



Esklets Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	400319
Inspection date	01 November 2005
Inspector	Linda Cook
Setting Address	Station Yard, Danby, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO21 2JF
Telephone number	01287 660173
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Registered person	Esklets Playgroup Committee
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?

Esklets Playgroup is a voluntary, committee-run pre-school provision situated in the village of Danby near Whitby. It serves the immediate locality and the surrounding villages, including Castleton, Lealholme, Fryup, Commondale and Westerdale. The group operates in purpose built accommodation on station property owned by the railway company. Opening hours are from 09.15 am to 11.45 am Monday to Friday, term time only. There is also a toddler group on the same premises, this runs on

Thursday afternoons from 13.00 to 15.00.

The group provides funded nursery education places for those children of eligible age. For this they have the regular support of the local authority. Of the 31 children currently on roll, there are 16 who have funded places. The setting welcomes children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language, but there are none attending at present.

There are four members of staff employed, the person in charge holds a relevant childcare qualification with another two working towards a qualification. 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.

The children are cared for in a warm clean environment where they learn about good hygiene practices. They learn to wash their hands before eating, after attending to personal care needs and after taking part in messy activities such as painting or playing outdoors.

Children develop a very positive attitude to being active in the outdoors; they benefit greatly from having daily access to the enclosed outdoor area and play barn for physical play and they enjoy the wide range of outdoor activities. They develop good physical skills and are particularly skilful in manoeuvring wheeled vehicles around a marked track and obstacle course.

The children learn to make healthy choices in their diet. They enjoy the excellent range of good quality snacks provided choosing from a wide variety of fresh fruit and cheese each day. They are provided with a choice of drinks at snack time and confidently ask for extra drinks to cool down after playing outside.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are able to play freely in an environment where risks are identified and minimised. For example, the children choose freely from good quality play equipment which meets safety standards and is age appropriate. Door security is very good as the children arrive and depart or access the outdoor area. There is an emergency evacuation procedure which is displayed and children practise on a regular basis. Their understanding is further increased when they make a visit to the local fire station.

Children begin to learn how to keep themselves safe as staff remind them to take care when moving at speed and manoeuvring ride-on toys. They learn about road safety when on outings and can practise using the miniature set of traffic lights and

pedestrian crossing in the outdoor play area.

Children are well protected by the staffs' sound knowledge of child protection issues. Key staff and the named person on the committee have recently attended child protection training and relevant information is kept on file.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children settle very well at playgroup due to effective implementation of the settling-in policy and the clear focus on this by the caring staff. They come into the playgroup confidently, relate very well to the adults and enjoy the friendship with each other. They develop their independence to a good level. The children learn to operate independently in the environment, the youngest children choosing where to play or which materials to use for their art work. The children capably help to prepare the snacks; older children put on their coats to play outdoors and independently attend to their personal care needs. Younger children are well supported by staff.

All children spend their time purposefully. They enjoy a wide range of activities covering all areas of learning which enables them to successfully build on what they know and can do and make progress in all areas of their development.

Nursery Education

Teaching and learning is good. The staff's clear knowledge of the early learning goals and how children learn enables the children to access the whole curriculum at their chosen play.

Key staff engage fully with the children throughout the session, instinctively using conversational questioning techniques effectively to support and extend the children's learning. The current detailed plans of activities show clearly that the whole curriculum is covered over the children's time at the setting; they depict the intended learning and activities are effectively adapted to ensure children of all ages and ability are included.

The staff use the available space very well. They display posters and children's work effectively to provide an interesting and stimulating learning environment; they accommodate early learning and self help skills in a child friendly setting. The daily routines are very effective in developing the children's independence.

The children are confident and motivated learners. They sit and concentrate at their chosen activities for prolonged periods and exuberantly take part in all of the activities, those children who find this difficult are sensitively supported. The children speak increasingly well as staff offer them additional vocabulary to talk about their play or to describe their favourite toys. They enjoy books, use them very well and begin to understand about print carrying meaning. They all begin to recognise their names in print as part of arrangements for registration; older children confidently label their own work and younger children show emergent writing skills.

The children develop a good understanding of number. The staff develop strategies to help the children to begin to recognise familiar numbers in the environment. For example, in the labelling of activities with the number of children and corresponding symbols displayed. They count increasingly well with older children confidently counting to ten and beyond. All children demonstrate a developing understanding of simple mathematical language to talk about size and position when they take part in group activities; stretching up tall like a Giraffe, curling into a small ball and passing bean bags under their leg and over their shoulder. However, children do not have sufficient opportunities in the every day routines to complete simple problem solving tasks and therefore are not as confident in their understanding of more and less.

The children have strong exploratory senses. They investigate all the activities and some show great curiosity as they play in the sand and water trays. They learn a great deal about their environment by gardening in tubs, enjoy a wide variety of trips to places of interest and the planned topics such as celebrating Harvest.

The children develop very good manipulative skills, carefully using tools for the play dough and craft activities. The older children show considerable strength and dexterity as they use screw drivers for construction and chop fruit at snack time. They have fun increasing their gross motor skills balancing, climbing and manoeuvring on the varied outdoor play equipment.

The children get a great deal of pleasure from their free painting both indoors and outdoors and express themselves with increasing confidence. There is a wide range of craft materials and children spend considerable time achieving a desired effect. They experiment by mixing paints and adding glitter to glue and dough. The children enjoy a wide range of different music and they joyfully join in with an increasing range of well known children's songs and action rhymes. They particularly enjoyed the visit of a local musician and have free access to a wide range of musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children are very relaxed, extremely confident and behave very well, they respond well to the clear guidance and praise provided constantly by staff. The more able children share and take turns with the minimum of support. The older children play co-operatively and imaginatively together. This is due to the firm emphasis placed on this aspect of their care and the pleasant, yet very industrious atmosphere created by the adults.

The children are valued as individuals. The staff use their exceptionally good knowledge about children's individual needs, their interests and their families effectively to help them to feel settled. Children demonstrate their acceptance and interest in the diverse nature of British culture. They particularly enjoy regular trips to places of interest in their local community. They mark festivals such as Harvest time and enjoy the added interest visitors bring to the setting.

Smooth transition is promoted due to the positive links with the local school. The children talk excitedly about their next step in life and are looking forward to joining

local school children for a Christmas activities day at Castleton village hall. As a result the children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good and relationships are extremely positive. The introduction and settling-in process works very well in practice. This means that the young children develop very comfortable three-way relationships with the staff and their parents. The parents receive good detailed information about the running of the provision and how they can help their children to settle in. They are kept well informed about their child's progress towards the early learning goals and the planned activities. Parents are particularly pleased with the caring attitude of the staff and the wide range of activities their children enjoy.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children benefit from a continually developing environment and increasingly knowledgeable staff team. The staff have a positive approach to their professional development. The person in charge is a qualified and experienced child carer and two members of staff are working towards a recognised childcare qualification. They regularly attend short courses to further develop their knowledge and effective practice.

The children are confident in the environment. The staff ensure the space is organised effectively to support children in developing their independence and enjoy learning in a stimulating and interesting environment. This is particularly evident in the outdoor area where children are motivated by a wealth of activities which are stimulating and fun. The well organised documentation and careful attention to record keeping help to ensure children's safety and welfare. However following the revision of the National Standards a system for the logging of complaints needs to be introduced and the existing recruitment procedures extended to ensure they are rigorous and robust.

The leadership and management of the provision is good. There is no formal self assessment system in place for monitoring the quality of care and educational provision. However, key staff work well with the local authority and have arranged to meet with the development worker to start to develop a system. Overall the provision meets the needs of all the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to continue to follow their own development plan to meet the requirements for staff qualifications and to extend the child protection policy to include the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member.

Two members of staff have undertaken training and hope to gain their level 2 qualification by the end of this year.

A named person from the committee has taken responsibility for child protection issues and they and two staff members have completed a child protection training course last month. The child protection policy is now in the process of being reviewed following the additional knowledge gained on the training.

Complaints since the last inspection

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.

There are no complaints to report on.

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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 a system is introduced for the logging of complaints and the staff recruitment and vetting procedures are extended to meet the requirements of the revised National Standards.

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 increased opportunities for children to extend their understanding of more and less and simple problem solving in fun and practical ways, incorporated in daily routines.

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