



## Roundabout Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	113682
<b>Inspection date</b>	07 December 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Jacqueline Crawford
<b>Setting Address</b>	Wick Church Hall, Wick Street, Littlehampton, West Sussex, BN17 7JS
<b>Telephone number</b>	07946 283750 or 01903 722138
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Lynda Mary Vallance
<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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Roundabout Playgroup opened in the present premises in 1996 and originally opened in 1968. It operates from Wick Church Hall in Littlehampton, West Sussex. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09:00 to 12:00 during the school term. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 26 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 11 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. There are no children currently attending who require this additional support.

The playgroup employs six staff of whom four, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are currently no staff are working towards a qualification.

The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for by staff who follow appropriate health and hygiene guidelines and procedures. Most of the staff are trained in first aid and ensure children receive appropriate care if they become ill or have an accident. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene practices, as they are well supported by staff who act as good role models. For example, children know to wash their hands and use individual hand towels following toilet visits and before handling food. Children are suitably protected from cross infection, as the staff follow good practice by wearing protective gloves when dealing with toilet training issues and ensure the environment and surfaces are appropriately cleaned.

Children have their health and dietary needs met because staff work effectively with their parents and keep appropriate records. Children enjoy social interaction with staff and their friends at the rolling snack times. They learn the importance of healthy eating and enjoy a good range of snacks which include fresh fruit. The snack time menu often relates to a theme or weekly topic which makes it interesting for the children. Children have some opportunities to pour drinks themselves at snack time. During hot weather, water is available for children to pour their own drink when playing outside.

Children have little opportunity to rest or relax in comfortable surroundings. For example, the book area is sparse with no comfortable seating. Children take part in regular physical activity both indoors and outdoors. They have extremely good opportunities to be active, enabling them to gain control of their body and to acquire physical skills. The free flow play and learning organisation, enables children to use a good range of equipment to increase their co-ordination and control effectively.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well cared for in a suitable and secure indoor and outdoor environment. Staff implement good arrival and departure procedures and additional security measures have recently been introduced to safeguard children. However, the use of risk assessment is not effectively implemented to identify potential hazards. For instance, an uncovered drain in the outside play area poses a hazard to both children and staff. Children are protected in an emergency as appropriate fire safety requirements and procedures are in place. However, no recent fire drill has been practised or recorded, in order to ensure staff and volunteers are fully aware of actions to take to protect the children and themselves in an emergency. Children use a range of suitable and safe toys and equipment, which are well maintained and regularly checked for cleanliness and safety. Play and learning resources are rotated in order to meet the children's developing

need's. Children particularly benefit from the good quality and new outdoor play provision and resources, which enable safe free flow play and learning. Children develop a good sense of spatial awareness and generally move carefully around the setting.

Children are protected from harm because staff understand their role in child protection. Staff are made fully aware of safeguarding children issues through awareness training and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. Children are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant knowledge and experience. Parents receive written information relating to safeguarding children.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are warmly welcomed into a happy environment by friendly staff and settle quickly into their chosen activity. Children have access to a suitable range of toys and activities, but these are not always set out or resourced effectively in order to maintain children's enjoyment and concentration. Therefore, children tend to lose interest in some of the activities and this impacts on the noise level, children's learning and the otherwise good behaviour. Children benefit from good opportunities to enjoy free flow play between the hall and garden when ever possible. This enables children to acquire new knowledge and skills in a relaxed indoor and outdoor environment and to make individual choices in their play.

Children develop their confidence and self-esteem through the effective settling in procedures and the warm relationships and good interactions they enjoy with the staff and their key worker. Staff listen to what children have to say and they are interested in them. Children happily interact with their friends and generally play well together. Children have their individual needs met as staff understand their developing needs and monitor their progress and achievements. Staff are beginning to use guidance, such as Birth to three matters to provide for the younger children. Children under three have access to the to the same full range of activities as the funded children, staff modify some activities enabling the younger children to achieve with adult support, encouraging them to become competent learners.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff use their knowledge of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage to plan activities which are clearly linked to the stepping stones and enable children to progress through meaningful learning experiences. However, some activities do not effectively support the educational programme to enable children to learn through play. For example, the role play area is not inviting or well resourced, there is little adult interaction to support children's imaginative play and their learning experiences. Children are sometimes distracted when routines interrupt an otherwise good learning activity. For example, during a group time discussion at the end of session, children are expected to put on their coats and recognise belongings while trying to listen to staff. Therefore, most children are distracted by other conversations and miss out on a good activity through poor planning. Children are beginning to learn about their own community and the world around them through a range of topics and visitors to the setting. Children have opportunities to explore real and imaginative experiences during interactive stories and activity rhymes, such as 'Walking through

the jungle who do we see?. They are beginning to link letters to sounds when discussing and changing the advent calendar. They benefit from regular visits from the 'Book Bus' and enjoy stories read by the librarian and opportunities to select library books for the setting. Children have access to a good range of books in the provision but the book area is not comfortably organised. They have opportunities to develop and practice pencil control and have free access to a variety of writing and drawing tools and materials. Children understand they can use marks and writing for a variety of purposes and enjoy writing on greetings cards they have made. However, generally they are not encouraged to write their own names or label their other work, although many of the older children are able to do so. Children are beginning to recognise numbers and to count confidently to 10 and beyond. They have opportunities to develop an understanding of simple number operations, such as adding and taking away in number rhymes and when changing the advent calendar. Children are beginning to recognise patterns, shape and the vocabulary involved, when using a range of resources with support from staff. Some activities such as the play dough table, are not effectively organised to increase children's enjoyment and learning, therefore, children lack interest.

The planned themes and topics allow children to explore and develop their natural curiosity. Children's learning is effectively extended as they learn about their own culture and the world around them. Children become aware of Christian beliefs and festivals as they learn about advent and the preparations for Christmas. Children discover techniques for joining materials when making seasonal gifts, cards and party hats. They find out about the natural world and changing seasons by growing and cultivating seeds and plants in their garden. Children's learning is successfully extended to out of doors in a varied range of activities within the well planned outdoor environment. Children enjoy physical play and show a good awareness of others as they move between activities. Children develop their fine manipulative skills effectively using a range of tools and resources in delicate operations. They explore colour, texture, shape and form as they make decorations, gifts and displays. For example, children use Christmas stencils, silver and gold paint with rollers and black paper to make effective prints. Children delight in choosing the costume of the character they want to be in the nativity scene in the Christmas show. They join in enthusiastically as they practise Christmas songs such as 'Jingle Bells' using musical instruments and action rhymes, to perform to their family and friends at the concert.

Children are making satisfactory progress in relation to the stepping stones and towards the early learning goals in the six areas of learning. The key worker system in place ensures all staff know the children well and are clearly informed of their individual progress. Staff know children's starting points and use assessment and records effectively to track children's progress in order to plan their next steps for learning. Children generally show good levels of interest and enthusiasm and have the ability to sustain good levels of concentration, when the provision is organised effectively and the staff are deployed appropriately. However, this is not consistent throughout the setting, as the use of time, resources and some teaching methods do not extend activities for the older and more able children or maintain children's interest.

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

The provision is good.

Staff work effectively with parents to ensure children's individual needs are met. This ensures all children are valued, made welcome and are included fully in the life of the setting. Children and their parents receive a warm welcome by friendly and approachable staff. Children increase their social skills and confidence, as they come into playgroup happy and are pleased to see the staff and their friends. Children develop a true sense of belonging because relationships and interactions throughout the provision are very good. They are able to make choices and take decisions in their play and learning and are familiar with the daily routines. They are building their personal independence well.

Children learn to understand responsible behaviour and to play and work harmoniously with others, any minor differences are quickly resolved through appropriate intervention by staff. Therefore, children effectively learn to share and take turns and to become aware of their own needs and the needs of others. Children are supported extremely well by staff who have a calm and sensitive approach and use positive praise and age appropriate behaviour management strategies, which children understand. Children become aware of diversity within a wider society, through various topics, resources and by celebrating a range of festivals, such as Christmas and American Independence Day. This positive approach ensures children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the good relationships and informal contact between their parents and staff. Parents receive good information about the provision and are suitably informed about the educational programme. Regular newsletters provide details of planned learning activities and parents are encouraged to become involved in their children's learning, thus providing good links between home and the setting. Parents are well informed about the provision of care and the educational programme, through discussions with staff and their children's key worker, together with opportunities to attend individual consultations and open days. Some written information available to parents, such as the details of the regulator on the complaints procedure and safeguarding children information is not up-to-date. Staff ensure parents are kept fully informed about their children's progress and have access to their development records.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children feel comfortable and are made welcome in the setting and good use is made of space. However, the organisation of some activity areas and resources do not consistently provide a stimulating learning and play environment for children at every session. All practitioners have a high regard for the well-being of the children and the staff ratio is very good. However sometimes, staff deployment lacks continuity and children's enjoyment and meaningful activities are compromised, because daily routines and clearing away activities interrupt learning activities through poor planning.

All of the legally required documentation and records are in place, although some of these are basic. The provider knows to ensure confidentiality by putting individual entries on separate

pages. Some policies and procedures, such as safeguarding children information for parents and the complaints procedure require amendment to include correct information regarding the regulator. The provider is also aware to ensure a complaints log is in place to inform parents. A clearer system for staff records and more effective induction procedure for new staff is being considered.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Management of nursery education provides opportunities for children to make progress in their learning and development. Most staff have a good understanding of the stepping stones and the Foundation Stage, but sometimes the organisation of activities and methods of teaching impact on learning opportunities for children. Management is aware of the areas for improvement, particularly in the consistency of teaching, in order to extend activities more effectively for the older and more able children. Management is committed to making improvements in the organisation of nursery education and to support the staff's training needs relating to the Foundation Stage and the quality of teaching. The setting is currently undertaking a quality assurance scheme which provides opportunities to evaluate and improve different areas of practice. Management is aware that by continually monitoring and evaluating the educational programme, children's learning and progress is supported more effectively. Management and staff work well together as a team and support each other and the children extremely well. Leadership and management are committed to provide an inclusive environment and nursery education programme which contributes to the children's continuing progress towards the early learning goals.

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

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

At the last inspection a recommendation was made to develop and implement an induction checklist to ensure that new and existing staff are aware of policies and working practices. An induction procedure and checklist still needs to be put in place, to ensure new staff are aware of the policies and working practices of the provision. In practice the policies, procedures and routines are discussed with staff, but there is no formal induction programme to support the safe provision for children.

A recommendation was also made to develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development. Staff show a good understanding of age appropriate ways to manage children's behaviour, any difficulties children have are quickly resolved when staff intervene with a sensitive approach. Therefore, children's social development and understanding of sharing and taking turns is supported effectively.

Another recommendation was made to devise and conduct a risk assessment on the resources and premises to minimize identified risks. A risk assessment to identify hazards and to ensure children are safe and secure has been carried out following an incident. However, generally risk assessments are not recorded or regularly carried out to ensure potential hazards are minimised in order to safeguard children at all times.

A further recommendation was made to make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the complaints procedure which includes details of the regulator. A complaints procedure is in place and is available to parents, although some information about the regulator is not correct. The provider is aware that if a complaint is made a record must be kept. This ensures parents are fully informed of the standard of child care provided in the setting.

A recommendation was also made to provide a range of activities and play opportunities for children throughout the session, ensuring there is enough staff interaction and engagement in activities and supervision of children. Children enjoy a varied range of planned topics, resources and activities throughout the session. Generally children are well occupied with some good interaction with staff. However, some activity areas, staff involvement in some areas of play and the clearing away of activities, impact on the supervision and the children's enjoyment and learning opportunities.

### **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 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):

- ensure emergency evacuation procedures are regularly practised and recorded
- use risk assessment and safety checks to identify and effectively reduce potential hazards both inside and outside
- ensure all activities and staff deployment are effectively organised so that children gain the most from play and learning experiences based on their individual needs
- ensure all records and documentation are reviewed and maintained in line with the National Standards and regulation



### **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):

- increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage in order to improve the planning of activities and the consistency and quality of teaching

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)