



Footprints PreSchool Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	405536
Inspection date	21 November 2006
Inspector	Kay Roberts
Setting Address	The Mustard Tree, Watsons Road, Longwell Green, Bristol, Avon, BS30 9DW
Telephone number	0117 9873395 or chair 0117 3307506
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Registered person	Footprints Pre-School Playgroup
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 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?

Footprints Pre-school first registered in 2001 and is situated in the Mustard Tree Community Church in Longwell Green, South Gloucestershire. The group have the use of a large hall, small room, reception room and toilets. There is a kitchen and coffee bar area which is used by adults only. Outside play takes place in a totally enclosed paved courtyard. Opening hours are Monday and Wednesday 09.15 to 13.10 and Friday 09.15 to 11.45 during term time. The group are registered to care for a maximum of 24 children aged between three and five-years. At present there are 20 children on roll and of these there are nine funded three-year-olds and five funded four-year-olds. The group supports children with learning difficulties and/or physical disabilities. There are four members of staff, all of whom hold a relevant child care qualification. Support on the education programme is provided by the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment and to keep the floor clean, wear plimsolls indoors. The risk of infection is minimised as staff follow hygienic procedures, for example using antibacterial spray to clean tables. The policy for excluding children who are ill is shared with parents. If children become ill whilst at the playgroup they are reassured and receive appropriate care until parents are able to collect them. Children have good opportunities to learn how to promote their own health, both through the daily routine and specific planned activities. As part of the daily routine children independently wash their hands after using the toilet and before snack. Use of a liquid frog soap dispenser makes hand washing more fun. The importance of being thorough is reinforced as children have an opportunity to place their hands under the ultra violet light of the hand washing machine, to show areas which are not clean. Dental hygiene is discussed as children play with the large dentures and toothbrushes in a resource pack and they are visited by a dentist. There are suitable procedures in place so that children's welfare is promoted if medication or first aid treatment is required.

Children have daily opportunities to play outside and for half the session are able to move freely between in and outdoors. In winter children wrap up warm and wear wellies so they do not get cold. Children are protected from the sun in summer as they wear hats and are encouraged to play in the shade of the gazebo. Children enjoy playing in the fresh air as planning ensures children are provided with a variety of interesting activities. For example, children are enthusiastic and motivated to learn as they dig in the peat with forks and trowels to find different vegetables. Pleased when they have found a vegetable, children shout across to a member of staff. The activity stimulates discussion; children talk about the vegetables and whether they are eaten at home. Children develop large muscle skills and co-ordination as they ride bicycles along the path, and are careful not to bump into each other. Children show a sense of balance and more able children can hop for some considerable distance. Children work together to carry large boxes of toys. Visits to local parks provides children with opportunities to extend their skills as they use the larger equipment. Indoors children take exercise as they stretch and dance to music. Afterwards they show an awareness of what happens to their bodies as they say they need a drink of cold water.

When thirsty, children pour themselves a drink of water from the jug. Children are able to choose when they have their snack, as staff operate a snack bar. There is a system in place to ensure that all children access this area and that special dietary requirements are met. The healthy, varied snack menu is displayed so parents know what their children have eaten. Children help themselves to bowls of fresh fruit or cheese and pineapple. On some occasions children make fresh fruit salad as a snack. Independence is extended as children spread their own butter when they have toast. Two days a week children stay for a packed lunch, which is a social occasion in key groups.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children relax as they receive a warm welcome from staff. They have free access to a large hall and separate art room. Activities are organised under the areas of learning, on tables and clearly defined areas with space between. This enables children to move around freely and those engaged in play are not disturbed by their peers. In all areas, children make informed decisions as they access an extensive range of clean, safe resources stored in clear boxes, which are labelled with pictures and words. Children's independence is accommodated through the provision of low level coat hooks and small steps in the bathroom. The premises are decorated and maintained to a satisfactory standard throughout. Children also benefit from direct access to an outside area. Parents are fortunate in having a room in which they can relax and study pertinent literature, whilst they wait for their children at the end of the session.

Children play in a secure environment and are protected from people who have not been vetted. There is a system in place to ensure that children are only released to authorised adults, and do not leave the premises unnoticed. There are effective procedures in place so the risk of children having an accident is minimised. Staff are appropriately deployed and children supervised at all times. The fully detailed risk assessment is reviewed annually, portable electrical appliances are tested regularly and every accident is reviewed so that steps can be taken to ensure there is no recurrence. Physical activities indoors are separated from the rest of the room. Children are further protected as staff regularly attend child protection training and have a good understanding of local safeguarding procedures. In the event of a fire children know how to evacuate the premises safely as they have practised the drill. Children learn to protect themselves as they are asked to consider why they should not take toys on the climbing frame. When one child shows the group the picture she has made with small beads which were heated with an iron, staff use this opportunity to explain the potential dangers. Children know how to keep themselves safe on Guy Fawkes Night, as they pretend to build a bonfire and act out safety measures. Prior to going on outings, for which there are safe procedures, staff and children discuss road safety and this is reinforced by a visit from a police officer.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children confidently enter the premises and recognising their name in print, self register by attaching their name card to the board. They make decisions and develop independence as they are provided with many opportunities, for example through the organisation of resources. Children are social and form strong friendships, often moving between activities together. They play alongside others engaged in the same theme and after dressing up in hats children pretend to go on a train ride to the beach. Other children use their imagination and learn about the world around them. At tidy up time one child reaches out a toy Hoover and pretends to clean the carpet. Other children use a large toy digger to scoop up the pebbles and conkers, and then transfer the contents into a lorry. Alert to their senses they say that the conkers are cold. Another child learns that if he squeezes an acorn in his hand it will pop out, he thinks that this is because his hands are "silky". Children are aware of information and communication technology; they know how to operate simple computer programmes and develop hand-eye

co-ordination as they operate the mouse. As children access the programme and watch small video clips they learn about the wider world; the importance of not dropping litter and how to care for a pet.

Children know how to problem solve. Having swept up some items into the dustpan one child said "now I need a bin" and went off to fetch one. Four children work together to complete a 35 piece puzzle and afterwards consider how it can be placed back in the box in one piece. Children are curious and having seen a puddle, scrape a spoon back and forth across the water. They mix in sand and peat. Another child recognises that having drawn a picture she can see the marks on the other side of the paper when holding it up to the light. Keen to explore the child makes marks on the second side of the paper to see if the same happens. Children develop fine muscle skills and independence as they select from a good range of craft materials to create their own pictures with sequins, beads, string and feathers. Afterwards they explain their pictures and say that the string is a web and it's for Spiderman to climb up. Some children are interested in painting with rollers; they take time to ensure that no paper can be seen once they have finished. Fine muscle skills are used to place pegs in a board. Children name the colours and say they will make a rainbow. More able children demonstrate how they can count more than ten pegs. Aware of time another child guesses that it may be "ten past eight". Children enjoy singing their favourite action rhymes and use their fingers to represent numbers as they sing 'One, two, three, four, five, once I caught a fish alive'. Nursery rhymes are also used to help children understand the concept of subtraction, for example 'Five Little Ducks', and the rhyme is made more interesting as staff use a glove puppet. Children use language in play, to express their ideas and for thinking. In a large group children confidently share their news. As they do so children listen to each other; they know they should only talk when holding 'Talking Bear'. Children show a respect for books and enjoy listening to the story 'Mamma Zoom'. However children do not freely access the book corner and after lunch whilst waiting for other children to finish eating, rather than looking at books a few children prefer to crawl under chairs.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good as staff are well informed about the Foundation Stage and know how to extend children's learning. Staff undertake regular observations of children and monitor their progress against South Gloucestershire's Stepping Stones document, which links directly to the early learning goals. There is an effective planning cycle based on the needs of every child so that all children make good progress. Children are motivated to learn as staff respond to their interests and praise each achievement. Each activity is very well resourced, and in particular the craft room and sensory tent. Appropriate organisation of the environment helps children to develop independence. Staff encourage children to think and develop language skills through pertinent questioning. Children are appropriately grouped so that staff can focus on specific areas of learning. For example, in a small group, children are encouraged to match the sound of a musical instrument and to repeat patterns, so that their listening skills are extended. At story time children are divided into two groups, so that those with better concentration listen to a longer story, whilst others listen to a short story and sing rhymes. In key groups children are encouraged to sample activities for all areas of learning, which some may not access otherwise. Two dimensional shapes are used to identify the key

groups, so children quickly learn the names of each shape. Generally time is well managed so children are not rushing to finish what they are doing, or lose interest.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children new to the provision are helped to settle as they are already familiar with the environment, having visited with their parent or carer the previous week. Children have a sense of belonging as some of their art work is displayed, and each child has their own named drawer and coat hook. Confidence is developed as staff meet children's individual needs, follow through on their interests and praise their achievements. All children are valued and included, and where necessary activities adapted accordingly. Staff are particularly experienced in sensitively meeting children's additional needs. Staff work in close partnership with other professionals and regularly review the progress of children with learning difficulties/and or physical disabilities so that they make excellent progress.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children are generally well behaved in response to the clear guidance and proactive approach by staff. When staff begin to sing 'One, Two, three, four, five, once I caught a fish alive' children immediately sit down for register. Children are able to take turns and negotiate sharing. They are appreciative of others and following a visit from a librarian, one child draws the librarian a picture. Children show respect for their environment by helping to tidy away toys they have finished playing with. They learn to positively appreciate difference as they access a range of resources reflecting positive images of diversity and visit places such as 'Hop, Skip and Jump', a resource centre for children with additional needs. Children learn about their own culture as each child's birthday is acknowledged by everyone singing 'Happy Birthday' and blowing out the candles on the cake. Some understanding of other cultures is developed as children acknowledge festivals, such as Diwali and Chinese New Year.

Children have many good opportunities to learn about the local community. On walks children point out where their relatives live and in the church listen to a story read by the minister. Children visit the library, adjacent shop, Bitton train station, Avon Valley Country Park and Keynsham Leisure Centre for soft play followed by a picnic in the park.

The partnership with parents is good. The strong, relaxed relationship between staff and parents, gives children emotional security. Parents comment positively about the provision; the fantastic staff, broad range of activities and opportunities provided so children develop independence and social skills. Parents are aware of practices within the setting as they receive a well presented prospectus which includes the key policies and procedures. Staff have a system in place to ensure that when key workers first meet with parents they are fully informed about all aspects of the environment, care and education. Regular newsletters and notice boards keeps parents updated. Other useful information, such as leaflets on antibiotics and behaviour management are readily available in the waiting area. Parents are involved in their child's learning as they assist at sessions on a rota basis and when a child's specific needs are identified staff offer suggestions. On a daily basis parents are verbally updated about each session via the manager and meet formally with their child's key worker twice a year. Although staff seek parents' views on children's progress there is no formal system for recording this information.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The provider meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. There are rigorous recruitment procedures, and although a system and documentation for appraisal has been devised to check the ongoing suitability of staff, it will not be implemented until January 2007. Staff are aware of their role and responsibilities as there is a clear induction and deployment is discussed prior to each session. Parents on duty are also provided with guidelines. Children receive a high level of support as adult to child ratios are above minimum requirements, and there is effective grouping of children. Staff are passionate about their work and keen to improve the provision regularly review practices, making changes where necessary. They attend training on subjects such as inclusion, high scope, the Foundation Stage and child protection. Children are provided with a welcoming, inclusive environment with space for physical activity, play and relaxation. There is an effective planning cycle based on children's interests so children are motivated to learn and make good progress. Paperwork is well organised, confidentially maintained and where appropriate shared with parents. Although there is a system for regularly reviewing documentation, occasionally it does not always accurately reflect practice.

Leadership and management are good. The leader is appropriately qualified and experienced in child care. The leader believes that the key to providing a good education for all children is the committed staff team. She is able to motivate staff so that they are enthusiastic about their work and keen to try out new ideas. The leader is able to clearly identify strengths and weaknesses within the education programme. For example, she is aware that children are not using the book corner and has tried to address this by introducing glove puppets, but to date, there has been no change. Other identified weaknesses have improved the provision for example, the introduction of a sensory tent and creating space indoors for physical activity during the main part of the session.

Improvements since the last inspection

Staff have made good progress against the two recommendations made at the last care inspection in October 2003. Children's health safety and welfare are further promoted as there is now a staff induction procedure, so that all staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Children now have greater access to resources reflecting positive images of disability through the purchase of appropriate books.

Four key issues were raised at the last inspection in February 2005. Very good progress has been made against the first key issue which was to improve the organisation of activities to ensure children have sufficient varied choice during the session. In all areas of learning children are able to self-select from an extensive range of resources. The second key issue required staff to give greater priority to mathematical development. Children's knowledge in this area has improved as they now have regular opportunities throughout every session to count. Nursery rhymes are used to develop children's understanding of subtraction and many opportunities are provided for children to develop problem solving skills. Good progress has been made against the requirement for planning to show the learning objectives and differentiation for able children. Planning now includes learning intentions and identifies children's individual needs. Some progress has been made against the last key issue which was to introduce a formal

approach to monitoring staff performance. Although a system has been devised, staff appraisals will not take place until January 2007.

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):

- continue to review practice and in particular ensure documentation is up to date

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 communication, language and literacy by ensuring that children are activity encouraged to develop an appreciation of books
- formalise the system for involving parents with the initial and ongoing assessment of their child's learning.

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