



Woodbank Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 307205

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Inspector Zoe Smith

Setting Address Woodbank Youth Centre, Turncroft Lane, Offerton, Stockport, Cheshire, SK1 4BN

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Registered person Deborah Hill

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?

Woodbank Playgroup has been registered since 1992. It is based in Woodbank Youth Centre in the Offerton district of Stockport. The group is open from 09.15 to 11.45 every weekday during school term times. They have sole use of the premises during hours of operation. Rooms used comprise of three children's activity and play rooms, kitchen and toilet facilities.

The group is registered to provide Sessional Day Care for a maximum of 30 children

aged between two to five years. Nursery education is provided for three and four-year-olds. There are currently 37 children on roll, of these 27 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group is able to support children with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group is privately owned, the registered person is also the manager, and holds a recognised childcare qualification. Nine members of staff are employed to assist in the care of the children, of these more than half hold a recognised childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy participating in a wide range of physical play activities that help them develop good control and coordination over their bodies. For example, they skilfully use scissors to cut out pictures and balance, catch and throw balls to each other. Children exert lots of energy as they enthusiastically ride bicycles, play chase and run round. This is providing them with plenty of fresh air and exercise and is helping them adopt a healthy lifestyle.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment. Effective hygiene practices and routines are implemented to protect children from becoming ill. Staff who have responsibility for food preparation are trained in and have up to date food hygiene certificates. They act as good role models by showing children how to wash their hands properly. Children wash their hands before preparing food, eating and after using the toilet. They are finding out about the importance of looking after their bodies. The dental nurse visits regularly to talk about dental health and to show them the correct way to clean their teeth.

The group has an effective healthy eating policy. All food is freshly prepared on the premises. Children take turns to help prepare snacks. They enjoy a varied and nutritious diet that includes a savoury snack, fresh raw vegetables and fruit. Dietary requirements are agreed with parents. Children's preferences are appropriately catered for and they receive drinks and food in sufficient quantities to meet their needs. Children participate in activities and discussions that positively reinforce the benefits of healthy eating. The health visitor comes to talk to them about looking after their bodies and they participate in lots of baking activities. Children enthusiastically decorate their pizza with cheese, peppers, tomatoes and mushrooms, and then take it home to cook and eat with their family.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a safe and well maintained environment. Adults assess potential risks and put effective procedures and practices in place to minimise them. A safety gate prevents children entering the kitchen, exposed plug sockets are kept

covered and the premises are kept secure. Thorough procedures are in place to keep children safe on outings. For example, high staff ratios are maintained and regular headcounts take place. Children learn about fire safety, they know and regularly practice the procedure for evacuation in an emergency. Children are enthralled when the fire service visits to discuss fire safety and prevention. They sit in the fire engine, watch the fire-fighters using the hose and learn never to play with matches.

Stories, discussions and activities help children learn about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe. The road safety officer and police visit to talk to the children about road safety and stranger danger and how to keep themselves safe. Children take it in turns to be the crossing patrol person and practice how to cross the road safely. They choose what to play with from a wide range of safe, good quality resources, which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. The safety and protection of children is of utmost importance to staff. They are appropriately deployed and diligently supervise children. Staffs knowledge of first aid practice is up to date and they have a clear understanding of child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children explore the wide variety of age appropriate activities, toys and equipment, which are designed to be enjoyable and stimulate their interest and development. Play and activities are planned using a thematic approach. Toys and equipment are rotated regularly to ensure the children's interest and enthusiasm is maintained. Positive adult and child interactions are supportive of early communication skills. Children love listening to stories, joining in action rhymes and singing songs. This is helping them to listen, respond to language and learn new words. Children have time to relax as well as to be active. All children spend their time purposefully. They particularly enjoy imaginative play where they actively use gestures and actions. Small groups of children become engrossed in their role play. They dress up in an array of different outfits and shoes, stomping round the room with suitcases as they rush to the airport to catch an aeroplane and jet off on holiday.

Children enjoy the challenge of completing jigsaw and inset puzzles. They carefully match and manipulate pieces into place, with a little help and lots of encouragement from staff. They love the sensory experience of being able to freely explore a range of different resources during planned messy activities. Children happily play with the dough, carefully rolling it out and using cutters to make cakes and putting them on plates for a tea party. They enthusiastically dig and sieve the sand, savouring the feel and texture of it as it flows through their fingers. However, messy and creative activities are mainly provided at set times and are not always readily available. This limits opportunities for children to independently choose to play with activities, such as sand, paint and water during some sessions. Staff knowledge of early year's guidance, such as the Birth to three matters framework is good. They use the framework to inform planning of activities for younger children to enable them to make progress in all areas of their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. There is an effective method of monitoring and recording observations of children's learning, achievements and progress. Children's learning is well supported and promoted because staff have a good knowledge of the early learning goals and stepping stones. If a child finds an adult led activity too simple, it is adapted to make it more interesting and challenging. Therefore, teaching builds on what children already know. Children benefit from one to one support from their key worker. Skilful questioning techniques encourage them to reflect, think and consolidate their learning. Plans reflect a varied, interesting and challenging programme of activities across all six areas of learning.

Children are happy in the friendly and relaxed environment. They have positive relations with staff, who talk to, listen to and are responsive to them. Attending to their own personal care, for example, putting on their own coat and changing their shoes for outdoor play is helping children to become increasingly independent. At snack time they take it in turns to give out plates and cups, pour out their own drink and help themselves to food. This is helping them to develop new self help skills.

Children's spoken language is developing well and they are becoming confident speakers. They initiate conversations, recall events, listen intently and respond to stories. When they show other children photographs of special events in their life, they confidently talk about what they were doing. Children have a good understanding that print carries meaning. They are beginning to develop early writing skills. They make marks and recognisable letters as they write lists of items needed to take on holiday, make labels for wall displays and put their name on pictures. The writing area has a good variety of drawing and writing materials. This enables children to spontaneously and independently practice their early writing skills. Children are beginning to link letters to sounds when working on the letter of the week. They skilfully write the letter and think of objects that begin with it.

Children show an awareness of and take a keen interest in number problems. They compare groups of objects, calculate and recognise numerals. Children can count confidently and solve simple mathematical puzzles. They have responsibility for counting how many girls and boys there are and then calculating the total number of children present. However, there are few numerals available for children to handle or displayed for them to see. Therefore opportunities for children to recognise numerals in everyday situations are limited. Children sort and compare animals and then put them into groups. Children use a range of mathematical language to describe shape, size, position and quantity. For example, in the shoe shop they talk about pairs, high heels, flat heels and wide fitting shoes. They know a wide range of number rhymes and songs, which are used to effectively reinforce their learning.

Children are enthralled when they have opportunities investigate what lives in the garden. They find out what worms look and feel like, and how they move. They gather information about the community they live in and talk about those features they like or dislike. Children visit the estate agents to find out about buying and selling houses. Then they go for a walk to look at houses and to choose which ones they like the best. Children draw maps and label where they live and important places. They have regular access to computers and other electronic toys and

equipment. Children follow simple instructions and skilfully control the mouse. Visits to supermarkets provide opportunities to find out about and use electronic scales. Children use a range of tools and resources to design and make objects. They are showing an increasing awareness of change. They have opportunities to explore what happens when different colours of paint are mixed.

Children play imaginatively in the role play corner and express themselves using a variety of media, such as construction toys, shapes, creative materials and musical instruments. They design and make interesting and detailed pictures and models of space ships, using paper, card, glue, sticky tape, pens and pencils.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have access to a range of resources that provide positive images of diversity, such as books, jigsaws and imaginative play equipment. They participate in lots of activities that help them learn about their own and the customs, religious and cultural beliefs of others. For example, they listen and dance to music from other countries, eat Chinese food using chopsticks and join in a sing song with the local Reverend. This is helping them to learn about the wider world they live in and to respect and value differences. All children are welcomed and play a full part in the group. Staff organise the group to effectively meet the individual needs of children. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff skilfully support and encourage children to play fairly, share and take turns. Children are aware of and adhere to the group's code of behaviour. They respond to meaningful praise from staff and behave well. Discussions and stories are used to help children learn what is right and what is wrong. Children are taken on outings to places of interest. They go for walks round the neighbourhood, visit local shops, the bus station, park and canal. This extends and consolidates their learning and is helping them to become a part of the local community. Children play an active role in caring for nature and the environment. They grow plants from seed, pick up litter using a gripper and make fat cakes to feed the birds.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are greeted in a friendly, warm and welcoming manner. Parents speak highly of the group, the progress their children are making and service provided. Positive steps are taken to ensure they are kept well informed about all relevant policies and procedures. Daily discussions keep parents up to date about their child's day, progress and any issues. Children's developmental records are readily available for parents to read, contribute to and comment on. Scrapbooks containing a compilation of photographs and examples of children's work provide parents with an informative and interesting record of their child's achievements. Open evenings inform parents about the care provided and the nursery curriculum.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy, secure and confident in the well organised environment. They eagerly explore the wide variety of easily accessible play and learning opportunities. High staffing levels result in a good standard of care. Children receive lots of individual attention, support and encouragement. They are grouped effectively to enable staff get to know them well and plan appropriately for their age and stage of development.

The leadership and management are good. There is a clear management and staffing structure. Frequent team meetings ensure staff work well together, continually review, evaluate and develop practice. Regular staff self assessments and appraisals identify training and development needs and how they will be met. High priority is given to staff development and training. Staff knowledge and skills are broadened through attendance on short training courses and those leading to recognised childcare qualifications. Children benefit from the continual improvements and developments this brings to the service provided.

All records and documentation are in place, appropriately maintained and retained for inspection. Written policies and procedures are used to effectively underpin the care provided. This provides continuity of care and promotes the children's welfare. Induction, recruitment and selection procedures are in place to ensure that persons working with the children are appropriately vetted and supervised.

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 the group agreed to develop child protection procedures. These now comply with advice from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Thereby ensuring the children's well-being is paramount and prompt action is taken if there are concerns about a child's safety and protection.

In respect of nursery education the group have increased opportunities for children to link sounds to letters. This is helping children to name and sound the letters of the alphabet. Appropriate areas have been created for each of the learning activities. Children's now have clearly defined learning areas that stimulate their interest and development. Children's usage of the attractive book corner has been increased. This is helping to foster their love of books.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report. 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- extend opportunities for children to freely access and choose from a wide range of sensory, messy and creative resources and activities (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- extend the variety of numerals that are available for children to handle and display more numerals in the environment.

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