



Little Fidgets Playgroup & Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133040
Inspection date	11 December 2006
Inspector	Susan June Stone
Setting Address	The Memorial Hall, Farrington Gurney, Bristol, BS39 6TY
Telephone number	01761 452719
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Registered person	Little Fidgets Playgroup & Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Little Fidgets Pre-school is located in the Memorial Hall in Farrington Gurney near Midsomer Norton. The pre-school has use of the main hall, kitchen, and toilets, they also have access to an outdoor area. The pre-school is open 09:30 to 12:00 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday during term times only. The pre-school serves the local area.

The pre-school is managed by a committee of parents and is registered to care for up to 26 children aged two to five years. There are 17 children on roll at present, of whom four are in receipt of government funding for three-year-olds and none for four-year-olds. There are no children attending at present with language or learning difficulties, or with English as an additional language. There are two staff employed at present with a current vacancy for a third person. The play leader is experienced and holds a level 3 childcare qualification. The pre-school is supported by the advisors from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The daily routine allows the children to experience regular physical play both indoors and out. They take part in outdoor physical activities where they run, jump, pedal bikes and use bats and balls. The children enjoy the freedom of space and benefit from the fresh air. They also have opportunities for indoor physical play in the hall where they climb and balance using mini trampolines and sit on spinning equipment. These activities help children to develop large muscle skills, balance and co-ordination.

Children's individual dietary needs are known to staff and managed effectively. The children are provided with a snack each day which usually consists of a biscuit and fruit. The children enjoy the social occasion of snack time, where they sit in groups to the table and happily converse with each other. Additional drinks of water are provided for children in named bottles which the children help themselves to during the pre-school session.

Children are developing an understanding of maintaining their personal hygiene. They know they must wash hands before snack and after messy activities. They wash their hands before snack, they use the sinks in the toilet area where they share the same sink of soapy water. Paper towels are provided which children use to dry their hands. Children also use a communal bowl of water to wash their hands after messy activities in the main hall.

All necessary records and documentation regarding children's health are in place, this means that their individual health care needs can be consistently met and respected. However, the staff's training in first aid has not been suitably monitored, to ensure a member of staff with a current suitable first aid certificate is present at all sessions.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The indoor play space is organised suitably well to create a child friendly environment where children are able to experience a range of play opportunities. A welcoming environment is created by staff for children and parents. The children can self-select from toys available each day, making their own decisions about their play. There is sufficient furniture and equipment available to meet the care needs of all children attending. Children enjoy using the toys available to them, which are clean, safe and suitable to use. They freely access the home corner and use the indoor equipment and apparatus like the trampoline with confidence. The staff are suitably deployed within the setting and appropriate adult to child ratios are maintained. This ensures that the children are adequately supervised at all times.

Staff encourage the children to take some responsibility for their own safety during pre-school sessions. They remind children not to run when inside and they teach children how to handle scissors carefully. This helps to ensure that the children can enjoy a variety of play opportunities in generally safe surroundings. However a general risk assessment of the premises and outdoor area is not conducted to identify any potential risks to children. As a result some hazards have

not been addressed during pre-school sessions. There are exposed power sockets and hazardous substances like cleaning fluids are placed where children can access them easily.

Children are protected by the staff's understanding of child protection and their role in the protection of children. The children's welfare is always a priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy to attend the pre-school. They feel settled and secure in the welcoming environment created by staff. Children are offered a balance of free play and adult-led activities. They follow the daily routine with ease and familiarity, showing confidence and increasing independence. They interact and play happily alongside each other, and are beginning to share and take turns. Resources and space are used suitably well to support their play and provide an appropriate environment for all the children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff demonstrate a suitable knowledge and understanding of how children learn. However not all staff are familiar with the stepping stones within the Foundation Stage. Staff plan and organise a range of activities and play opportunities to encourage children's development. They are suitably involved in the activities provided to help the children to learn and develop at their own pace. They question children appropriately to help them gain from the experience. Written weekly activity plans indicate that children are offered a range of activities. These plans identify what staff would like the children to learn. However the learning intentions are very general and do not link to the stepping stones in the Foundation Stage. Activities are not suitably evaluated to identify what children have learned or gained from the experience offered. All children have individual progress folders, however these contain sparse information. Staff make some notes to report on the children's progress and achievements but this is not regularly transferred to the children's progress folders. This means that the progress folders do not give an accurate picture of what stage the children have reached in their individual learning and development, and they do not clearly indicate their progress through the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage. Due to the lack of information contained in them, progress folders are not an effective aid to help inform planning, to ensure all children are suitably challenged and individual progress made through the stepping stones.

Children concentrate and listen to staff direction. They mostly sit quietly when appropriate like at story time and register time. They are developing their independence. They confidently choose from the activities available and make decisions about their play and learning. Most children are able to put on their coats for outdoor play, some ask for help as needed.

Children select their name card on arrival and use this to self register on the board. Most of the older children can recognise names and some are able to recognise the names of others. Some children independently name their own work, others are encouraged to copy staff. Children freely access the book corner, looking at books, talking about what they see. They know how to handle books carefully and correctly. Children are confident to initiate conversations and

ask questions like, 'What's your name', 'Why are you here'. Two children talk about their princess and snow white costumes which they have at home.

Children are regularly offered activities which develop their mathematical skills. They regularly count how many children are present at register time. Children are able to name different shapes when making decorations for the Christmas tree.

Through topic work and themes they are learning about different festivals, cultures and beliefs. They are learning to value and respect others' views and beliefs. They have also looked at nature and explored the changes during the autumn season.

They enjoy many creative activities like role play, playdoh and painting. They use their imagination in role play and games, re-creating familiar scenarios like looking after babies. The children enjoy singing and join in with the daily songs. They confidently match actions to the words.

Children experience opportunities for outdoor and indoor physical play. Children run and jump in the outdoor areas and can confidently pedal and manoeuvre ride-on toys and bikes. They enjoy throwing, kicking and catching balls with each other. They confidently bounce on the mini trampoline and spin themselves around on the roundabout spinner.

Overall the children are making satisfactory progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are building good relationships with staff and peers. They play well individually or together in small groups and encourage others to join in. They are treated with equal regard and their individual needs and beliefs are respected. Through planned activities the children are offered opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the wider world around them. Children celebrate a variety of festivals and have access to resources which help to promote positive attitudes to diversity. Staff have appropriate knowledge of their responsibilities of supporting children with learning difficulties and disabilities, who are suitably supported and their needs are met. The group's Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) has attended relevant training with regards to special needs. She works alongside parents and other professionals to ensure the children's individual care needs are addressed.

Children know the levels of expected behaviour. They generally behave well as they are aware of the realistic boundaries that have been set. They mostly sit quietly when appropriate such as register time and story time, but some of the younger children can tend to get a bit restless towards the end of circle time. Staff use praise and encouragement and are positive role models for the children. They offer appropriate explanations to the children when their behaviour is not acceptable. They encourage children to share toys like the favourite bike, using a sand timer to identify time available to each child. Children respond to this well and fetch the timer to use for themselves. Children demonstrate good manners and are polite, saying 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate, such as at snack time for their food and drink, which is actively encouraged by staff. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are able to access their children's details and progress folders at any time. There is unfortunately limited information in the children's individual progress records to share with parents. Therefore parents are not adequately informed of their children's progress through the stepping stones in the Foundation Stage. Staff are available to talk with parents each day which helps to contribute to the consistency in the children's care and well-being. Good relationships are evident between parents and staff, and parents are happy with the care their children receive. Information about the provision is shared through newsletters, notice board, and the group prospectus. However, even though policies are available to parents they are not easily accessible. Information to parents about how to make a complaint is not readily accessible and a complaints log is not available at the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is adequately supported by satisfactory organisation. The premises are suitably organised to allow the children access to a variety of different activities and play opportunities. The daily sessions are organised and managed by staff that have appropriate experience and knowledge of childcare. They work well together to provide a welcoming environment for the children and ensure the sessions run smoothly. Staff and volunteers are suitably deployed within the setting to ensure adult to child ratios are maintained.

The leadership and management are satisfactory. Positive working relationships are being developed between the present chairperson and the pre-school staff. The committee are aware of the new procedures with regards to the checking of suitability of staff, and recruitment and vetting procedures are in place. There are however no effective systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education, care and the outcomes for children. A written operational plan has been developed, but this has not been suitably reviewed and updated to ensure it remains in line with current guidance. It does not accurately reflect and support the organisation of the pre-school or systems in place to ensure the outcomes for children are promoted. Appraisals of staff have not been maintained, which has led to staff responsible for the delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum not sufficiently developing their knowledge of the stepping stones within the framework. Policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated, but some now do not reflect current practice or the requirements of the National Standards. Documentation within the pre-school is suitably stored to ensure confidentiality.

Overall, the pre-school meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were three recommendations from the last care inspection and four from the Nursery education inspection which both took place in December 2003. The care inspection recommendations were to: continue to seek a qualified deputy play leader, to ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing and to extend positive images of disability and gender roles in play materials for the children. There have been a lot of staff changes since the last inspection. A new manager has recently been employed who has a level 3 qualification. The deputy is at present working towards the Certificate in Pre-school Practice (CPP) and is hoping to continue to achieve the Diploma in Pre-school Practice (DPP) which is a recognized

level 3 qualification. The committee are currently looking to recruit a new member of staff who is suitably qualified. With regards to hand washing, practice is still not 'good'. Children share the same water when washing hands after using the toilet as part of the daily routine before snacks. A communal bowl is also used to wash hands after messy activities during the main sessions. With regards to extending the resources to reflect positive images of disability and gender roles, the present committee have highlighted that this has still to be addressed.

The recommendations from the nursery education inspection were to: firstly extend the inclusion of large play on a more frequent basis to give children regular practice in climbing, pedalling and jumping, secondly to extend children's creativity by ensuring sufficient accessories in the role play area and opportunities for using art materials freely to produce their own designs, thirdly to provide information to parents about what children learn from play and how to extend learning at home, and finally to improve the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluating activities by sharing views and recording comments on activity sheets. Again staff and committee have changed since the last inspection. Large physical play is now included in each session either indoors or outside where jumping, pedalling and climbing is encouraged by staff through using equipment like the trampoline for jumping and ride on toys for pedalling. Children have regular access to the home corner which includes dressing up outfits including multicultural costumes. Topics and themes are used to encourage children to play different roles like hospitals, police and fire fighters. Children have access to the painting easel where they paint and design their own pictures. Playdoh is regularly offered where children create and design their own models. With regards to information provided to parents: parents are welcome to help at pre-school sessions which enables them to gain an insight into how children learn through their play at pre-school. Activity plans are often displayed to explain what children are expected to learn from certain activities. Newsletters are also sent home to parents informing them of future topics and themes and how children can contribute and learning could be continued at home. With regards to improving the effectiveness of monitoring and evaluating activities: the systems in place at present are still not effective and this remains an issue from this inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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):

- make sure that staff's training in first aid is regularly updated, to ensure a member of staff with a current suitable first aid certificate is present at any one time
- conduct and record regular risk assessments of the premises to ensure potential hazards and possible actions necessary are identified and suitably addressed
- ensure up to date information is available to parents on how to make a complaint, make sure a record of complaints is maintained and available on request
- review systems in place to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education, care and the outcomes for children which includes formal appraisals of staff (also applies to Nursery Education)
- ensure the settings' operational plan is reviewed and updated to reflect current practice in line with the National Standards and supports the day to day running of the group.

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):

- ensure staff responsible for children in receipt of nursery education funding develop their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum
- develop written activity plans to clearly identify learning intentions linked to the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage; make sure that activities are evaluated against learning objectives to identify if they have or have not been met
- develop children's progress records to give more evidence of achievements and progress made; use these records as an aid to inform planning to ensure all children are suitably challenged and individual progress through the stepping stones is maintained

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