



# Chislet And District Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127103
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 September 2006
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<b>Registered person</b>	Chislet & District Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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*

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## 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?

Chislet and District Playgroup opened in 1975. It is managed by a committee and operates from Hoath Village Hall, near Canterbury, Kent. The playgroup has access to a main hall, kitchen and toilets. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. It is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 09:15 until 11:45, term time only.

There are currently 12 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 10 children receive funding for nursery education.

The playgroup has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties/disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs four members of staff. Of these, three members of staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The playgroup receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment that is clean, and bright. Children begin to learn the importance of good hygiene through the daily routine and they learn about the importance of minimising the spread of germs through regular hand washing. Children know why and when they wash their hands, for example, after helping with the gardening, a child remarks that he needs to wash his hands because they are dirty. In addition, the use of liquid soap and hand dryers contribute to minimising the risk of cross-infection.

Children learn about healthy eating because snack time is well organised and affords children good opportunities to enjoy a variety of healthy snacks and fruit that is good for them. In addition, children are able to enjoy fresh milk or water with their snack, contributing to their good health. Children are able to access fresh drinking water freely during the session, helping them to learn the importance of keeping their bodies hydrated. Information relating to children's dietary requirements, preferences and allergies are collated and good procedures are implemented for children who have serious dietary requirements. As a result, children's good health is safeguarded. A sick child policy, clear accident procedures and staff's up-to-date first aid training means that they can act in the best interest of children in the event of a medical emergency or an accident.

Children receive good opportunities to participate in activities to promote their large muscle movements both inside and outdoors; this includes, riding bikes, ball games, running freely, climbing apparatus and twirling/dance. As a result, children develop a healthy attitude to exercise and they are beginning to learn about changes that occur in their bodies as they embark on vigorous physical play.

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

The provision is good.

Systems to monitor the safe arrival and departure of children are effective because details of adults authorised to collect children are in place and high regard is placed on security within the premises. For example, staff use a chain to secure the door and a window ensures they are able to see all visitors to the premises before entry is permitted. Procedures for monitoring safety within the setting are good because staff ensure the environment is checked daily for safety and formal risk assessments are completed, minimising risks to children. The outdoor play area is well organised and carefully prepared; as a result, children are able to move around freely and safely, making effective use of the available resources. However, procedures for monitoring the cleanliness of the outdoor equipment has not yet been established. As a result, toys remain dirty and weathered.

Regular practise of the fire drill ensures all children are familiar with procedures to follow in the event of an emergency. In addition, fire extinguishers are checked regularly and there is a fire blanket located in the kitchen. As a result, risks to children are identified and minimised promptly, contributing to children's welfare and safety. Restrictions within the accommodation mean children cannot freely access toys and resources independently. However, staff ensure the environment both inside and outdoors is carefully prepared and conducive to the needs of the children being cared for. As a result, children remain interested and stimulated throughout the session.

Procedures for recording accidents are good and ensure parents are informed promptly. All staff continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of issues and procedures relating to child protection contributing to children's safety. However, the group's policy has not been updated and does not yet reflect the recommendations of the local safeguarding children board, and the policy relating to allegations against staff is informal.

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

The provision is good.

The carefully prepared and well organised environment helps children to settle quickly. As a result, children are keen to embark on a broad range of interesting activities that encourage and promote all areas of development and stimulate their interests. Staff know the children well, they show kindness towards them and are caring in their approach. As a result, children are keen to try new ideas, and make effective use of the toys and resources. However, opportunities for children to self select and make independent choices outside of the activities provided by staff are limited because of storage restrictions within the hall. Children's self-esteem and confidence is enhanced because the staff praise and encourage them in their play, expressing delight in their achievements. Children interact well, demonstrating kindness and consideration to others as they play collaboratively. They talk and respond with animation and laughter to the staff and their peers. Staff use effective questioning techniques to engage the children and encourage them to talk and explore language. Open questions extend children's thinking and help children to reflect on what they are doing and what will happen next.

The staff meet weekly to ensure the planning is in place and is organised to incorporate information gained through observations to support children's learning. Staff continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework to support the planning of activities. Careful consideration is given to ensuring children are able to access a broad and balanced range of activities which are suitable to their ages and stages of development. However, systems for ensuring all children are adequately challenged in the activities they select continue to evolve.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Strong relationships between the children and staff, and a consistent routine, supports children as they settle into the playgroup routine and develop a sense of belonging. As a result, children are keen to embark on their play, work collaboratively with their peers and develop their concentration. Children speak openly and confidently. They receive regular opportunities to sing rhymes and are keen to participate in

story time, recalling past events and sharing what they know. However, although children clearly enjoy looking at books and know how books work, the book area is uninviting. Consequently children are not regular visitors to the book area. Children receive excellent opportunities to write for different purposes within their role play. For example, children write lists for shopping, leave telephone messages on the notepad and mimic registration time by calling the register, using a bound notebook. Older, more able children are beginning to write correctly formed letters, however staff do not consistently invite children to mark their own work with their name. The environment is well labelled, both inside and out. Children examine the notices outdoors and predict what is written whilst looking around the environment. For example, when reading the notice pinned to the fence, they predict the notice relates to the holes in the fence where, they can see the outside world. Consequently, children are beginning to learn that print carries meaning. Children receive good opportunities to recognise their names as they self-register upon arrival and find their name at snack time. Many children count reliably up to 10 and beyond and they receive lots of opportunities to participate in incidental counting. For example, children count the acorns as they collect them in the garden for the squirrels at wildwood. However, children receive limited opportunities to recognise numbers to consolidate their learning, for example, there is no number line displayed. In addition, children receive insufficient opportunities to explore other concepts of mathematics through practical activities, such as sorting, calculating, simple addition and subtraction. Children express curiosity when playing outdoors, exploring the environment, looking for bugs and sharing in discussions about the group's vegetable patch. Children receive good opportunities to explore with their senses and have regular access to a range of malleable materials, for example play-dough is provided daily with a variety of tools and materials to extend children's imagination. Regular access to a range of programmable toys enables the children to operate a range of different equipment, for example, children change the cassette in the tape recorder and use the rewind button to repeat a favourite song, they operate the washing machine and hang the clothes out to dry when the cycle is finished. The celebrations of festivals from around the world provide children with opportunities to learn about other cultures, beliefs and traditions.

Staff continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and endeavour to ensure all children receive a full programme of good quality education. Curriculum planning is prepared in advance, however, it is not implemented rigidly, thus enabling staff to work with children as they guide spontaneous play and learning. However, systems to ensure that older and more able children are sufficiently challenged in the activities they select are not yet in place, as a result, staff miss opportunities to extend children's learning fully. Staff provide a range of purposeful activities that provide opportunities for teaching both inside and outdoors. Opportunities for children to engage in activities that they can initiate themselves with appropriate intervention by staff are good. Consequently, children are consistently engaged in the learning process, helping them to make progress along the stepping stones. Opportunities to arouse children's thinking are promoted as staff use excellent questioning techniques that stimulate the children's interests and enables them to build on what they already know.

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

The provision is good.

Children arrive happy and are keen to embark on their play. The carefully prepared environment and well organised routine helps children to settle quickly and forge strong relationships with staff. As a result, children have a clear understanding of the boundaries in which they are cared for, helping them to learn right from wrong. In addition, staff deploy themselves appropriately throughout the session ensuring all children are engaged in their play and learning. As a result, children's behaviour is good. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are valued as individuals, treated with respect and encouraged to show kindness and respect to one another. Children learn about differences in lifestyle, culture, belief, tradition and the wider world through the celebration of festivals from around the world. In addition, children have access to a range of resources that reflect diversity in a positive way, these include books, dolls and puzzles.

The supervisor is the group's nominated special educational needs co-ordinator [SENCO]. She has attended appropriate training and she continues to develop her knowledge and understanding of the Code of Practice for the Identification and Assessment of special educational needs. In addition, staff work closely with the area SENCO in order to provide appropriate care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. As a result, the staff demonstrate a strong commitment to providing an inclusive service that meets the needs of all children attending the setting.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are greeted warmly by staff and overall they are happy with the setting and the care provided. Parents know their child's key worker and they feel well informed of their children's progress, both through the informal verbal exchange of information and regular access to their children's developmental records. Parents of children in receipt of funding for nursery education are provided with good information relating to the Foundation Stage curriculum, as part of the playgroup's prospectus. In addition, most parents feel involved in their children's learning because the staff team are approachable and responsive, demonstrating a keen interest in the children and their well-being. Details of the group's policies and procedures are included in the group's prospectus and are available to parents upon request. In addition, newsletters and short notes keep parents informed of all relevant issues relating to the smooth running of the group. However, parents have not yet been informed of changes in legislation relating to procedures for dealing with complaints.

The playgroup has begun to implement the Birth to three matters framework to support the programme of activities for younger children. This includes the implementation of developmental records and incidental observations on younger children in order to identify where the children are at in their learning, ready for when they turn three years and begin the implementation of the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, as yet, systems to monitor the effectiveness of the observations have not been reviewed and details of the Birth to three matters framework is not included in the playgroup prospectus.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

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

The day-to-day organisation of the setting is good and contributes to the positive outcomes for children. As a result, children are provided with good opportunities to access a broad range of interesting and stimulating activities to develop and support their learning. Most of the staff hold relevant qualifications in childcare and education, and they continue to access regular short courses and in-house training to build on their skills and enhance their practice in the playgroup. Recruitment and selection of staff is the responsibility of the committee and checks to establish the suitability of staff working in the group are in place. There is a strong commitment amongst the staff team to continue to improve the quality of care provided within the group, this is achieved through regular staff meetings and opportunities for all staff to reflect on practice, in order to instigate change and secure improvements. Systems to ensure that policies, procedures and information provided for parents are updated regularly to ensure they reflect accurately the service offered and the ethos of the group are not yet in place. As a result, many policies are out of date and do not reflect changes in legislation. Most of the mandatory documentation and parental consents are in place and completed correctly. The certificate of registration is displayed along with details of the group's public liability insurance; as a result, parents are easily able to confirm details of the playgroup's registration.

Leadership and management of the setting is good. The staff work well as a team and benefit from support and guidance of an experienced supervisor and the early years advisory teacher from the local authority. As a result, all staff demonstrate a strong commitment to provide a service that is underpinned with quality and one that is conducive to the needs of the children. Systems for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the nursery education within the setting continue to evolve and the supervisor and staff team continue to build on their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. All staff contribute to the planning; as a result, children receive a broad and balanced range of learning opportunities to help move them on to their next steps in learning. However, systems to ensure all children are sufficiently challenged throughout the session continue to evolve. The well-organised and carefully prepared environment and commitment amongst the staff team ensures all children receive a broad and balanced programme of activities that promote most areas of development and learning. As a result, children receive good opportunities to build on what they know and learn new skills. All staff undertake both incidental and planned observations on the children and information gained to inform future planning. However, systems for ensuring developmental records are kept up-to-date in order to identify gaps in children's learning are not yet established.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the quality and standards of care and nursery education were judged as inadequate.

Following the inspection, the playgroup received five actions to improve the quality and standards of care and five actions to improve the quality and standard of Nursery education.

## Care

Since the last inspection, positive steps have been taken to ensure all staff have in place, checks to establish their suitability and most staff have also attended appropriate training in first aid, contributing to children's safety.

The playgroup has implemented formal risk assessments and sought training to help prepare planning and assessments for children under the age of three years, based on the Birth to three matters framework. In addition, strategies for managing unwanted behaviour have been reviewed fully. Support and advice has been sought from external agencies to help staff build on their knowledge in this area and implement appropriate strategies for managing unwanted behaviour.

Overall, the playgroup have made good progress in addressing all of the actions relating to the quality of care provided at the setting.

## Education

Since the last inspection, the staff have sought support and further training to increase their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. As a result, the education programme has significantly improved. A review of the organisation of the session has enabled the staff to ensure the routine and pace of the session meets the needs of the children attending, including time spent in whole group situations. In addition, systems for monitoring children's progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals continues to evolve. As a result, staff are beginning to identify where children are at in their learning and provide opportunities for children to build on what they already know. Although, staff are more aware of the importance of ensuring challenges set for more able children are identified and implemented fully, this is an area that is continuing to evolve and remains a recommendation of this inspection.

Overall, most of the actions set at the last inspection relating to the quality of Nursery Education have been met fully.

## 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 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):

- develop the organisation of resources throughout the sessions to ensure children develop independence and are sufficiently and appropriately challenged in their play [also applies to Nursery Education]
- ensure records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, and to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are reviewed regularly and reflect changes in legislation and policy

### **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):

- improve the programme of mathematics to ensure children receive regular opportunities to recognise numbers as labels and for counting and develop an understanding of simple addition and subtraction
- continue to develop effective systems in order to regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the setting and that of the educational programme and further promote the use of observations in order to identify individual children's next steps in learning and consistently use any information gained from observations to inform the planning of activities [also applies to care]

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