



## Oaktrees Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	131550
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 September 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Amanda Shedden
<b>Setting Address</b>	Helvellyn Road, Southampton, Hampshire, SO16 4AS
<b>Telephone number</b>	07931 705933
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Oaktrees 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*

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Oaktrees Pre-School opened in the current premises in 2002. It operates from a purpose built room, within the Mason Moor primary school in Millbrook Southampton. The pre-school serves the local area.

They are registered for 25 children under the age of 5 years. There are currently 26 children aged 2 to 5 years on roll. This includes 20 funded 3 year old and 4 years olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs and who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens 5 days a week during school terms. Sessions are from 9.00 to 11.30 and 12.30 to 15.00.

Two full time and three part time staff work with the children. Two of the staff have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher/mentor from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are offered a choice of fruit, vegetables and other healthy options at snack time. The snacks and focused activities increase children's awareness of foods that are healthy. Children readily talk about foods that are good for you and that milk "will make you big and strong". Children are offered milk and water at snack time, however, water is not readily available during all the sessions to stop children from becoming dehydrated.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene and are developing good self care skills as they wash their hands after messy play and after using the toilet. Staff ensure that the room is clean and ready for the arrival of children. Tables are cleaned regularly during the sessions enabling the children to enjoy a healthy environment. The group's sickness policy does not reflect that children should not attend if unwell.

Children demonstrate a good sense of space as they move confidently during physical activities. They move around the room and in the garden showing a good sense of space as they negotiate around the resources and each other. Music and movement sessions allow children to have fun, they enjoy making the actions as they sing along to songs such as The Piano Man and traditional nursery rhymes. Each day they play outside riding on bikes and cars, they use scooters and try to hop to the hopscotch that staff have drawn for them on the ground.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The purpose built room offers a welcoming environment for the children; their work is displayed and the furniture and equipment are suitable and appropriate for the ages of the children attending. Staff greet the children warmly. The majority of children are happy to leave their parents and extra support is given to those who find it more difficult. Children freely access resources and play equipment from the activities that are out or from the low level units increasing the child's independence.

Risk assessments are undertaken informally on a daily basis ensuring that the hazards are identified and minimised. There is effective supervision of the children and required staff -child ratios are maintained ensuring children are safe and secure. The procedures at each end of the session ensures that children can only go with home with their designated person. Children are aware of the dangers of fire and regularly practise the evacuation procedure.

All required documentation is in place and understood by staff to ensure a child's welfare is safeguarded. Staff follow required procedures but have not received formal training to develop their knowledge of child protection issues.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive eager to join in with the activities that they freely select from the range of resources that are offered each day. Children settle quickly into the friendly atmosphere and feel secure and confident in the structured routine.

Children play well individually and with each other: for instance with small world resources such as the wild animals, making tea in the home corner and taking turns at pouring jugs of water into the wheel delighting as it turns at different speeds. They have positive relationships with the staff who through their positive interaction ensure that children are happy to communicate their thoughts, wishes and feelings fostering their self esteem.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Some staff do not have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage or how children learn. This leads to many missed learning opportunities for children and inconsistencies in teaching. For example, although qualified members of staff encourage children to link sounds to letters, during a focused activity, other staff do not know how to use the worksheets effectively. Therefore not all children learn how to form their letters correctly.

Children's individual abilities are not recorded and monitored. This means their own skills are not built upon. For example during a craft activity all children were directed by staff to make a standard tractor. They had little opportunities to use their imagination or extend their skills for instance to use scissors and sticky tape.

Staff use weekly planning sheets to cover the six areas of learning. However these are not always evaluated. For example records show that children have been introduced to festivals around the world, but there are no assessments of how effective these topics have been in developing children's understanding.

Children are learning about the rules of the setting, and are developing basic skills in handling numbers and computers. However, because some staff are inexperienced they do not always know to use the resources to build upon children's knowledge. There is little monitoring of the education program. This means staff do not have records to refer to inform their decisions and ensure children have appropriate experiences. Lack of daily plans means staff are not always aware of the purpose of the activities, leading to inconsistencies in children's learning.

Children enjoy playing outside but limited resources mean learning experiences are restricted by individual staff's knowledge. One member of staff is skilled at providing meaningful activities; for instance acting as a policeman, but other staff do not engage with children but supervise their play.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as staff have an understanding of the children's individual care needs. Children's behaviour is very good and their understanding of right and wrong is increased as they respond to gentle reminders to care for each other and the resources.

Children with additional needs are supported well, staff work with other agencies to develop individual learning plans, this ensures that the needs of the children are met.

Children's spiritual, moral and cultural development is fostered.

The positive relationships with parents ensure that they value the playgroup. Staff share information about the children on a daily basis, however, little information about the children is sought when children join the group. Parents are happy to leave their children at the playgroup knowing that their children are well cared for.

The partnership with parents of children who are receipt of funded nursery education is inadequate. Parents are given little information about the early learning goals. They are not asked to contribute what they know about their child's development. They receive little guidance about how children learn or how they could support this. Informal sharing of information about the child's social achievements takes place but parents are not fully informed of their child's educational progress in all areas of learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is supported by the staff's understanding of their needs and the high staff ratios ensure that they are well cared for. Children feel at ease with the environment and staff, enabling them to feel confident to initiate and extend their own play.

All required documentation is in place to promote the welfare and care of children, however, some do not reflect the actual practise of the group. Not all written permissions from parents have been obtained, such as permission for medical emergencies or to take photographs.

Appropriate vetting procedures have not been carried out on all staff, however staff are deployed to minimise risks to children.

Leadership and management is inadequate. Senior staff are aware of their roles and ensure that children are safe at all times. Lack of support from the management committee means they have had few opportunities to undertake training and extend staff's knowledge. The committee have played no effective role in monitoring the education provision and therefore inconsistencies in teaching have not been highlighted or addressed. This means children's learning has not been supported. Although senior staff are developing a vision for the group, the management committee have not been in a position to fully support this. Consequently although children's care is sound their educational; progress is limited. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

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

At the last inspection, the group were required to keep a record of any visitors to the pre-school and to ensure that the snacks were healthy and nutritious. Children are now offered range of healthy snacks such as carrots, apples and bananas. All visitors are required to sign in and out ensuring that staff are aware of all visitors to the group.

They were also required to nominate a trained member of staff for child protection. A qualified member of staff is now in place, however, they have not received appropriate training.

Nursery Education.

At the last inspection the group were to increase opportunities to develop their writing skills and use programmable toys. Children are now encouraged to practise writing each day and they have access to a computer with a range of suitable programs.

They had to develop planning systems to ensure that all areas of the Early Learning Goals (ELG'S) were included, particularly for music and dance. Weekly plans now reflect the ELG's with music and dance included frequently.

Activities needed to be offered to ensure younger and more able children were extended appropriately. the present system does not allow individual children's abilities to be recorded and therefore there are no effective systems in place to address this.

### **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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

### **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):

- ensure that written permission is obtained for staff to seek or administer emergency first aid
- ensure that the policies and procedures reflect the practice of the playgroup
- develop the range of information obtained from parents to ensure individual children's needs are known when they first join the group.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop effective systems between the committee and senior staff to ensure the educational program is monitored, evaluated and contributes to children's learning
- extend the detail of planning so that staff are aware of learning objectives and how to support children to achieve these
- develop systems of assessment so that children's individual abilities can be built upon. Use this to support parents in extending their children's learning.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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)