



Holyrood Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142951
Inspection date	28 June 2006
Inspector	Michelle Tuck

Setting Address	Zembard Lane, Chard, Somerset, TA20 1JL
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Telephone number	07980 032187
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Registered person	Holyrood Playgroup
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Sessional care
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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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Holyrood Playgroup operates from a modular building within its own grounds and centrally located in the town of Chard. The group has a securely fenced outdoor play area, which is equipped with a variety of physical play equipment, directly to the front of the building. The playgroup was established in 1980, but has been in its present location for six years.

There are 24 children currently on roll, of which 20 are in receipt of Government

funding for nursery education. The group offers support to children with special educational needs, and their families. There are no children attending who have English as an additional language. The group are registered to accommodate up to 24 children aged from two to five years.

Sessions run daily from 09:00 until 12:00 and on two afternoons from 13:00 to 15:30 for the Happy Hands group, which is specifically aimed at the younger children.

The group is managed by an elected committee of parents. There are four members of staff that work with the children. The supervisor holds an NVQ level 3, the deputy has a relevant child care qualification and is about to complete an NVQ level 3. The two assistants both hold an early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health and wellbeing is effectively promoted and given high priority by all staff. Children show an excellent understanding of how to keep themselves healthy. For example, they know the importance of hand washing and independently wash their hands after messy activities and toileting. Children enthusiastically respond to requests to prepare for snack time by using the toilet and washing their hands. They learn from staff's good role-modelling through routine procedures; such as, tables being cleaned with anti-bacterial spray. Excellent procedures are in place to help prevent the spread of infection. For example, children do not wear their outdoor shoes inside, and for each different cleaning task staff use a different colour cloth.

Children's dietary requirements are met effectively through discussions with parents. This is underpinned by excellent organisation and documentation and staff demonstrate very good knowledge and practice. Snack menu's show a commitment to healthy and nutritious foods. Children have excellent opportunities to take part in activities which promote healthy eating, for example, children develop new skills by preparing vegetables and make them into soup. Children have good knowledge about which foods are good and bad for them. Through discussions they know that it is important to exercise and take regular drinks of water to help maintain their good health. Children know when they are thirsty and independently access drinking water from a jug and use separate cups to drink from. Water is also taken outside for children to access when playing in the outside area.

Medication and accident records are clear and correctly countersigned by parents which promotes children's good health.

Children develop a positive attitude towards physical exercise and enjoy daily outside play opportunities all year round. Children practice and master fine and gross motor control skills by means of regular access to an extensive range of very good resources.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are safe within the setting as staff are extremely vigilant and have identified and minimised risks. Staff complete written risk assessments and carry out regular checks daily to ensure the continued safety of the children. For example a member of staff ensures the chain is on the gate before the children play outside. Children are counted as they go to play outside and counted as they return inside.

Children learn about safety through regular discussions. They know why they should walk and not run inside, they move around freely and safely negotiating pathways well. Children learn about fire safety through regular fire drills. They are very well supervised due to excellent staff deployment which keeps children safe inside and outside. For example, activities are well supported to ensure children are safe whilst they explore through play. Staff are positioned so they can also monitor the bathroom area, and also have a clear view of the classroom. Children understand they are not allowed into the kitchen or store room and as they are so engrossed in their play they do not wander. Children independently access an extensive range of toys and resources which are safely displayed around the room. For example, craft materials are clearly labelled in a mobile drawer unit which is positioned next to the creative area.

Children's welfare is paramount and they are well safeguarded as staff are knowledgeable about child protection issues and know where to seek advice if concerned.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the playgroup and show they are comfortable and familiar with routines and all staff members. They achieve very well because staff are skilled at understanding individual needs and meet them exceptionally well. Staff are highly skilled and use their excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage, to provide high quality care and education, through meaningful and well planned learning opportunities. The two-year-olds are gently introduced to the group, with the provision of sessions of their own with less children attending. Staff are skilled at introducing learning through play with differing levels of expectation, dependant on individual children's understanding and ability. Daily planning incorporates basic provision such as sand, water, painting, role-play and games, as well as specific activities all linking to themes and each of the six areas of learning. Children blossom in all areas of development due to the exceptional way staff engage with them, encourage independence and value their individuality.

Nursery Education.

The quality of the teaching and learning is outstanding. The planned curriculum is comprehensive and all staff have very good knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals, each contributing their ideas. All planned activities have a

learning objective but staff are versatile to respond to spontaneous play. They assess and evaluate activities regularly, successfully offering activities that motivate and interest the children. For example, children went to visit a local bakery where they used their senses to touch, smell and kneed the dough. They also sugared doughnuts and had a snack of muffins. On returning to the playgroup the role play area was turned into a bakery where the children wore their hats they had received on their trip. This child focused approach leads children to excel in a rich learning environment, given a wealth of opportunities to learn and develop at their own pace.

Children achieve very well overall because there is a good emphasis on them establishing strengths in their personal, social, and emotional development. Children are warm and caring to one another, they are very polite and share and take turns well in large groups. Children are involved and active participants in all activities. They learn to value each other and to appreciate differences. Children learn about different beliefs, people and places through a variety of multi-cultural topics. For example at Chinese New Year the role play area becomes a Chinese take away. Children also have the opportunity to explore festivals such as Hanukkah the festival of light, taking part in interesting activities and discussions.

Children are confident and proficient in communicating their ideas and thoughts in language. They listen well, and use their imaginations to be creative, especially in the role play area. For example, children take on different roles within the 'hairdressers', they talk to one another, pretend to wash each others' hair and make appointments. Children are excellent at linking sounds and letters, they are particularly good with initial sounds. They recognise their own name and those of others. All children use marks to represent their own ideas and children who are able to, write their own name.

Children enjoy books and listening to stories. This is supported by the very good range of books on offer and their easy accessibility. Number skills are developed through an excellent variety of games and everyday opportunities for children to count. For example, children roll a die and either subtract or add apples onto their tree game board.

The range of topics are vast and change weekly, which results in the children's interest being maintained successfully. Use of the local environment and making activities practical stimulates the children's instinct to ask questions, to observe and find out. For example, the staff made different booths for each of our senses. Children were excited to go into each booth and explore with their senses what was inside. They put their hands inside a box and described what they felt, or described what they smelt, or tasted.

The range of adult led and child initiated play is well balanced. Staff deployment is very good and effective team work is clearly evident. The excellent use of time, resources and space creates a day which flows well and children are seen to be busily occupied and enjoying themselves.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are extremely well behaved as they understand the clear boundaries set by staff. Good behaviour is encouraged through positive role modelling provided by staff and consistent messages. Children are praised at every opportunity and their achievements are valued, which results in very proud children with high self esteem.

Children's individual needs are exceptionally well identified and met effectively. For example, through comprehensive assessments and recording each aspect of their learning is planned for to ensure they are supported and fully involved in every aspect of the provision. Although there are no children currently attending with special educational needs or English as an additional language the staff are extremely aware of how to identify, support and liaise with parents and professionals to meet the child's individual needs. Children explore different cultures and festivals through a vast range of activities. Resources promote positive images of diversity and children learn through meaningful discussions about their local community and that of the wider world. Boys and girls have equal opportunities in everything they do and staff are particularly proactive at supporting both genders in their chosen activities. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Children greatly benefit from an effective partnership between the play group and home. Children's activities and learning are shared with parents through the effective use of newsletters and notice boards, informal discussions and an opportunity once a term to meet with the supervisor to look at their child's folder. Information is given to and explained to parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum, and parents can access policies and procedures easily.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff work harmoniously together to provide a highly effective routine which impacts greatly on the children's happiness and their opportunity to play and learn in an effortless way. The successful organisation of the room is a credit to the staff's dedication to set the room out at the end of one session ready for the next. Good systems are in place to ensure toys are rotated and individual needs are met. Each activity is carefully linked to one of the six areas of learning. Detailed documentation and highly effective communication between staff ensures a wide range of appropriate resources are accessed by the children on a daily basis. Excellent staff deployment ensures the children are well cared for both inside and outside. Most aspects of the daily operation of the setting is very good, however at snack time children become restless and look for excuses to leave the table before it is time to do so.

The leadership and management is outstanding. The supervisor is extremely conscientious and always striving to improve the care and education for all children. There are very good systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision. Staff work very well as a team and individuals' strengths and training is given the highest priority to further enhance children's care and education. Documentation is clear and

professional. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group agreed to further develop staff's understanding and knowledge of the local Area Child Protection committee procedures. All staff have now completed a child protection course and are aware of the correct procedures to follow if concerned about a child.

At the last education inspection there were two key issues raised. The group were asked to increase opportunities for children to calculate number in everyday situations. Children have regular opportunities to count and calculate in specific activities and in everyday situations. They were also asked to increase opportunities for children to extend creative and writing activities for themselves. Children are very creative especially in the role play area where they also write for different purposes, such as making lists.

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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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):

- consider the organisation of snack time, to ensure children do not become restless and disruptive.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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