



Corvedale Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224080
Inspection date	02 May 2006
Inspector	Janette Elizabeth Owen
Setting Address	The Old School House, Diddlebury, CRAVEN ARMS, Shropshire, SY7 9DH
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Registered person	Martine Lisa Carol Wynne
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 satisfactory. 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?

Corvedale Playgroup opened in 1974. It operates in the Old School House which is adjacent to the local primary school in Diddlebury, South Shropshire. There are three activity rooms available and the group have use of the school hall and computer suite. A maximum of 17 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each weekday between 09.00 and 15.00 during school term time. There is an enclosed garden area available for outdoor play. The setting serves the local and

outlying rural areas. There are strong links with the local parent and toddler group.

There are currently 19 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these 9 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs and children with English as an additional language.

The setting employs four staff and one student on permanent placement. Three members of staff have recognised early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification level three. The setting receives support from the local authority. The setting is a member of the Preschool Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is adequately promoted because the staff take reasonable steps to promote children's good health, and encourage them to begin to take responsibility for their own health and hygiene as they learn to wash their own hands and use the toilets independently. However, arrangements for children to wash their hands before snacks and procedures for preparing food are not effective in minimising the risk of cross infection to children. Accident and medication procedures are satisfactorily maintained; ensuring children's health and welfare is protected.

Children are appropriately nourished and have good opportunities to learn about healthy eating because they are provided with regular drinks and food that are nutritious and complies with their dietary and religious needs. The staff help children to learn about healthy living through a very good range of activities that develop the children's understanding of what foods are good for them such as growing vegetables which are used in cooking activities and food tasting.

Children are encouraged to be active and are becoming increasingly independent, acquiring control over their bodies and developing new physical skills. Very good use is made of the outside area to enable the children to participate in a very wide range of activities. Children can use wheeled toys such as cars and tractors well, pedalling confidently. They are developing their dexterity and control over their movements as they participate in practical activities such as planting seeds and water experiments. Activities are planned into the curriculum to ensure children participate in a varied range of physical activities which help them develop all their muscles and develop control and co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally safe and well cared for in premises that are suitable for their purpose because appropriate facilities are provided for children and they have

access to a good range of resources which meet their developmental needs. Children always use a wide range of equipment and participate in activities which are suitable and safe and used effectively to support the children's learning. Children able to access activities with ease, helping them to develop their independence and ability to make choices. The outside play and learning environment is particularly well organised and resourced, providing good opportunities for children's learning.

Children's safety is promoted because the registered person takes reasonable steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings. The supervision of children is good. Although risk assessments are carried out they have not been effectively used to rectify potential risks to children particularly in relation to security of the provision. Children are learning to keep themselves safe because the setting encourages the children to begin to understand about safety issues both within the setting and outside. Staff explain simply to children the consequences of their actions and safe ways of doing things. Children's welfare is adequately protected because staff have a sound understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for and are provided with wide and varied learning experiences. There is a strong emphasis on children learning through play which enables the children to develop their confidence and independence well. Children respond well to the staff who demonstrate a good understanding of children's individual needs, the effective interaction with staff extends children's learning and social skills. Children are provided with exciting and interesting activities, many of which are very practical, these are used effectively to capture children's interest and promote their development and learning. Staff use 'Birth to three matters' and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage to provide suitable learning experiences for all the children.

Nursery Education.

The quality of the teaching and learning is good.

The staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and a very good understanding of how children learn. They know the ability of the children well and build upon this knowledge to ensure all children are provided with appropriate learning experiences and sufficient challenges to enable them to make good progress. The curriculum is planned to include all areas of learning and specific areas of development are identified for individual children including those with special educational needs. Children are provided with sufficient challenges because staff encourage children to extend ideas and activities to meet their own needs. Staff are skilled at knowing when to intervene to enable the child to further develop an idea or concept. Teaching methods are good. There is a good relationship between children and staff. Children are confident in asking for help when needed, they receive a good level of praise and encouragement. Varied methods are used to enable the children to grasp new ideas; many practical activities are reinforced through more structured

activities to ensure children understand. Staff use questions effectively to explain ideas or to provide challenging questions for the children. The learning environment reflects both the community in which the children live, with good opportunities for the family to be involved in the children's learning and for children to learn about the wider world. Good use is made of visitors and visits to enable children to get a wider perspective of the world around them.

Children's behaviour is managed well because positive strategies are used to involve children effectively in the setting. They are able to participate by providing ideas for activities and in helping with daily tasks within the setting. Staff encourage good behaviour by being good role models. Resources are used effectively to support the children's learning. Staff interact well with the children providing good support to enable the children to make progress and toys and equipment are used effectively to support the teaching and children's learning. Assessments are carried out regularly to identify the progress children are making towards the early learning goals. An initial assessment enables staff to plan the curriculum to meet the children's needs and ongoing assessments ensure that progress is being made. Staff share information on the children's progress with parents and provide information for the school they transfer to. There are good links with the local school.

Children have very good opportunities to develop personally, socially and emotionally because they are well supported and given high levels of encouragement by staff. They are well motivated to learn because they are actively involved in the learning process. They are involved in the planning of activities and are able to make choices about how they use activities to meet their own learning needs. Children are able to extend activities as they explore and investigate for themselves. They are developing their self confidence and independence as they initiate their own play and begin to develop relationships with the staff and other children. The children are happy and helpful; they are beginning to learn that their actions have consequences because the staff talk to the children about good behaviour and being safe.

Children's language and communication skills are developing well because staff use effective strategies to support the children in listening and understanding. Good teaching methods are used to enable the children to begin to learn letter sounds and to enjoy books and stories but these methods must be used consistently to help children develop a clear understanding of phonics. Opportunities for children to develop their fine motor skills in preparation for writing are good. They participate in activities which help them to develop their co-ordination and dexterity such as making patterns in sand and foam and they have ample opportunities to use writing and painting materials.

Children's understanding of numbers and mathematical concepts has been improved, providing more opportunities for children to use mathematical language in activities. They are developing their understanding of numbers for counting and as labels as they count, match and compare numbers of object. They can recognise shapes in everyday situations and use scales to weigh and to measure. Positional language is introduced effectively to the children as they play with small world toys, take part in planting seeds and during sand and water play.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is fostered through many

practical activities such as experimenting with water and natural materials, through visitors to the setting who share their experiences with the children and by allowing children to be actively involved in deciding what they want to do. Children are encouraged to extend activities to meet their own exploratory needs and to use their natural curiosity to find out how things work. They learn how plants and animals live by observing living creatures and by planting seeds and vegetables which they use in cooking activities. Children's confidence and self-esteem is very well promoted through circle time and song sessions. Children confidently stand up to sing favourite songs and rhymes unaccompanied, they show pleasure in their achievements and receive praise for their efforts. Staff value children's contributions to the group and listen well to what children have to tell them, this enables children to be confident and self-assured.

Children are imaginative and creative. They make good use of the outside play area which is imaginatively set out and well resourced offering very good opportunities for children to be engaged in activities which stimulate their imagination as they play in the boat shaped play house and paint water pictures on the floor. The children have a good understanding of colour and how to mix colours together, they produce individual pieces of art work showing their creativity, imagination and ability to use paints and drawing materials well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing good relationships with staff and other children in a setting where staff work very well with parents and carers to meet individual children's needs and ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. Children with special educational needs receive a good level of support because there are effective systems in place which enable staff to implement individual learning plans for the children and to work in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure each child is able to make good developmental progress. Children are able to develop their sense of belonging as they work harmoniously with others and make choices and decisions. These all contribute to the children developing good self-esteem and respect for others. Children are developing a good awareness of the wider society because they have access to toys and resources which reflect positive images and opportunities to learn about the wider world through visitors to the setting and the celebration of festival. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children respond very well to the approach used by staff for managing behaviour. They are developing positive attitudes which are promoted through the very good interaction with staff who are very good role models, demonstrating respect and consideration for the children and each other. Children are beginning to develop their understanding of responsible behaviour because staff involve children in talking about good behaviour and how to be kind and considerate of others. This positive approach helps children to develop their self-esteem and confidence.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the strong

community focus of the group because the staff work very well with parents, making them welcome and inviting them to be part of the group. This helps children to settle well and be happy. Parents are able to make informed decisions about their child's care and education because they are provided with information on the provision and regular newsletters keep them informed of the learning focus each term. They have opportunities to discuss their child's needs with staff and a daily diary provides written information on their child's developmental progress. A questionnaire is regularly carried out with parents and any ideas and suggestions considered. However, children's welfare is not fully considered because procedures for managing written complaints are not made clear to parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the provision ensures that children are generally well cared for because there are well qualified and suitable staff to meet the needs of all the children for whom the setting cares for. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of child development and training is regularly accessed to ensure staff are able to keep up to date with information and a quality assurance award is currently being undertaken. The staff work well together as a team and are flexible in their roles enabling children to receive a good level of individual care. Written policies and procedures are available to support staff but are not always used effectively to ensure the safety and well-being of the children.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. However, children's safety and welfare is not effectively protected because there are some omissions regarding regulatory requirements. There is no effective procedure for keeping Ofsted informed of significant changes to the organisation and management of the provision, for ensuring all checks on persons involved in the management of the provision are carried out efficiently and for registering the attendance of children and staff effectively. There is a strong committee made up of parents which supports the setting in practical ways. The manager has the main responsibility for the daily organisation and the provision of the early years education. The committee is aware of its roles and responsibilities and are beginning to develop these roles to further support the staff and assist in the effective management of the provision. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection several issues were raised relating to the care of the children and the provision of nursery education. Good progress has been made in addressing all the issues raised. In relation to the children's care, hygiene procedures have been improved because staff use gloves and aprons when changing nappies therefore reducing any risk of cross infection. Staff are now fully informed of children's individual details because religious information is also included on admission forms.

The provision for children's education has been improved because staff effectively

extend activities in mathematics and communication, language and literacy in order to offer sufficient challenges for more able children. Specific learning objectives are identified and staff are able to tailor activities to meet these areas of learning. Children regularly use the concept of calculation in daily activities and are beginning to develop a sound understanding of more than and less than. Children are making good progress in their use of language and understanding of letter sounds. A system of phonics has been introduced and used regularly with the children. Staff interact well with the children to ensure they are listening and able to understand the letters used. There are good strategies used to enable the children to develop their independence, they help to set up and serve snack, and to make independent choices about what activities they participate in, even being involved in the planning of activities. Older children are given more independence in meeting their own self-care needs and are able to access the toilet facilities independently. Bright posters and labelled displays enable the children to see the written word, text and numbers, enabling them to further develop their understanding of words and numbers.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted 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.

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On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. 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):

- improve arrangements for children's hand washing and procedures for food preparation to ensure any risk of cross infection to children are minimised
- improve risk assessments to ensure potential risks are identified and addressed
- keep a record of complaints relating to the national standards and any action taken

- review and improve procedures for informing Ofsted of significant changes
- implement a system for registering children and staff attendance on a daily basis, showing hours of attendance.

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):

- ensure a consistent approach is used to introduce children to letter sounds.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk