access the play equipment, which is stored at a low-level in boxes and on tables. The children are confident to choose and help themselves to their favourite toys, which helps them to develop their independence. Children are protected from harm as the staff regularly check the equipment for any damage or hazards. The outdoor play area has been made safe by the addition of the soft flooring which protects children from injuries.

Children's welfare is promoted as the staff recognise their responsibilities to protect young children from harm. They have a good understanding of potential signs of abuse and neglect, also of who they are to contact to report any child protection concerns. They have undertaken recent safeguarding children training in order to keep updated on recent changes to the legislation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled, happy and enjoy their time at playgroup. They are excited and enthusiastic when they arrive at the setting and are greeted warmly by the staff. The children proudly show the staff what item they have brought from home for the 'show and tell' session later in the day. Children show an interest in what they do in the setting. They particularly enjoy the play dough and the drawing resources. The children also enjoy outdoor play, where they enjoy climbing on the castle. Children begin to distinguish between right and wrong because the staff teach them to take turns when playing on the castle. The children learn good manners and respect for others because the staff act as positive role models. For example, two children want to read the same book, so one child offers it to the other and they take turns.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress as the staff have developed a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They plan an interesting curriculum which covers all aspects of children's learning. Staff gain some idea from parents about their children's attainment on entry, however, there is currently no system for gathering and recording this information. Planning, assessment, observation and recording in relation to the early years goals and stepping stones are well recorded. Children's individual learning needs are known, which means that the staff have clear plans to enable individual children to move on to the next step in their learning. Staff set reasonable expectations of what the children can achieve, however, the planning does not differentiate between the children sufficiently so some of the more able children are not receiving sufficient challenge.

Children are developing good social skills and are making positive relationships with their peers and staff. They are interested and motivated to learn and are becoming confident to suggest ideas and speak in a familiar group. This is particularly evident during story time and 'show and tell' sessions. They confidently play in small groups and on their own if they choose. Children are developing good self-care skills as they put on their coats before going outside.

Children develop good speaking and listening skills as staff regularly engage them in conversations. They enjoy 'show and tell' time when they bring an object from home and tell their friends about it. They are beginning to develop skills in linking sounds to letters and naming and sounding letters of the alphabet. Children are encouraged to select books from the choice of books and are learning to handle them carefully and turn the pages in the correct order. The children are actively encouraged to read by taking their chosen books home with them to read with their parents. Children have plenty of opportunities to develop their writing skills as they attempt writing for a variety of purposes using different forms. For example, children enjoy writing their names and some are able to recognise other children's names.

Children have opportunities to count in everyday activities, such as when lining up by the door to go out to play. They are learning to recognise numerals, shapes and sizes through activities planned for them. Children have access to computers and are able to develop good skills in

mouse control and general computer skills. They also have access to programmable toys, such as robotic bees, which helps them to learn about positional language and counting. They are able to learn about living creatures, such as the owl that comes to visit them. Children have opportunities to express themselves creatively in various different ways, for example, through music and also experimenting with different coloured crayons and pencils.

Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals given their capacity and starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Positive behaviour is constantly encouraged by the staff by use of praise and encouragement. With support and guidance children are happy to share, take turns during their play, learn to play cooperatively and develop skills in negotiations. These positive approaches foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are welcome in the setting and there is a good support system set up. Staff have attended appropriate training courses to support children with difficulties and work very closely with parents and other agencies in order to fully support the children's needs.

Children make a positive contribution and learn about their community as the staff take them on outings to the nearby park and candle factory. The children also enjoy meeting the local firemen and police officers and learn about fire safety and stranger danger. Children are encouraged to develop positive attitudes about a diverse society through the activities provided by the staff. They celebrate festivals such as Chinese New Year and Diwali by undertaking craft activities. There are some multicultural resources such as books and dolls available, and a few visual images in the setting to support the children's learning about the wider world.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the positive relationship the staff have with the parents. They are given good information about the curriculum planning and become involved in their children's learning by bringing items in for certain activities, such as 'show and tell' sessions. Staff communicate with parents on a regular basis about the children's welfare, care and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the care is good because staff are well qualified and attend a wide range of training courses to enable them to keep up to date with current childcare practices. The staff group are extremely committed to working with children and devote considerable time and effort to ensuring that they deliver good quality care and education to the children. A rigorous procedure is in place in relation to the recruitment of staff. This means that staff employed in this setting are suitable to meet the needs of children.

Children are relaxed and confident in the environment due to the good organisation of their care and learning. Children's play opportunities are good as the staff organise the premises very well, thus allowing children to move about easily from one activity to another. Documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is well organised. Staff are familiar with the policies and procedures and these are also shared with the parents.

Leadership and management is good. Children's educational needs are well met through the strong leadership and management of the supervisor who has a constructive partnership with the management committee. Staff have developed a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The staff have established links with the advisory workers who assist them in their teaching methods and systems for assessing children.

Children are provided with a varied educational programme. Staff meet regularly to evaluate and monitor the quality of teaching and learning. This means that the staff have an understanding of the setting's strengths and weaknesses. They experiment with different methods of recording children's progress and are very open to trying new ideas and methods.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection it was agreed that the loose fire extinguisher bracket in the school hall be secured and that an action plan be established to ensure that the children are kept safe whilst playing in the play ground. Both of these recommendations have been addressed, thus keeping children safe and secure in the setting. It was also agreed that the contents of the first aid box be checked frequently and replaced as necessary. This has also been undertaken, thus ensuring that staff are adequately equipped when dealing with accidents. It was also agreed that the complaints policy be reviewed and the policies and procedures be available to parents. These recommendations have been implemented, which improves the sharing of information between staff and parents.

It was agreed that children would have access to musical instruments. This has been addressed and therefore they have opportunities to be creative.

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 records 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 that all entries in the accident book are counter signed by parents and set up a system for recording the administration of medication.

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):

- develop the system for obtaining information from parents about children's abilities on entry
- review the planning and assessment system to ensure that individual children's learning needs are met and that children are sufficiently challenged to extend their learning.

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