



## Long Hanborough Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	134441
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Pamela Edna Friling
<b>Setting Address</b>	Playgroup Buildings, C/O The Manor School, Riely Close, Long Hanborough, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX29 8DJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	07974 588486
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Long Hanborough Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Long Hanborough Playgroup has been opened since 1973. It operates from a purpose built, single room, building and enclosed outdoor play area in the grounds of The Manor School in the village of Long Hanborough, Oxfordshire.

The playgroup provides care for a maximum of 18 children at any one time. There are currently 27 children on the roll. This includes 11 children who are in receipt of funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting has systems in place to support children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup opens term time only. Playgroup sessions operate Monday to Friday from 09:00 until 11:30 and from 12:30 until 15.00. In addition, a lunch club is offered from 11.30 until

12.30 for playgroup children and for children attending the school reception class on a part-time basis.

There are four part-time staff working with the children. Two hold suitable childcare qualifications at level three and one is working towards a childcare qualification. A parent helper attends each morning session. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the modern, very clean and well maintained care environment. They take part in a broad range of activities which enable them to learn about good health and how to take increasing responsibility for their own personal hygiene. The staff support all children well as they strive for independent personal care. Children instinctively wash hands before eating and after using the toilet. Children's health is well promoted through suitably trained staff and clear routines for administration of medication and first aid. Children's wellbeing is further promoted through clear records of accidents, medication and existing injuries which are shared with and signed by parents.

Children of all ages develop good physical skills. Large and small equipment is used well to provide physical challenge to the children and to allow them to practise developing skills. They have a time within the session when they can choose to use the outdoor play area. They can practise pedalling, running and pushing skills. They climb and balance confidently as they negotiate the balance beams and climb up and slide down from the climbing frame. Less confident children are supported effectively to attempt new movements with staff support as they attempt to balance on a curved and textured balance beam. Children show good awareness of space as they move sensibly around the playroom avoiding furniture, floor toys and other users of the space.

Children's individual dietary needs are well documented to ensure staff are fully aware of special diets and the issues involved in catering for individual needs and preferences. However, snack and drink options do not fully promote healthy living. For example, children attending the playgroup are offered sweet biscuits with a drink of squash, water or milk on most days of the week and do not have independent access to drinking water throughout the session. When fruit was offered as a snack food children were observed eating with enthusiasm and requesting more when all the apple had been eaten.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for within an environment which is both safe and secure. Access to the premises is carefully monitored to ensure children are protected from adults entering the building unannounced. Children are supervised as they play through effective deployment of staff throughout the premises. Staff are vigilant in their approach to safety and supervision.

Risk of accidental injury is minimised by the thorough and well documented risk assessment of potential hazards within both the play room and outdoor area.

Children have a good awareness of safety issues and are learning about keeping themselves safe. Vigilant supervision and clear explanation extends young children's understanding of safety issues. For example, clear explanation is given relating to the dangers of throwing wooden blocks in the outdoor play area. Children know how to stay safe when playing outside, recognising safe areas to jump where there is an impact absorbent surface. Children develop good independence as they access resources freely for themselves. These are of very good quality and stored invitingly on low shelves and in attractive labelled drawers and boxes to aid individual choice. Children's own pictures and paintings are clearly labelled and attractively displayed around the room, creating a colourful and welcoming environment for children. Children may choose, independently, to display their work in a low level children's gallery.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted through staff knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures. However, at present only one staff member hold current training in child protection. Appropriate steps have been taken to update training for other staff members and suitable reference materials are readily available at the premises.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at playgroup and are supported well by the staff as they play and learn. Children are greeted warmly by staff. They arrive with enthusiasm and quickly settle to the well established daily routine. Planned and free choice activities are carefully introduced to the children to enable them to plan their time at playgroup. Children benefit from good levels of staff supervision, support and involvement in their play. All children are included in playgroup activities with the quieter children actively encouraged to participate in planned activities or invited to join in free play with other children. Children participate in a wide range of interesting, well planned and resourced topic based activities.

Children are relaxed in the company of the attentive staff and rota parents. They are encouraged to express themselves and build on their conversational skills through careful staff questioning and genuine interest in individual conversation. Children benefit from staff knowledge of individual children's characters, likes and dislikes. The youngest children's care needs are well addressed through implementation of an observational monitoring system based on the 'Birth to Three Matters' framework. Children of all ages are encouraged to share their news and describe their treasures from home through effective use of a small group time which encourages even the quietest child to participate fully.

As a result of the sensitive care offered, children are happy, secure and confident. Children are very independent. They make choices from all available resources and activities, take care of their personal care needs and assist with daily routines. Low-level, well-labelled storage of good quality toys encourages self-reliance.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Children benefit from staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning. Staff interaction and questioning encourages children to think and solve problems as they take part in both self initiated and adult led play activities. Staff observe children as they play and learn, taking anecdotal notes of their observations. However, observational notes and evaluations of activities are not used systematically to ensure planned activities encourage all children to build on what they already know. Planning is generalised and does not show differentiation for children who need additional support or increased levels of challenge.

Children develop good relationships with staff and other children in the group. They learn to co-operate and work well together. Children show good levels of concentration for both self-selected and adult-led activities. For example, some three-year-olds played co-operatively with the train track, assisting each other in completing the circuit.

Children are confident communicators. They are happy to talk in large and small groups, to both familiar and unfamiliar adults. Children benefit from very good opportunities to make marks, as they play, though easy access to writing materials and high expectation by staff for them to name their own work. More able children are forming recognisable letters and some can write their own names. Children are challenged to build on their knowledge of initial sounds through routine use of name cards throughout the day and effective staff referral to sound names as children play or listen to stories. Children demonstrate an interest in numbers and counting. They count confidently with more able children showing understanding of number concepts and recognition of some numerals. Number rhymes are used well to introduce children to practical subtraction as they sing familiar songs and use their fingers to count down 'monkeys jumping on a bed'. Children are able to explore mathematics as part of their free choice activities through easy access to resources for sorting, matching and weighing.

Children enjoy exploring and investigating many different media as they print with paint and leaves, make clay hedgehogs and dig in sand. Children confidently operate simple electronic equipment such as the toy microwave, washing machine and kettle. However, they are more limited in their use of the computer, which does not form a daily part of their free choice activities. Children are introduced to different cultures and festivals through themed activities and good quality books and play items. Over time children have the chance to observe the natural world through well planned activities. For example, growing plants in the outdoor area and collecting bugs and leaves during nature walks in the local environment. However they have more limited opportunities to explore science and the natural world as part of their self initiated play.

Children enjoy good opportunities to be freely creative. They immerse themselves in role-play scenarios in the home corner as they collect food for an outing, cook meals and dress dolls. Staff interact sensitively to extend the play but take care to ensure the play remains in the control of the child. Children cut, stick and glue independently and enjoy displaying their pictures in their own gallery. For example, a child drew a picture of herself and then proceeded to the gallery to display her picture. When questioned about the picture the child explained that it was not a picture but a photograph. Careful questioning continued to encourage the children to describe where the photograph was taken. Children enjoy singing as part of the daily routine and enthusiastically join in action songs and rhymes, adding familiar movements

and singing along loudly. Musical instruments are freely available for children to explore. Children safely and competently use a range of tools and equipment, for example pencils and scissors and confidently pour their own drinks at snack time.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents is good. This good partnership that has formed with parents contributes significantly to children's well-being, developing a sense of security and belonging. Parents receive good quality information on the playgroup and their child's activities through access to written weekly activity plans, informative newsletters and interesting notice boards. In addition, parents have access to an extensive lending library of information relating to the care and education of their children. Daily opportunities are used for verbal feedback and for exchange of information to ensure children receive appropriate individual care. Children's assessment records are available to parents on request. However, systems are not in place to ensure parents are able to contribute information to these assessment records in order to demonstrate a full picture of their child's abilities. Written permission is requested from parents for outings and emergency medical attention. Children and their parents are warmly welcomed and play a full and active part in the playgroup.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children share well and are encouraged to be kind and thoughtful to others. They show kindness and consideration for each other as they assist with painting aprons and hand out biscuits at snack time, reminding children as they go to say 'thank you'. They have use of good books and resources reflecting culture, race and disability. Children take part in a range of activities in the playgroup to maximise their understanding of the wider world. For example, celebration of world festivals such as Diwali. Involvement in both school and church activities and celebrations further extends their understanding of their local environment. Children behave very well and respond positively to praise and encouragement from the staff who form calm role models for the children. Well thought through and recently reviewed written policies for behaviour management and special needs ensure consistency of approach to individual needs.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The children settle very well to familiar surroundings and show very good understanding of well-established daily routines. The new premises are bright and clean and offer a good care environment. Space and equipment are successfully arranged to allow children to use all areas and resources independently. Safety and security are effective in protecting children from harm with effective staff deployment to support and supervise the children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Staff are very attentive to the children and respond quickly to their requests for support or direction. The staff team work well together and with no team changes for a number of years provide a stable environment for children's care. It is recognised that if new staff members are recruited then an induction process would be needed to ensure staff continue to work consistently. The staff

appraisal system is effective with ongoing training needs, career and personal progression routes highlighted. Training opportunities are offered to all staff to extend their understanding of the needs of the range of children attending the playgroup. Input is welcomed from the Local Authority to improve and refine methods employed in the care and education of the children. Regular staff meetings ensure that all staff are able to contribute positively to future planning and development.

Children's welfare is promoted through the well-organised recording systems and written operating procedures which meet the requirements of registration. The ratio of adults to children is maintained at a very good level allowing high levels of individual attention. Children enjoy sociable snack times. However, healthy eating is not fully endorsed by the playgroup who offer sweet biscuit snacks on most days. In addition, drinking water is not freely and independently available to children.

Leadership and management of the playgroup is satisfactory. The committee and staff team work co-operatively to meet the needs of the children attending. Systems are in place to ensure staff are appropriately qualified and cleared for work with the children. The educational programme provides a wide range of experiences to enable children to make sound progress towards the early learning goals, but does not effectively use observational notes and activity evaluations to plan for individual progress. In addition, children do not have sufficient independent opportunity to explore science and technology.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At their last inspection the playgroup was asked to develop children's listening skills, especially during 'show and tell' and develop staff's management of children's behaviour. In response to this recommendation a new system for small group 'show and tell' has been instigated. Children enjoy their time in this small group, when even the quietest child is encouraged to share their news and describe items brought from home. Children behave well and patiently listen to others. The playgroup were also asked to provide suitable resources to support children with writing their names. Writing is now a strength of the group. Children easily and frequently access pencils to write their name on art work and to make their own lists as part of their free play.

As key issues identified with the educational provision the group were asked to develop effective methods to evaluate planned activities ensuring intended learning is recorded and used to aid future planning. They were also asked to ensure observations are used regularly to record the children's achievements during planned activities. Some progress has been made. Activity plans now show clear learning intentions linked to the Foundation Stage stepping stones and are evaluated in writing on a daily basis. However, evaluations are generalised and do not yet demonstrate whether intended learning has been successful or whether children require additional support or challenge to build on their knowledge and ability. Anecdotal observations are recorded for children as they take part in both free play and adult led activities and these form part of individual children's record of assessment. However, the observations are not used systematically or with sufficient frequency to target next steps of learning for the children.

At the last inspection it was recommended the group ensure that all staff are familiar with the National Standard's for Registration, child protection issues and review the equal opportunities

policy and annual appraisal procedure so that the line manager participates appropriately in this process. In addition, it was recommended that the group obtain written parental permission to seek any necessary emergency advice or treatment and make sure children's pre-existing injuries are recorded. Finally they were asked to review the snack time so that it provides a more healthy and social experience and make sure drinking water is available for children at all times. Good progress has been made with all issues. Staff are familiar with the National Standards to which they work and have taken an active role in the review of operating procedures and policies to ensure a consistent approach by all to the care of the children. The annual appraisal system is now well established with a line management system which fully involves the play leader in the appraisal of her staff team. Children's wellbeing is promoted through clear records of parental consent for emergency medical advice or treatment and detailed records of pre-existing injuries sustained when not attending the group. Snack time now provides the children with a sociable experience where they sit in small groups with a staff member. However, snacks offered do not consistently promote healthy eating and, although available from staff on request, children do not have independent access to drinking water throughout the session.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection 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.

## **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 satisfactory.

### **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):

- promote healthy living through provision of healthy snacks and independent access to drinking water throughout the session.

#### **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 evaluation of planned activities and written observations of children as they play are used effectively to promote differentiation of planning to encourage individual children to build on what they already know and can do.
- encourage parental contribution to children's records of progress (also refers to care)
- provide opportunities for children to explore science and technology as part of their free play experiences.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)