



Godinton Park Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127203
Inspection date	20 February 2007
Inspector	Mary Van De Peer
Setting Address	Godinton Village Hall, Loudon Way, Ashford, Kent, TN23 3JJ
Telephone number	01233 612703
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Registered person	Godinton Park 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 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?

Godinton Park Playgroup Pre-School is committee owned. It opened many years ago and operates from two rooms in a village community centre, in Ashford, Kent. A maximum of 30 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:15 until 12:30, term-time only. There are currently 52 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 42 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and can also support children who speak English as an additional language. The nursery employs six staff. There are five staff, including the two supervisors, who hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is one member of staff who is working towards a qualification. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance. They also receive support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The areas children play in are kept clean. The toilets and washbasins are accessible for children to use independently. The playgroup has an appropriate sick policy in place, so cross-infections through illnesses are kept to a minimum. If children require medication administered, there is a procedure in place for staff to follow. This helps to protect children's well-being. The setting's first aid kits are well stocked and accident records kept up to date. All playgroup staff have attended a recognised first aid course, therefore if children sustain a minor injury, they can receive appropriate treatment. Staff use the kitchen area to prepare snacks for the children. These consist of fruit, yoghurts, toast or sandwiches. Children also enjoy stirring the batter and eating pancakes cooked for Shrove Tuesday. Milk is provided at snack time. However, drinking water is not readily available or kept at children's height so they can have a drink when they want it. Physical development is satisfactory, children are able to climb, balance and slide on large equipment provided indoors. Children's play using bikes and cars is extended by providing a petrol garage and a zebra crossing, imitating every day life. Daily outdoor play opportunities are not possible at the setting, however planned walks and visits to a local park mean children can occasionally experience fresh air and exercise. Children's fine motor skills are progressing as they are able to assemble puzzles and build constructions using inter-locking resources. Nonetheless there are some missed opportunities to further develop children's imagination, for example, the availability of dressing-up resources.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The main hall where children play is a good size and hazards have been reduced. There are alarms on exit doors, safety gates at each side of the stage area and cupboard locks in the kitchen, where required. Risk assessments are carried out but there is no clear procedure or records for this in place. Children are generally able to play safely and securely. There are child size tables and chairs, as well as low storage units, so that many toys and resources are easily accessible for children. When children are taken on local walks or visits, the adult ratio is high so that there is adequate supervision to keep them safe. There is fire safety equipment on the premises, including a fire blanket and extinguishers. The emergency evacuation procedure is practised regularly and the children and adults are able to leave the building quickly and safely. Staff ensure children are only collected by adults they know. A register is kept, recording the attendance of children and staff. There is also a visitor's book. A child protection policy is in place, which includes information on how any allegations made against staff are dealt with. Children's overall safety and welfare is adequately protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

When they arrive, children have free-play time. The activities available range from creative play, mark-making, small world figures, construction, to a slide and climbing frame. Although

many resources are stored in low units, children do not always access these independently. Many of the activities provided are adult-directed, for example story time, group time. Although the setting has a good selection of toys and activities, including additional creative play materials, musical instruments, sand, water and role play, these are not offered to children on a daily basis. A book area is provided in a smaller room off the main hall. Staff also use this area to read stories to children. When it is working, a computer is also set up in here. However, because of its location, children are unable to benefit fully from this facility. This results in children's play opportunities often limited to what staff choose to make available. Children's independence is not always consistently and appropriately promoted. Staff interact well with the children, playing, talking and listening to them. They have a good knowledge on children's backgrounds and use this to help in their conversation. More able children are not always appropriately challenged, with some activities, such as puzzles, more suitable for younger children. Fruit offered at snack time is prepared by the adults, missing an ideal opportunity for children to develop new skills. However, children enjoy mixing the batter together for pancakes they eat later on.

Nursery Education

Teaching and learning is satisfactory. All the staff have an input into the setting's play-plans. These are still being developed and are not always used effectively, especially for identifying children's next steps. Many activities are adult-directed, reducing children's free choice in their play. There are some opportunities provided for children to develop their independence, for example, they are able to use the toilet and wash their hands on their own. The snack bar system is beginning to encourage children to choose when they want a drink and something to eat. A picture chart of the playgroup rules, such as tidying up and sharing, helps children develop their social skills. Children's speech is good. Staff provide many opportunities for children to talk together in groups or one-to-one. Mark-making materials are always available to children and they can practise this skill in everyday situations. There are activities which encourage children to count and compare numbers. Weighing and measuring the flour and water for the pancake batter, shows children the importance of correct quantities in cooking. Local walks children make during the year, allows them to see the differences in the seasons. Resources reflecting diversities in today's society are limited to a few books and small world figures. Creative play opportunities are available every day, however there are often only a couple of activities provided at one time. There is good interaction between adults and the children, this helps create a happy and stimulating environment for children to play in.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All the children are encouraged to participate in group activities. The staff stress the importance of listening to each other and children respond well to this. The provision has limited resources reflecting positive images of other cultures and disabilities. Parents complete child record forms so that staff have the required information to help with the appropriate care of the children. Children with educational needs attend the setting. They are able to join in with all the play activities and the other children show respect and kindness towards them. Children are able to give each other space but some older ones like to run or build up speed on the bikes in the

open spaces, causing some chaos. Children's behaviour overall is fine. Staff talk to children and use pictures showing rules, to help explain right from wrong.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents confirm that their children are very happy at the playgroup. They know who their child's key worker is and receive almost daily feedback on their progress. A notice board, newsletters and several procedures are all available for parents to refer to for information about the playgroup. However, parents don't receive individual copies of the policies and procedures, nor information regarding the Foundation Stage. Contact books are used for each child and this is popular with both staff and parents. Continuity of care for all the children is given good attention.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting is committee run. All relevant persons are known to Ofsted and most of the staff working with the children are qualified. They have also all been appropriately vetted and completed criminal records checks. Staff are encouraged to attend work shops and other child care training to help ensure their continued suitability to look after children. The supervisors make sure that the adult to child ratios are met at every session. Emergency cover is provided by calling on current staff. The committee members are supportive, very hands-on and help out with daily tasks such as payments from parents. The main hall used for play is a good size, however it is not always used to its best advantage. The presentation of some of the activities, such as the book area are not attracting the children's attention effectively. The quantity of resources and equipment made available to the children is limited and does not always provide appropriate and more challenging play opportunities. All the required documents and paperwork is in place and available to view. Policies and procedures are not easily accessible for parents to refer to. They are also currently being reviewed and updated so important information is available to parents. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The committee provides support for the staff. They are in the process of reviewing the group's operational plan, including policies and procedures. There are two supervisors, staff confirm that they are very approachable. Staff appraisals are being planned. Attendance by selected staff at workshops and other child care training is continuing. This helps to ensure that adults working with the children are keeping their child care knowledge updated. The group's planning system is not effective enough. This results in more able children not being appropriately challenged and limited extended play opportunities for the children. Next steps are not always being identified effectively, therefore they are not influencing future plans. The committee, supervisors and staff work well together and are keen to improve the quality of care they provide for the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

The first recommendation raised was for the provision to ensure that important policies, such as complaints and child protection and information about the daily curriculum, are kept updated and actively shared with parents.

The management committee and staff are currently reviewing and updating policies and procedures. However, this information is still not actively shared with parents.

Improvement in this area is limited and remains as a recommendation in this report.

The provider has followed the previous recommendations to improve the provision.

A second recommendation states that staff need to ensure that records of medicine, existing injuries and incidents contain the required details and are held confidentially. There are medication records, children's existing injuries information and forms to record details of any incidents involving the children, in place. These are recorded on separate sheets and stored in files, to help ensure confidentiality. These records and procedures help safeguard children.

A third recommendation was for staff to ensure that topic-work activities are integrated into the curriculum and organised as the next steps in children's individual learning. Any topic-work or adult-led activities are being integrated into the curriculum and children's next steps are sometimes being identified. However, the staff are not confident about the present system and more input is needed to ensure children's play is appropriately challenging and their next steps are being catered for.

The last recommendation was for leadership and management to review the deployment of staff and organisation of space throughout the playgroup session, including snack-time, to ensure children's needs are met effectively. Staff have introduced a snack bar and children are able to choose when they have their food and drink. However, the opportunities for children to serve themselves and further promote their independence are limited. Staff deployment shows attention has been given to beginning to ensure children are appropriately supervised so their needs can be met.

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):

- review the location and presentation of the book area, to encourage all children to look and learn more about books
- ensure that important policies, such as complaints and child protection and information about the daily curriculum, are kept updated and actively shared with parents

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 children are able to make more choices in their play, further promoting their independence and self-esteem
- ensure all children's next steps can be easily identified and consistently influence the planning, so that activities are challenging for all children and hold the interest of the more able children

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