



Jiminy Crickets Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507959
Inspection date	15 November 2006
Inspector	Melissa Cox
Setting Address	Ashford Hill Cricket Club, Chapel Lane, Ashford Hill, Thatcham, Berkshire, RG19 8BE
Telephone number	07748748870
E-mail	
Registered person	Ashford Hill 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?

Jiminy Crickets Playgroup opened in 1990 and operates from the Ashford Hill Cricket Club in the village of Ashford Hill. The playgroup serves the local area and surrounding villages. It is managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school.

A maximum of 15 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 20 children from three to five years on roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for early education. Children attend a variety of sessions. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions last from 09:15 to 12:00, and the group runs a lunch club from 12:00 to 13:00 on a Tuesday and Thursday.

Five staff are employed to work with the children. Two staff members have an early years qualification to NVQ level 3 and one member of staff is qualified to NVQ level 2. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted effectively by staff who demonstrate a good knowledge of the procedures for promoting health and hygiene. Staff consistently wear disposable gloves and aprons for nappy changing, and help prevent the spread of infection through effective routines. Staff follow good procedures when preparing and storing food, ensuring all lunchboxes are stored appropriately for those children attending lunch club.

Children have a clear awareness of their own needs and are developing independence in their personal care. They independently use the toilet facilities and are aware of the importance of hand washing after using the toilet and before snack time. They help themselves to tissues and are mindful to put their hand over their mouth when coughing. All necessary accident and medication books are in place and shared with parents when necessary. There is a clear sickness policy which further ensures the children's good health.

Children are beginning to learn about healthy eating. They are offered a good selection of snacks during the week, that include several fruit choices, raisins and crackers. Water is made available to children throughout the session. They learn about healthy eating through planned activities and proudly show off the poster that they have made entitled 'We love healthy food'. Children's independence is not always fully encouraged at snack time. Children are not fully involved in the preparation of their snack and lack opportunities to serve themselves, further promoting their independence. Children's healthy growth and development however, is fostered, as staff show an excellent understanding of children's individual dietary requirements and fully include any children with additional dietary requirements.

Children benefit from fresh air and regular exercise, making good use of the indoor and outdoor environment. The nearby playground is used regularly by the children and they enjoy frequent walks to the local school and around the nearby field. Staff organise physical activities inside with the children, for example parachute games or tents and tunnels. They have good co-ordination and an awareness of others, particularly when they jump around to instructions by staff when playing their instruments and pausing their music when staff lift their arms in the air. Children take part in a range of activities in all areas of learning, which help to develop both their fine and gross motor skills. They are able to control pencils, scissors and paintbrushes with a good range of activities to develop their manipulative skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a warm, friendly, happy and welcoming environment where they play safely. They use a varied range of safe and developmentally appropriate resources, including

everyday household items that are good quality and safe. The resources and play equipment support, stimulate and challenge the children's individual development needs appropriately. Equipment and resources are kept clean and in a good state of repair and are checked regularly for safety.

The playgroup premises is secure and there are good arrangements for the safe arrival and departure of children. Children, staff and visitors arrivals and departures are promptly recorded so that in an emergency there is an accurate record of who is in the building. Children are well supervised by staff at all times, who take good measures in reducing potential risks around the building both inside and outside. Written risk assessments are carried out and these are supported by detailed policies and procedures to ensure that the staff are consistent in keeping children safe. Children learn to keep themselves safe by giving each other gentle reminders of the safety rules of the group.

Staff understand their responsibilities for protecting children's welfare. All staff undertake training regularly to update their knowledge. They have clear procedures in place and have a good understanding and knowledge about what to do in the event of having a concern about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident and happy as they leave their parents to play. All children enjoy themselves at playgroup and the activities offered are fun and enjoyable. There is a good balance between adult-led activities and free play. Children can select their own activities and staff have a good understanding about ensuring children complete their activity in their own time.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are confident in their environment, arrive happily and eager to take part in all activities. They show immense enthusiasm as they make independent choices and select their own activities from good well-presented play equipment and self-selection areas. Children concentrate well at varied planned and spontaneous activities, for example counting cubes or comparing shapes when completing an activity with staff. They gain a good understanding of early numeracy, which staff integrate well into all areas of learning. Staff are particularly skilled at picking up on spontaneous opportunities for promoting mathematics and children's needs are met effectively through staff's sensitive and appropriate interactions.

Children receive praise in their work and play helping build their self-esteem and confidence. They show a well-developed self-respect for others in the setting. Children respond well to the routine changes in the session, they follow clear guidelines and are aware of the expectations such as, helping tidy activities away. They explore different beliefs, traditions and cultures and talk about special events in their lives at circle time. Children experience varied opportunities to develop their physical skills through well-planned and spontaneous activities both indoors

and out. As a result, they develop an excellent understanding of the importance of a healthy lifestyle.

Very positive relationships are evident between staff and children. They know the children well nurturing their self-esteem. Children develop a good awareness of their own needs and a mature respect for the needs of others as they negotiate turn taking. All children are happy, settled, and thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting.

Children are skilful communicators. They listen attentively to stories and recall parts of the story from memory. They interact with confidence, speak clearly and listen well to each others and staff's conversations. Children respond with enjoyment to songs, rhymes and are able to repeat complex sequences of movements with their musical instruments at singing time. Children's imaginary play is varied and interesting as they draw on their experiences from everyday life when playing with the happy street village. They use the wide range of construction materials available to them to sculpt rockets and enjoy decorating them with a variety of materials.

Teaching is inspiring and challenging for all age groups of children. Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They provide a purposeful learning environment for the children to learn and develop as individuals. Staff develop and use varied teaching methods to engage the children's interests and develop their progress. Relationships are excellent and staff 's enthusiasm for learning is contagious.

Staff demonstrate a good knowledge of tracking the children's progress but do not always use the information effectively to guide their planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff are proactive in ensuring the needs of all children are being met. They demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the individual needs of the children in their care. Children's efforts are valued and staff praise them appropriately, developing their confidence and self esteem.

Children develop a positive attitude to others through varied positive images displayed around the setting. This is supported by regular visitors to the playgroup such as the local Reverend, library van and opticians. They have regular opportunities to visit the local community with visits to the local school or church and develop a secure knowledge of the wider world. Children with special educational needs are well supported in all areas and due to this they are able to achieve their full potential.

Children benefit from staff who adopt a consistent and positive approach to the management of their behaviour. Children know right from wrong, they are sensitive to the needs of others, readily share toys and resources and co-operate with each other. They become aware of the routines and procedures and know what to expect in response to the routine changes in the session. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents and carers are well informed by staff. They share relevant background information, play activities and discuss children's specific needs. A clear and informative notice board with relevant up to date information is accessible to all parents. Children benefit from the open door policy and two way sharing of information, with opportunities for parents to speak to staff to enhance their development and learning.

Parents are encouraged by staff to play a supportive role in the playgroup. The children benefit from this relationship as the group have a strong committee and a dedicated team of parents who have worked hard to renovate the premises.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the setting's effective organisation. The manager and chair of the committee work together effectively, with clearly defined roles and responsibilities. All share a clear vision for the playgroup's future. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and strong emphasis is placed on staff qualifications and on-going training. There are clear policies and procedures in place to ensure these are met, and which underpin the safe and efficient running of the playgroup. All required documentation is in place, although two policies require minor amendments.

The activities and experiences for all children are rich and varied meeting their individual needs very well. All staff are skilled and sensitive to the management of the children and their behaviour. Staff use the accommodation and resources effectively to support the children's learning which reflects their backgrounds and the wider community.

The provision for the quality of leadership and management are good. Staff working with the children are enthusiastic, knowledgeable and consistently promote the children's well being. This enables children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. The manager provides clear, positive leadership to the staff who all work extremely well as a team. They monitor and evaluate the provision through regular meetings, training and promoting their personal development through job shadowing and observations. This results in a happy and focussed team who work very effectively at meeting the personal development and achievements of all the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last care inspection, the playgroup were asked to develop a full range of documentation including, operational plan, risk assessment, record fire safety records and develop planning to include children's individual needs and interests.

Considerable improvement has been made by the group and the committee to meet this recommendation. The group have extensive policies and procedures in place and a clear operational plan which works well in practise. As a result the children benefit from a well organised group which provides extensively for their needs.

The previous nursery education inspection highlighted that the playgroup needs to extend children's opportunities to partake in planned creative activities; to use calculation and problem solving in everyday activities; for more able children to write words and simple sentences; develop planning to include children individual needs and interests and support children's understanding of text and that print carries meaning.

The group has successfully addressed these issues. Staff provide opportunities for children to use calculation and problem solving in their everyday activities. They count during registration, snack time and general routines and staff re-enforce language throughout the session. Children are avid readers and take part in the selection of their reading material by self selecting their own choice of books from the library van. They have an increased awareness that print carries meaning and are given more opportunities to write words and simple sentences. Staff have addressed planning needs and fully include all children who are skilfully organised into key worker groups. As a result, the points have been successfully implemented in the group and the children now benefit from a broad & balanced curriculum based on what children can do and covering all areas fully.

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):

- develop further opportunities for children to become more independent at snack time
- ensure complaints and child protection policies contain more accurate information.

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):

- further develop the system for planning, ensuring children's assessments effectively influence planning

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