

Farington Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY356802
Inspection date	29 April 2008
Inspector	Anna Barnes
Setting Address	Farington Cp School, Rose Street, Farington, LEYLAND, PR25 4GH
Telephone number	01772 497 769
E-mail	
Registered person	Farington Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Farington Playgroup has been registered since 2007, after moving to this location from a previous address occupied since 1978. It is situated in the Leyland area of Lancashire. The main areas used by the club are; the playgroup room, information technology room, school hall, creative centre, and the middle outdoor courtyard. It is managed by a voluntary management committee.

A maximum of 30 children aged from two to five years may attend the playgroup at any on time.

There are currently 70 children on roll, of whom 50 are in receipt of funding for nursery education.

The playgroup is open Monday to Friday from 9.15 until 15.00. Children attend a variety of sessions.

The playgroup employs 15 staff. Eight of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three member of staff are currently working towards a National

Vocational Qualification child care qualification. The playgroup receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The group is also a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a good understanding of simple health and hygiene practices and are learning to take responsibility for their own self-care routines. For example, they use the toilet independently and wash their hands using the easily accessible soap and paper towels provided. Children are very well protected from infection because the sick child policy is widely available and well adhered to. Staff are trained in first aid, which further supports children's health and safety. There is a first aid kit available in case of accidents and emergencies.

Children are very well nourished and enjoy a variety of healthy meals and snacks each day. For example, bread sticks, fresh fruit salad, raisins, carrots and noodles. There is a jug of water and cups are accessible on a low level table for the children to pour their own drinks as well as the water dispenser. This helps them to develop their independence skills and hand-eye coordination. The children's understanding of healthy eating is extended as they participate and learn about growing plants and vegetables by growing onions, cabbage, carrots and cress that they have introduced into their egg sandwiches. Staff provide interesting information for parents regarding healthy foods that they can include in their children's lunch boxes, together with the snacks and lunch menu provided. They also benefit from visits from the school nurse who talks to them about being healthy and brushing their teeth.

Children take part in regular physical activity both indoors and outdoors. There is a great emphasis upon the importance of children receiving regular fresh air and exercise. They travel around the playground, skilfully pedalling their bicycles forwards and backwards. They demonstrate a good sense of space as they are able to manoeuvre around objects and each other. Children move with confidence and coordination as they push their prams and avoid obstacles, balancing on large rubber tyres and confidently jumping off. The range of outdoor play equipment available to children is currently insufficient in relation to large apparatus that is challenging so children can learn new skills. Indoors, children revel in a favourite activity of construction as they carefully create aeroplanes out of construction toys. Their fine motor skills are developing as they make shapes with the play dough by rolling, cutting and patting the malleable material.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The playgroup is welcoming to children with colourful displays on all the walls within the room which includes a good variety of children's art work that positively supports their sense of belonging. The room is creatively arranged to allow the children to move spontaneously and independently around all areas of play and learning. Children are accessing a broad range of resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development and actively support their learning. Resources are well arranged to enable children to make spontaneous decisions about the toys and resources they are going to use.

Safety is given high priority. For example, staff ensure that they supervise children's arrival and departure extremely carefully and ensure that the gate and doors are always securely closed. They also closely monitor visitors to the playgroup.

The staff ensure that regular risk assessments are carried out daily to address all areas of potential concern that may impact on children's continued safety and well-being. Children learn about keeping themselves safe by staff reminding the children to help to tidy up the toys and reinforcing the need for them walk rather than run indoors as they could fall and hurt themselves. Fire safety is also taught through regular emergency evacuation practises. The children benefit from visits from the local fire department in order to enhance their understanding of the dangers and how to keep safe.

Children are very well protected because staff fully understand their important role in protecting them from abuse and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice if needed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery and arrive happy and eager to participate. Planning for children under three is linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework and is clearly evaluated. Relationships between staff and children are good which contributes to children's well-being. The effective key worker system ensures children are cared for by familiar adults who support and encourage them. As a result they are aware of and meet children's needs effectively. For example, they know when the children are tired or need an alternative activity, as staff respond appropriately. There are systems in place to identify the needs of the children under three and staff have devised a clear system through observations that enables them to cover areas of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and what they need to work on with the children next.

Children under three acquire new skills as they join in interesting activities. They enjoy examining and exploring a wide range of materials, such as the sensory basket, paint, sand, water and collage materials. Children enjoy dancing and singing to action songs, 'five monkeys on the bed and dingle dangle scarecrow'. They sit quietly and look at books exploring the illustrations as they confidently turn the pages. Photographs in the children's files highlight their involvement in a variety of activities. The free play sessions encourage them to continually make many choices in their play. Young children sit at the table and persevere with the jigsaws. They skilfully manipulate the pieces into place demonstrating their developing hand and eye coordination. The children are delighted with their success and relish the praise from staff on its completion.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress as the staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage. This is very evident in their planning, assessments and evaluations of children's progress that link very well to the stepping stones. This information is used effectively to aid future planning for individual children, and ensures that appropriate challenges are set so that all children make good progress. Staff use questioning appropriately, which extends the children's learning. Children are fully able to engage themselves in activities of their own choosing for extended periods of time. They are able to self select many resources as there are clearly labelled drawers with word and pictorial symbols.

Children are able to concentrate and actively listen to others; they respond appropriately with questions and make relevant comments during a discussion with staff about their pets. They

are developing their language for thinking as they join in discussions and frequently converse animatedly using old mobile telephones. Children are able to easily recognise the initial sounds in many words, including their names and their peers' names. They regularly have opportunities to use writing as a means of recording as they freely access a full range of mark-making resources, such as paper, pencils, crayons, paints, stencils and rulers. Children frequently choose to sit in the reading corner with their peers and staff and enjoy looking at the wide range of books available to them.

Children have numerous opportunities for counting and problem solving as they enthusiastically take part in a counting game led by a member of staff relating to a graph of the children's pets. The children demonstrate good progress in their mathematical development as they count confidently during story time, singing and when using the computer. Staff use many opportunities to encourage children to count and calculate. They also engage in matching and sorting games and jigsaws, all of which provide good opportunities for them to extend their mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problems.

As children explore and experiment with different mediums, such as sand, water and play dough, they learn about flow, weight and capacity. They regularly construct with a purpose, using a variety of easily accessible resources, making aeroplanes. Children enjoy plenty of opportunities to develop their computer skills and they demonstrate good mouse control and keyboard skills. Children enjoy participating in role play and dressing up in different costumes. Their imaginative development is extended due to the availability of props and the skilful participation from staff, for example, the children attended the role play hospital for a health check and staff explained about the rhythm of the heart and how this can be heard through the stethoscope. One child confidently used the pen and pad to write out a prescription, making marks and forming letters. She confirmed her understanding further by explaining that you go to the chemist to collect the prescription.

Overall, children are making good progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have an understanding of diversity through a good range of resources, including small world toys, dressing up clothes, books and jigsaws, which reflect culture and disability. They develop awareness of the wider world through planned activities that are linked to customs and cultures, for example, celebrating Chinese New Year, Divali, Halloween, Easter and Christmas. Staff extend the experience for children by providing a variety of related books, dolls, utensils and play food. There are systems in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities and the designated member of staff is aware of the importance of working closely with parents and other agencies to support children's individual needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The staff act as good role models. They are calm and gentle in their own approach, addressing each other politely and respectfully. Behaviour issues are managed using suitable strategies that are in line with the written behaviour management policy, using appropriate explanations at a level children understand which creates an environment that encourages children to behave well. They are regularly praised and encouraged by staff and this makes them feel good about themselves and improves children's behaviour overall.

Children are cared for by staff who work very closely and successfully with parents to meet their individual needs. Relationships are warm and friendly, and verbal communication is clearly very good as informal conversations about children's care take place as parents drop off and collect their children. A complaints policy is in place including a system for recording any complaints if necessary.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents have access to their children's assessment records and discuss their children's progress with the staff on a regular basis. Parents receive sufficient information about the educational curriculum via the display boards, newsletters, parents evenings, policies and procedures. Parents spoke positively about the playgroup, the home links scheme and that they felt staff are approachable and easy to talk to should they require advice. Parents are also encouraged to visit and are offered a gradual introduction for their child to assist the settling-in process. Parents can provide information in the 'All about me' booklet to assist staff in identifying children's starting points.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children's care is good due to the thorough organisation of the playgroup by experienced and qualified staff. The staff group work very well as a team and provide good consistency for the children. Staff demonstrate a commitment to continual development and they regularly attend relevant training courses and workshops to support them in their work. Children are relaxed and confident in their environment due to the effective 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 with ease. Rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to determine the suitability of staff members to safeguard the children attending the playgroup. Documentation which contributes to children's safety and well-being is in good order and stored confidentially in lockable filing cabinets. However, some of the children's dietary information is displayed on the wall and therefore not maintained confidentially.

The leadership and management are good. Children's educational needs are very well met through the positive leadership and management of the manager and assistant manager. Staff have attended relevant courses and have a secure understanding and knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The manager and the staff regularly evaluate the delivery of the curriculum through discussion, evaluating parental questionnaires and activities undertaken by the children, in order to have continual improvement. An effective level of ongoing support provided by the local authority education advisors also positively supports children's learning.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

This is not applicable as it is the first inspection since registration in the new premises.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- maintain the confidentiality of children's information relating to dietary needs displayed on the wall.

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 range of outdoor equipment ensuring it is sufficiently challenging to enable children to learn new skills.

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