



Overton Pre- School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507966
Inspection date	08 March 2007
Inspector	Mandy Gannon
Setting Address	The Community Centre, Winchester Street, Basingstoke, Hampshire, RG25 3HS
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Registered person	Overton 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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Overton Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1974. It operates from one room in the community centre with access to a dedicated garden area for the children, and also from a classroom at the local primary school in Overton, near Basingstoke. The playgroup serves the local village community. There are currently 74 children from two years and six months to five years of age on roll. This includes 57 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions, with older children undertaking some sessions at the school venue. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language. The playgroup operates five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 9:00-11:30 and from 12:00-15:00 with a lunch club that operates from 12:00-12:30. The pre-school playgroup is run by the same committee as the pre-school based at the school. The same staff are employed at both settings. The supervisor and deputy lead alternate sessions at both sites. Two full time and eight part time staff are employed in total.

Of these four members of staff have early years qualifications at NVQ level 3 and three staff hold NVQ level 2. A member of staff is planning to undertake training towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting is accredited by the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The setting receives support from an advisory teacher and has good links with the school.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children relish and enthusiastically participate in a wide range of physical activities with free flow inside and outside play. They benefit from an exciting and stimulating range of challenging activities and show high levels of confidence as they build assault courses and negotiate along planks supported by crates. Children independently access an extensive range of equipment and enjoy riding bicycles, tractors and scooters. They kick and throw balls, dig in the construction site and use pulley systems and wheelbarrows to transport sand.

Children are aware of excellent hygiene practices and know how to look after themselves through personal routines; they access toilets adjacent to the room, wash their hands before snack and meal times and on arrival at lunch club. They access tissues, are encouraged to wipe their own noses and are aware to put the tissues in the bin. Children are confidently aware of the reason they must wash their hands as they come in from the garden and explain to others "because of germs". Staff implement highly effective hygiene procedures, such as the cleaning and wiping down of tables and wearing of aprons to prepare food and during cooking activities.

Children develop an exceptional understanding of healthy eating. For example, at circle time a child is aware in order to run fast they must eat food that provides energy and that bananas are a good source. Children learn through topics as they have visits from outside specialists, for example the local doctor, dentist and the ambulance service. They have healthy snacks at the café style snack time with parents providing a variety of fruit and the group having support from the local fruit and vegetable shop who sponsor the group for 'healthy eating'. Children's independence is promoted as they pour their own milk and water and spread their own crackers. Children's dietary requirements are met as staff have successful robust procedures in place to monitor food for children with allergies reminding one another of individual requirements before a cooking activity.

Practitioners have a comprehensive understanding of the needs of all the children in their care. They implement effective use of the Birth to three matters framework for the younger children. They provide appropriate support and are forward thinking to adapt activities when required.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure environment. Staff are vigilant and meticulous about children's safety and ensure this is effectively implemented using thorough daily risk assessments. Children are able to move freely inside and outside in the garden where hazards have been identified and safety precautions put in place. A staff member has taken on the role

of health and safety officer to monitor practice. Staff are aware to replace the chain on the door when they leave the room and have an accurate awareness of the position and whereabouts of other staff members to ensure children's safety is paramount.

Children are protected as staff have an in-depth understanding of child protection issues, recognise their role and responsibilities and know how to implement the pre-school playgroup and local child protection procedures. Staff have attended training and remain up-to-date with recent changes and information, gaining information through the internet. A comprehensive policy is in place for lost or uncollected children, registers and visitors' books are maintained and records for pre-existing injuries are in place which all contribute to safeguarding children.

Children thrive in a well-organised, stimulating, vibrant learning environment where they have access to an extensive range of equipment and resources suitable for their age and stage of development. Effective procedures are in place to ensure equipment is safe. Children access resources independently, which promotes and develops their confidence and independence.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive and flourish in the setting as staff have an exceptional understanding of their individual needs. Staff ensure children are welcomed and make sure they are their top priority at all times. For example, staff settle and reassure a child, returning to offer support throughout the session. Children build warm relationships with their peers and staff and due to this children are confident, happy, relaxed and settled. Children are engrossed and involved in an extensive range of imaginative provision. They become competent learners, as staff are clear about their individual needs, encourage them and provide appropriate activities. For example, at circle time for younger children they are learning about electricity and have two bears that are hot and cold and they discuss how they are made to feel hot and cold; a child starts to find it difficult to sit still and gets up and starts to play the keyboard, the staff member incorporates this into circle time by asking the child to accompany the singing.

Practitioners have an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development and make successful use of the Birth to three matters framework to guide their planning and observations. Children are exceptionally well behaved; they are engrossed in activities, kind and considerate to one another.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are eager to come to the setting and thrive as they play an active role. Children's learning follows their own interests as they make choices about their activities and independently select resources. Children are extremely confident and develop excellent levels of confidence as they sweep up, pour drinks and access resources. The setting organises the space exceptionally well both inside and outside, enabling children to be active learners who are highly motivated and engrossed in their play, which enhances their ability to achieve their full potential.

Children's communication, language and literacy are exceptionally well developed, as staff listen, respond and encourage children. Children have excellent opportunities for language for thinking as staff are dynamic and enthusiastic at asking them questions to make them think and adapting their questioning to meet individual needs. Children confidently contribute to group discussions at circle time and excitedly participate. For example, when they are going on a dragon hunt, children are confident in taking their turn to make suggestions of how they will cross the river. Children are able to recognise their name as they self register on arrival and when they have snack. They show pleasure and excitement as they share a book and participate enthusiastically with a familiar story.

Practitioners have an expert knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and use an excellent range of questioning techniques and inspirational teaching methods to extend and enhance children's learning. They make excellent use of resources available, planned topics and children's individual ideas to solve and develop ideas. Children have exceptional, innovative opportunities to gain a clear understanding of knowledge and understanding of the world. Children's curiosity and investigative skills are developed to their full potential as they pour water and make a swamp for their animals, paint logs and then pour water on the log and watch the coloured water drip through the bench, put items on an overhead projector and show wonder as it makes shadows. A child puts many items on the projector surface and says "Oh no, it's a dark cloud and it's going to rain", they then remove some items and smile, "It's alright, the sun has come out". Children make rapid strides in their learning because staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn.

Children have inspiring opportunities to use their imagination. For example, circle times are inspirational as children go on a dragon hunt and use torches in the cave, draw plans and organise digging work on the construction site and fly their space rocket to the planets. Children use their senses as they select herbs from the herb garden, smell them and add to the play dough. They enjoy and explore rhythm and sound as they play musical instruments and sing along in the microphone.

Staff use their knowledge of children's interests and their individual play plans as a starting point to plan an imaginative, innovative curriculum. Assessment and monitoring is rigorous and children's achievements are meticulously recorded. Children take the lead in their learning following their own interests, and skilled practitioners build on this. Teaching is inspiring and dynamic, challenging for all children and dedicated staff ensure that children are continually making progress, thriving and enjoying this interesting, exciting learning environment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children develop a superior sense of belonging and their confidence is enhanced as they take on responsibilities, such as sweeping up, pouring drinks or helping one another to tidy the toys. Their behaviour is exemplary as children are extremely confident, independent and have considerable amounts of self-esteem as practitioners provide worthwhile praise, encouragement and value them and their individual achievements. All children and their families, including those with disabilities and English as an additional language, receive outstanding support from practitioners and outside agencies, enabling them to thrive and make excellent individual

progress. Children develop a high level of respect for themselves and others as they learn about their local community and the wider world through visitors and topics and value and celebrate their differences and similarities. They have strong links with the local community and school. They have visits from the local village policeman and make regular visits to the village fire station and other local amenities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children flourish in the setting due to the dedicated support they receive from the staff who encourage them to be autonomous and competent learners. Children receive excellent support and encouragement, for example a child who is unsettled is reassured throughout the session. Children play extremely well together and take turns, negotiate and share. Children benefit immensely from the integrated outside learning environment and continuous provision.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are fully involved in the setting and their children's learning with ideas how they can support at home through topics. The setting provides comprehensive communication through newsletters, notice board and supportive committee. Dedicated practitioners ensure that parents of the children are actively involved in their child's learning. They work together with the practitioners to progress and agree next steps for their learning and development. This ensures that individual needs are fully met, children make rapid progress and parents play a full part in their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care and learning is significantly enhanced by the exceptional organisation of the nursery and the outstanding leadership and management of the nursery education. All practitioners have a very clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities within the provision and the implementation of the operational plan is highly effective and seamless, ensuring all children are provided with a high level of support and thrive in a well-organised environment. This enables them to play an active role in their learning and reach their full potential.

Practitioners have an in-depth knowledge and understanding of child development and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff are fully involved in the planning and evaluating of activities. Staff continually monitor and evaluate teaching practices, ensuring that continual effective learning takes place. Staff performance is monitored and ongoing training identified to continue to enhance the expertise of the enthusiastic professionals. A highly effective, successful key worker system is in place, which secures links between home and the setting.

The leadership and management are outstanding. Detailed effective robust policies and procedures are in place which are consistently applied, which ensures excellent outcomes for children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. The staff and management work exceptionally well together providing an optimum facility where the children are their top priority. The setting continually reflects on their practice and identifies areas for further improvement. Regular meetings and rigorous monitoring ensures that all children are thriving and making substantial progress.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection, the group were recommended to evaluate the organisation of lunchtime to ensure hygiene practices were followed and to ensure that policies, procedures and documents were in place with sufficient detail to meet the standards of registration. Staff ensure that children wash their hands at lunchtime and comprehensive robust policies, procedures and documents are in place to meet the standards of registration.

At the last Nursery Education inspection the group were recommended to increase access to programmable toys and information technology to support learning in everyday activities and to make reference books available. Children have access to a wide range of programmable toys and information technology resources including tape machines, cash registers and computers. Reference books are available and accessible to children.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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