



Silverhill Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109504
Inspection date	28 November 2006
Inspector	Fran Fielder
Setting Address	Alma Terrace, St. Leonards-on-Sea, East Sussex, TN37 6QT
Telephone number	07939113303 during sessions
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Registered person	Silverhill Playgroup
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?

Silverhill Playgroup has been operating for more than 40 years and runs from the church hall on the outskirts of St Leonards. Children have access to the main hall and three smaller rooms. A maximum of 30 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each morning from 09.15 until 12.15 with a lunch club from 12.15 until 13.15. They are open three afternoons a week. Some sessions run through the school holidays depending on demand. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 52 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 29 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area. The group makes provision for children with special needs and for those who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs six members of staff of whom five, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment. Effective routines support children's independence and help them learn the importance of good personal hygiene. They wash hands after visiting the toilet and before eating. This prevents the spread of germs that can cause tummy upsets. Tissues are always available for children to use and staff support young children when learning to blow their nose. Toys and resources are cleaned as needed and essential items such as tea towels and aprons are washed every day.

Children enjoy fresh fruit as a snack and choose their favourite. This helps to develop good eating habits from a young age. They have access to drinking water and help themselves using named cups. Parents provide packed lunches and these are stored appropriately to prevent spoiling. Children learn about healthy eating through visitors to the group such as a dentist. Children discuss the foods that keep them and their teeth healthy.

The large hall allows children to enjoy physical activities every day regardless of the weather. They demonstrate good manoeuvring skills when riding tricycles both indoors and out. Children have regular access to large play equipment so they can practise climbing skills. They walk and crawl along balancing beams and some children show very good hand and eye coordination when throwing and catching balls. Children particularly enjoy dancing and move expressively to music from different countries. When dancing to fast Irish music children follow staff's lead and dance together in circles repeating movements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a spacious environment. Staff lay out the hall effectively ensuring space for active and quiet play. Resources are easily accessible with a good range of tabletop and floor activities. Resources are in good condition and are suitable for the age and stage of development of the children. Staff value children's contributions and create attractive displays of collaborative work. Several notice boards display useful information for parents making the hall welcoming.

All areas used by the children are safe and children can move freely between quiet activities and physical play. Regular fire drills ensure all staff and children know how to evacuate the building quickly and safely. Daily safety checks of the premises and resources means hazards are quickly addressed. Before going on outings staff carry out a risk assessment so they can anticipate any potential problems and keep the children safe. The premises are secure and there are good procedures to ensure children cannot leave unsupervised at collection time. Children learn about road safety through well-planned activities.

Staff have a very good knowledge of child protection procedures and are aware of the signs and symptoms that might indicate abuse. This promotes and safeguards children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and clearly enjoy the time they spend at the playgroup. Staff encourage children to play together and share. Lots of praise and encouragement makes children feel good about themselves. Children relate very well to each other and learn important social skills, such as sharing and being kind. Staff are warm and supportive making children feel secure and valued. Circle time includes all children as they watch for their name or greet Tickle, the rabbit puppet. Tickle brings things for the children to see such as numbers and colours. This makes memorable and enjoyable experiences.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff create a well-balanced curriculum that allows children to learn through fun activities. Regular meetings ensure children's individual learning needs are accommodated. Staff understand that children learn best through first hand experiences. Good open-ended questions encourage children to express themselves fully. Staff listen to children making good eye contact with them. This makes children feel valued and promotes self-esteem.

Children have a very positive attitude towards new activities and are keen to join in games with friends. Children are confident, independent and share well. Communication skills are good. When making models children can explain clearly, what they are doing. They love stories and the book area is easily accessible but not ever so inviting. All children get to choose songs to sing and if they cannot remember the name of a song, they can easily find a favourite one using pictures. Children have plenty of opportunities to develop their early writing skills. Although role-play is not always used effectively as a learning tool, children enjoy imaginative games and make up interesting stories as they play.

Children count confidently and learn about simple calculation through songs such as 'Five Currant Buns' and 'Five Little Men in Flying Saucers'. Children enjoy many activities that allow them to explore and experiment. They look at worms through magnifying glasses, experiment with magnets and make jelly. They grow cress and make their own sandwiches. They play with sand and water and collect natural items such as cones, leaves and twigs. They learn to use computers and regularly play educational games.

Children experiment with music and enjoy making twinkling fairy sounds using a triangle. They march to the beat of a drum and play with rain sticks. Children and staff work together to make things such as a large mulberry bush and then enjoy dancing and singing around it. Children use different techniques when painting as they use a variety tools such as twigs, vegetables and stencils.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in an environment where staff take time to get to know individuals. Staff encourage children to enjoy all resources and activities. During festivals, such as Divali, children enjoy taking part in puppet shows about Rama and Sita and make sponge pictures of the Hindu Monkey God. This helps children understand different cultures so they develop a positive attitude towards diversity.

There are good systems in place to support children who have special needs and those who speak English as an additional language. Staff have experience of caring for children with a variety of needs. Close liaison with parents ensures any needs are identified early. Staff are consistent when managing behaviour and children respond well. Staff create a very positive atmosphere where children receive praise for sharing and helping to tidy up toys. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive good information and are very pleased with what the playgroup provides for their children. Staff gather relevant details on the registration forms so they can give appropriate care. Staff involve parents in their children's learning by making suggestions about activities that can extend learning at home. Parents can make appointments to see their child's key worker but not all take up the opportunity. This means not all parents contribute to their children's assessment.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff organise space well to ensure children gain fully from the activities on offer. Staff deployment is effective ensuring good supervision and support at all times. There are effective recruitment and induction procedures in place. This means all staff are fully aware of their role and the way in which the group operates.

Leadership and management are good. Staff work very well together. Clear communication and guidance allows them to provide a stimulating well-balanced programme. Regular meetings enable staff to plan for individual learning needs. Teaching is monitored through observation and the evaluation of activities.

The good use of the self evaluation system show a commitment to improving the quality of care and education. Annual appraisals identify training and development needs. There are less formal meetings throughout the year that gives ongoing support to staff.

All required policies and procedures are available to parents and reflect practice in the group. All mandatory records are in place and most are very well maintained. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the playgroup was asked to amend and update various policies and procedures and to introduce some new documentation. They were also asked to carry out a risk assessment of the premises to identify any potential hazards.

All policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated. Some new ones have been introduced to ensure all required documentation is in place. The attendance records clearly show when staff and children are present. Staff ask parents to give written permission so they can seek advice or treatment in an emergency. This ensures the smooth running of the provision and supports children's welfare. New staff are asked to complete a health declaration to ensure they are physically and mentally suitable to work with children. A risk assessment has been carried out and daily checks ensure all areas are safe for children. Any potential hazards are reported quickly so they can be addressed.

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):

- consider ways to enhance the book area and make it more appealing
- ensure accident record includes all necessary details

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):

- make better use of role-play as a learning tool across all areas

- encourage all parents to attend regular feedback sessions where they can make a positive contribution to their children's assessment

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