



St Clements Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY291798
Inspection date	17 November 2006
Inspector	Valerie Fane
Setting Address	Henwick Road, Worcester, Worcestershire, WR2 5NS
Telephone number	07739945354
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Registered person	St Clements Play Group
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 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?

St Clement's Playgroup, owned by the Governing Body of St Clement's Church of England Primary School, was registered in 2004. It operates from several rooms in the primary school and has a fully enclosed area for outdoor play. The playgroup serves the surrounding area.

The playgroup is open Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 15:15 during school term times. There are currently 26 children on roll. Of these four children receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

Four staff work with the children. Of these, two have appropriate qualifications to Level 2 or above. The playgroup receives support from a mentor teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children have an excellent understanding of the benefits of fresh air and exercise because they use the outdoor classroom throughout the sessions. They have all-in-one suits and Wellington boots readily available so that they are suitably dressed to go outside in most weather conditions. They enjoy a very wide range of activities to support their physical development. They develop climbing and balancing skills on the large tree trunk and enjoy playing in the mud on the top of it! They develop a very high degree of control of ride-on toys as they confidently pedal round a track that includes some significant slopes and bends. They enjoy running up and down the banks and playing games such as 'hide and seek'. Children with limited mobility receive excellent support from staff to reach their maximum potential as they move around the outside area.

Children develop very good understanding of the principles of healthy eating. They enjoy a range of healthy snacks that includes toast at morning snack time and a variety of fresh fruit in the afternoon. Children exercise control over portion size because they understand that if they eat more than two squares of toast at snack time they will not want their lunch. Children bring their own packed lunch to playgroup. If parents do not include a range of healthy options, staff discuss the contents with them to try to develop their knowledge of healthy eating. Children learn to eat the savoury items from their lunch box first each day. Children gain further awareness of healthy food through books and topics. They read the story 'Handa's Surprise' and then taste the different types of fruit that occur in the story. They identify different vegetables and then enjoy vegetable printing. Children's well-being is safeguarded because staff have relevant food hygiene qualifications and are rigorous about good hygiene procedures in the kitchen area.

Children learn about the importance of good hygiene routines as they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. They use low-level washbasins with increasing independence, learning to use soap and hand driers effectively. Staff support them well by explaining the consequences of poor hygiene routines. Children receive good care in the event of an accident because staff have current first aid knowledge. They keep accurate records of any accident that occurs and ensure that these are signed by parents. Children are protected from cross infection because the playgroup has a clear policy not to accept children who are unwell and this is made known to parents before their child attends. The policy is also reinforced by a notice on the playgroup door that explains to parents why it is important to exclude children for 48 hours following a stomach upset.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an attractive and safe environment where all risks have been identified and minimised. Staff make regular use of risk assessments to ensure both indoor and outdoor areas are safe and secure. Children are safe outside because the gate is securely locked before children go out to play and one member of staff has specific responsibility for carrying out a

safety check of the area every day. Children learn to keep themselves safe outside. They know that they must ride their bikes in one direction round the paths to avoid collisions and that they must not ride bikes down the steepest bank. Children are also safe because there are clear procedures in place to ensure that they are collected only by named people. If someone different is collecting them their parent signs the collection book and indicates a password to be used to confirm identity.

The children use a wide range of good equipment that is suitable and safe. This is because the staff provide child-sized furniture, equipment and toys that are appropriate for their purpose, are of suitable design and condition and are well maintained.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a sound understanding of the symptoms of child abuse and the procedures to follow if they were to have concerns about a child in their care. They keep records of any existing injuries to a child when they arrive at playgroup. Children learn to protect themselves. They have a visit from a parent who works for the police and learn that it is safe to talk to a policeman and that they should not talk to strangers. They develop their understanding of their personal space because staff encourage them to say 'no' if they do not want to be hugged by other children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages settle very well in the relaxed playgroup atmosphere and develop good relationships with staff. Young children enjoy a wide range of activities that are underpinned by the principles of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They confidently self-select activities. They extend their imaginative play in the well-resourced home corner. They pretend to do the ironing and play with the dolls. They develop a variety of skills through creative activities. They use glue sticks to cover their Cinderella wand. They carefully decorate the wand with pieces of shiny paper and enthusiastically cover the wand with different colours of glitter using glitter shakers. They develop their language as they enthusiastically join in the words and actions of favourite songs such as 'Sleeping bunnies'.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from the staff's excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage and the breadth of learning that children gain through different activities. They enjoy an interesting and varied selection of planned activities each week that are related to the current theme and cover all aspects of the six areas of learning. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because the planning includes differentiation for children of different ages and abilities. Staff evaluate activities at the end of each week. They use the evaluations both to inform the following week's plans and to assess each child's progress through the stepping stones.

Children enjoy an interesting range of well-resourced creative activities. They make footprints wearing Wellington boots on a large piece of paper outside. They discover the fun of stamping in a tray of paint and then making prints on the paper. They increase their independence and their manipulation skills as they choose which colour paint to use from the row of bottles, try

to open the bottle themselves and squirt their own paint into the tray. After the activity they clean their own boots with a brush in a tray of water provided for the purpose. Staff allow children to do things for themselves but are ready to give support when necessary. Children develop their mathematical language as they compare the sizes of footprints they are making. They extend their learning by choosing to put the paint directly on to the paper and jumping in it to make spatter patterns. They begin to play cooperatively as they take turns to run across the paper.

Children develop a range of skills through cooking activities such as making sugar mice. They begin to use books to gain information as they look at the recipe book. They recall the story of 'Cinderella' as they discuss what happened to the mice in the story. They learn to use scales to weigh ingredients. They use their senses to investigate the ingredients such as a coconut and make interesting use of language to describe the mixture of coconut and condensed milk, saying 'I can smell baked banana'. They use tools such as spoons to stir the mixture and count how many decorations they need for the eyes and ears, looking closely at the picture and relating it to their own bodies. Staff provide excellent support to enable all children, including those with learning difficulties, to benefit from the activity.

Children develop good self-help skills. They learn to dress themselves to play outside in bad weather and they have some opportunities at snack time to pour their own drinks or to pass round the plate of toast. They discover the purpose of writing as they produce their own invitations to Cinderella's ball. They enjoy experimenting freely with musical instruments and operate the CD player to listen to songs. At circle time they enthusiastically join in with the words and actions of favourite songs such as 'Peter Rabbit's got a fly upon his nose'. They learn to count and develop their mathematical language but they have limited opportunities to compare numbers and quantities or solve simple mathematical problems through planned activities or in daily routines.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children develop a good awareness of our wider society because the playgroup provides a wide range of toys such as puppets, dressing-up clothes and books to support their learning. Staff extend the resources by borrowing from the multicultural centre. Children learn about other cultures and religions as they celebrate a variety of different festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year. At Diwali they make cards or dress up in appropriate clothes and decorate their hands. At Chinese New Year they make dragons or Chinese lanterns. Children behave very well at the playgroup. They respond positively to the staff, who have high expectations for children's behaviour. They learn to respect each other and to leave a child alone if they have indicated that they do not want to play co-operatively. Staff deal with unwanted behaviour such as tantrums calmly. Children respond to behaviour strategies that are appropriate for their age and staff help them to understand the reasons for the boundaries that are set.

Children are secure in the playgroup because their parents are well informed about the provision. Parents receive a simple, clearly-written booklet of information about the playgroup before their child attends. They welcome the flexible settling-in strategies that allow them to stay

with their child until they feel the child is ready to be left alone at playgroup. Children progress because parents develop a good relationship with their key worker and regularly exchange information with them. Children are protected because parents are made aware of how to make a complaint to the regulator, but a log has not been put in place in line with recent changes to the National Standards for the manager to record any future complaints that may be received.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents have regular newsletters with information about activities and can read details of this week's planned activities and the learning objectives on the notice board. Children benefit because parents are involved in their learning. Parents are encouraged to spend a morning helping in playgroup as often as they like. Children are also encouraged to bring things in from home related to the current topic such as items for the autumn display.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities generally receive good care because the staff discuss their needs with their parents and, if appropriate, with outside agencies. Staff are fully aware of the needs of individual children. However, children's progress is limited because staff do not work with parents to identify learning targets and produce individual education plans for each child with identified or suspected learning difficulties or disabilities.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children flourish in the well-organised playgroup environment. They are safeguarded because the head teacher has robust procedures in place to ensure that all staff who work with the children are suitable to do so. All required policies and procedures are in place. Parents also provide all necessary information and consents before their child attends the group. Staff keep accurate records of the attendance of children, staff and visitors, showing clearly if a child arrives late or leaves early. Children benefit greatly from the high ratio and expertise of well-qualified and experienced staff who are committed to attending regular training to obtain qualifications or to update their good practice.

Leadership and management of the funded children is satisfactory. Children generally progress well because the enthusiastic playgroup manager provides clear leadership for a strong team of hard-working and committed staff. However, the overall development of the group is compromised because support, guidance and involvement from the school Governing Body is limited. Children also do not benefit from close links between the playgroup and other Foundation Stage provision within the school.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the playgroup was required to ensure that staff ratios are maintained at all times. They were recommended to provide all children with regular opportunities to practise the emergency evacuation procedures and to update the medication procedures to require parents to sign the dosage record.

Children are now safeguarded because staff ratios are met or exceeded at all times and this is clearly indicated in the attendance register. Fire practices are now held once a month on different days of the week so all children have regular opportunities to practise. Children are protected because parents are now required to sign to say that they are aware their child has been given medicine at playgroup.

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.

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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):

- produce individual education plans for children with identified learning difficulties or disabilities in line with the Code of Practice
- maintain a log of any complaints made against the provision that is in line with recent changes to the regulations.

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 opportunities for children to compare numbers and quantities through planned activities or daily routines
- improve links between the school and the playgroup in relation to the planning of activities and monitoring and involvement of the Governing Body.

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