



# Tolleshunt Knights Co-operative Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	650159
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Lynn Amelia Hartigan / Susan Catherine McGarry
<b>Setting Address</b>	Tolleshunt Knights Village Hall, Top Road, Tolleshunt Knights, Maldon, Essex, CM9 8ET
<b>Telephone number</b>	01621 816771
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Vicky Reeve
<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?

Tolleshunt Knights Co-operative Playgroup opened in 1971. It operates from the village hall in Tolleshunt Knights. The playgroup serves the local community and surrounding area.

There are currently 41 children from two to under five on roll. This includes 29 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with special educational needs and children with English as an additional language.

The group opens for four sessions a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.30 until 12.00. and 09.30 until 13.30.

There are five staff who work with the children. Four staff have recognised early years qualifications at NVQ level 2 and 3. The setting receives support from the local authority and the Pre-School Learning Alliance (PLA).

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy as they are encouraged and praised when using the bathroom, most can manage this independently. They are encouraged to wash their hands before snacks, lunch club and after using the toilet. Children are further protected from illness as the staff promote well documented policies regarding illness, medication and accidents. In addition all staff are fully trained in first aid. A satisfactory daily risk assessment and cleaning programme helps minimise accidents and cross-infection. However, completion of training to assist and support staff's medical knowledge, specific to meet individual children's needs, would ensure children's health is not compromised.

Children are offered a choice of healthy snacks and drinks, for example, they enjoy several choices of fruit and have fun making fruit salad for snack time. Drinking water is available throughout the session and children are able to pour their drinks with confidence and accuracy. Some children stay for lunch club. Staff encourage children to think about what food is good for their bodies, children talk about apples being 'good for your teeth' and have a good understanding of what are nutritious foods. They are aware of the affects of weather on their body and what are appropriate clothes to wear.

Children move around indoors carefully as the room is set out well. Many opportunities to support the children's physical development are available such as; dressing up, play dough and cutting activities. These are well used, children can independently dress themselves and use scissors with skill. Children have some opportunities for outdoor play and fresh air as there is an outdoor play space available. Children enjoy the ride on toys and older children pedal with ease and steer with accuracy using the space well. They have fun in the outdoor play house and drawing on the floor with large chalks. Children enjoy indoor games such as the parachute, they squeal with delight when running underneath.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into a bright, attractive hall that is clean and well maintained. Children's art work, photographs and posters create a welcoming environment. These are displayed on the room dividers at child height. The large hall is divided into cosy areas and the children appear happy and comfortable within their environment. They happily leave their parents and settle well to their chosen activity. Children's safety is considered as a priority by staff who carry out risks assessments and regular fire drills with the children. Management of the entrance doors by staff and a security bell system ensures children cannot leave the premises unseen.

Children are able to choose from a good range of toys and play equipment that has been set out for them. All toys and resources are well maintained and of good quality. Some resources are easily accessible and children are able to self-select independently.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as the staff have a satisfactory understanding of child protection. All required procedures and documents are in place to promote this. Completion of training ensures staff are up to date with current practice.

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

The provision is good.

Children are busy, play happily and are enthusiastic as the sessions are varied and help them have fun and make progress in their development. They have formed warm relationships with the staff who interact well with the children and are intuitive of their needs. Activities are theme based and the children are currently learning about firework night. They proudly show you their 'splatter' painting firework pictures displayed within the hall. They are also beginning to talk about Christmas and have fun making glitter Christmas cards for their family.

Children are encouraged to initiate their own play. Well supported adult-led activities are also offered during lunch club. Dressing up is a popular activity and children are able to dress themselves. They enjoy using the doctors and nurses outfits and medical kits to assist them in their imaginary play. Younger children are managed well as some staff have received some training on how to support and develop the under threes. Activities such as a large floor mat with sand is used well by the children, they have fun pouring sand through funnels and making patterns.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a basic knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Children are sufficiently confident and eager to learn. They concentrate well on tasks and activities and have satisfactory levels of independence, curiosity and concentration. Overall children make sound progress in all areas of learning. However, the staff's basic observation and assessment of children is not always sufficiently recorded, and this information could be used more effectively to inform the next steps of learning for all children. As a result some children are not always sufficiently challenged.

Some good quality resources such as dressing up and props, home corner and hospital medical kits are available to support the children's creativity and imagination. Children's listening and mathematical skills are effectively developed as well planned activities, such as; interactive singing, games such as 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' are offered. Children show great interest in the book corner. They are aware that the text has meaning and even young children handle books correctly and with respect. They share and enjoy stories together and staff are on hand to read to the children when requested.

Children are able to explore and problem solve as good imaginative toys such as a garage, train set, and dolls house are available. Children are keen to use the computer supported by a member

of the staff and have good eye and hand co-ordination and use the mouse well. Children enjoy woodwork and use the tools well, they learn how to keep themselves safe.

Children learn to recognise their name when self-registering. Children make some effort at writing their names on their art work and when free drawing. Children's learning with regard to different cultures and religions is developing. Acknowledgement of different cultural festivals and traditional days are included within the plans and celebrated. This promotes children's learning and respect for others and their beliefs.

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

The provision is good.

Children have an understanding of the needs and feelings of others and gain an insight into world cultures as they celebrate festivals and traditional days as these are planned within the curriculum such as, Firework night, Christmas and Mothers day. Children sing happy birthday to their friends on their special day.

Children have access to resources such as; dressing up clothes, small world figures, dolls house families that depict the elderly and ethnic families, puzzles and a selection of good books. These are used well to provide children with diverse and positive images of the world around them. A good system is in place to support any additional needs of a child and staff have attended training with regard to special needs. Staff are sensitive, patient and discreet when managing children's individual needs.

Children respond well to the staff's high expectations of behaviour and the adults are good role models. Children develop self-esteem and respect for others by learning social skills, such as; sharing the toys and taking turns on the computer. Children have formed friendships and are caring towards one another, for example, they apologise to each other without any prompting from staff when they accidentally bump into one another.

Children's individual needs are met as there is satisfactory communication with parents. A complaints policy is available for parents, however, this needs to be reviewed and updated. Parents speak positively about most aspects of the pre-school.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory.

Children benefit from an emphasis on partnerships with parents. Parents are kept informed of events and dates by way of newsletters and notices displayed on the notice board within the entrance hall. They are invited and welcomed into the pre-school by friendly, approachable staff and annual open days are arranged. New parents are encouraged to stay and settle their child.

Informal chats each day between parents and staff allow for the exchange of useful information to help children's progress and development. Records are confidentially stored and available to parents at all times. Parents, however, are not fully informed or involved with regard to their children's learning. Some links have been established but are limited. Information regarding

the stepping stones, Foundation Stage and 'Birth to three matters' framework for parents is not easily accessible.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for by dedicated and qualified staff. They feel secure and settled through the use of appropriate staffing ratios and the environment is organised so that they feel comfortable and settled. To ensure the well-being of children is not compromised, effective recruitment and induction policy and procedures should be available.

Children's safety, enjoyment, health and achievements are supported by the policies and procedures within the operational plan. Documents to ensure the smooth running of the pre-school are maintained and promote the children's welfare, care and learning.

The leadership and management is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a team who work well together. Through ongoing staff development and training, the children are achieving. Staff appraisals assist the staff in identifying their training needs and their own personal development. Some responsibility such as designated staff members for health and safety, special needs and equal opportunities, ensures the staff feel valued.

The staff team are able to identify the pre-schools strengths and weakness's and plans are in place that will further develop the group.

Overall children's needs are met.

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

At the last inspection, the provider was asked to review and update the health, hygiene and child protection policies and identify some child protection training. Policies are now regularly reviewed and updated and several staff members have recently attended child protection training through completion of the Diploma in Pre-school Practice. The setting was asked to ensure that attendance records clearly showed the arrival times and departure of the children. Arrival and departure times are now documented within the register. The provider was also asked to include an induction programme and job descriptions for new staff members, this is still outstanding and a recommendation has been made.

The provider was requested to develop the planning, assessment and observation procedures to ensure children aged three and four years were sufficiently challenged, and to introduce a system to evaluate the quality of teaching. Some improvement has been made but is still ongoing and a recommendation has been made with regard to these issues. The setting was also asked to provide the children with more opportunities to read a range of familiar words and written text. This has been successfully achieved by displaying clear labels and posters with simple words, at the children's height.

## **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 complaint 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):

- review and update the written statement for parents which provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint
- ensure a robust recruitment policy and induction programme is in place
- ensure medical knowledge and training is provided for staff from a qualified health professional, specific to meet individual children's needs.

### **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):

- develop staff's understanding with regard to observation and assessment, to ensure plans sufficiently link with the children's development records. Ensure planning supports children and enables them to progress in their next steps of development and learning, and that more able children are sufficiently challenged
- continue to improve links with parents to ensure they are fully informed regarding their child's development and 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)