



## Westbere Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127766
<b>Inspection date</b>	07 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Karen Scott
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<b>Registered person</b>	Westbere Playgroup
<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?

Westbere Playgroup is managed by a committee of parents working in partnership with staff. It opened in 1975 and operates from the village hall in Westbere, Near Canterbury. A maximum of 25 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:45, term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 18 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 10 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area and surrounding towns. The playgroup currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The playgroup employs three members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications. The group receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene; they know that they need to wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating. They independently use the bathroom. However, children are not protected from cross-contamination as they share a hand towel and a basin of soapy water. Staff do not undertake regular checks of the bathroom, the toilet is often not flushed and the floor wet and slippery, not protecting children from possible accidents. Children independently help themselves to tissues, blow their noses and place the tissues in a bin. Children rest in a domed area that is comfortable and welcoming.

Children are prevented from dehydration as they help themselves to drinks of water. They are trusted to pour their own drinks and do so regularly. However, at snack times, younger children are not trusted to do this and an adult pours their drinks for them. Children receive healthy snacks such as cheese, crackers, fruit and vegetables. They make choices about what they wish to eat and practise skills, such as using tongs to serve themselves. Children bring packed lunches and perishables are stored in the refrigerator, keeping them fresh. Staff sit with children at snack and lunchtime, ensuring that they eat the correct food, protecting them from food they should not eat.

All staff hold current first aid certificates and are able to administer first aid in the event of an emergency. The setting would seek emergency medical advice or treatment if needed and has written parental permission to do so. Parents and carers give written permission for their children to have medication and are kept informed of the time the dosage is given, helping to protect children.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a spacious and well-organised environment. This allows them to move around safely. They make choices about what they want to play with from the activities that staff have arranged around the setting for them. Toys and resources are selected by the adults who ensure that there are no broken parts that could harm a child. Regular risk assessments are undertaken to ensure that children play in a safe and secure environment. Before children play outside the staff check the area to ensure that there are no potential hazards. The front door is locked and parents are reminded to close it after themselves, helping to keep children secure. They cannot access rooms or items that could be dangerous. However, staff do not regularly check the children's bathroom, in order to protect them from potential hazards such as slippery floors and basins full of water.

Clearly defined procedures for the non-collection of children, lost children and evacuation of the building help to protect the children at the setting. Children participate in regular fire drills,

meaning that they are aware of what to do in an emergency. The staff have attended training in child protection. They have a good understanding of the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care and make parents and carers aware of this.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, relaxed and confident. They have formed close relationships with their peers and adults and are beginning to learn important social skills. Children make independent choices about the activities that they wish to become involved in from the toys and resources that are arranged in the room for them. Activities reflect most areas of learning although there are a lack of resources that help children to learn about technology. Most activities are child led with staff encouraging children to do things for themselves. Adults offer children support when they are learning new skills but miss opportunities to extend children's learning. Toys are played with in specific areas and children are discouraged from moving resources to other parts of the room, discouraging them from extending their play.

Staff have an understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and are putting this knowledge into their planning. However, plans do not always reflect children's individual learning needs.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Most activities are child led with adults supporting their play when necessary. When an adult leads an activity children are excited by this and all wish to participate. Staff make regular observations of the children but these are not planned for and do not focus on a particular area of learning. Although the child's key person makes a note of what the child's next steps in learning are, they do not always plan for them. Staff know the stages of development that their key children are at but do not always plan how to move them onto the next step. Children enjoy their time at the playgroup. They concentrate on activities that are adult led or supported by an adult. They understand right from wrong and share this understanding with adults. When children first begin attending the group staff informally discuss their starting points with their parents and carers but they are not recorded in writing and are not used to plan for the children's learning.

Children initiate interactions with each other. They show care and concern for themselves and each other. However, there are limited opportunities for children to show a range of feelings and to respond to experiences. Children's work is not displayed around the setting although their efforts are frequently praised and they take pride in their achievements.

Children willingly chat to each other and the staff involve them in conversations too. They join in with songs and clearly have their favourites which they enjoy singing. Children enjoy one-to-one stories with the adults, nestling into a welcoming, cosy book area. However, the choice of books is limited and children do not see a range of books. There are opportunities for children to recognise their names. When they have finished artwork children place it under their name, ready to take home. Staff have devised a system for children to self-register but do not support children in doing this and not many, therefore, do. The setting provides envelopes

and paper for children to practise their pre-writing skills but these are on the art table and most children paint on them. Children are not supported by adults at this activity and are not encouraged to use the stationery in other areas of the room. There are many opportunities for children to use one handed tools and equipment and to practise their pencil control.

Some posters display numbers but they are above children's eye level. Children enjoy number rhymes and songs. Children make calculations, for example they count how many adults are in the room and work out how many are left when one leaves. They participate in activities that involve counting. Children play with shapes, matching them.

Children explore under rocks when in the garden, looking for mini-beasts and using magnifying glasses to support them. They practise their sorting skills when playing with various tabletop toys. They have access to construction toys. There are a lack of opportunities for children to learn about technology and very few resources reflecting different cultures and beliefs.

Children are able to use the outside area most days and are free to come in and out, as they choose. When in the garden they practise their balancing and ball skills. They show bodily awareness, explaining that they get puffed out when running around the garden. Children engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination, such as using tongs and playing with pegboards.

Children help themselves to a wealth of resources to create their individual art projects. They are encouraged to use their imaginations when participating in art and craft. Children explore play dough and talk about how it feels. The home corner is uninspiring and underused; resources are mainly plastic toys with the odd real saucepan included. However when an adult places herself in the home corner, supporting children's play, they use their imaginations to put on a tea party for the dolls and soft toys.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are treated with respect and made to feel good about themselves. The group very occasionally celebrates festivals from various cultures, and toys and resources reflecting positive images of diversity are limited to dressing up clothes. Consequently, children are denied the opportunity to learn about our diverse society. The group has experience and a good understanding of caring for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. They work with parents and other agencies to ensure that children receive the care that they require. Children benefit from lots of praise and encouragement and from some basic ground rules that are consistently maintained by the staff. Children receive ample support from adults, resulting in good behaviour. They are polite and well mannered. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. To enable children to be cared for appropriately the setting gathers all relevant information from parents and carers. They are informed of the group's practice through daily chats and regular newsletters. Parents are welcomed into the setting and encouraged to participate in events such as 'Pancake Day'. However, parents and carers are not fully involved in and informed about their children's

learning. Activity plans are displayed away from the entrance and are unseen by parents, resulting in them not being aware of what the plans are for each week. Parents and carers are encouraged to read their children's portfolios but very rarely take up the opportunity. However, they receive reports once a term detailing their child's stages of development. Parents and carers are not asked for their input on their children's stages of development throughout their time at the playgroup meaning that the setting does not gain valuable support from the parents and carers in order to plan for children's individual learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Children benefit from well-organised space and they receive sufficient adult support to help them feel secure and confident. Each child has a key member of staff who is a point of contact for parents and carers. The staff are proactive in attending training. They keep themselves informed of current childcare practices meaning that they are able to offer up-to-date care to children. All relevant and mandatory documentation is in place and is well maintained. Records are stored securely and confidentially but are easily accessible when they are needed. There is a system for recording the times of arrival and departure of children, staff and visitors meaning that there is an accurate record of attendance should it be needed. Staff and students are aware of their roles as they are given clear guidance through written procedures.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff interact with children, supporting their play. They make attempts to extend children's learning through joining in with their play and supporting it but limit that extension at other times by not enabling them to move their play around the room, for example. The supervisor has started to monitor the educational provision but is unaware if all areas of learning are planned for accordingly. She is working with an advisory teacher and is aware of weaknesses regarding meeting children's individual needs.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, three actions and six recommendations were identified for progress within care and five recommendations within nursery education.

Within care, the nursery were asked to: make sure that premises are secure and access to the provision is monitored at all times; develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development; and develop staff knowledge and understanding of issues surrounding child protection particularly in the event that an allegation is made against a member of staff. It was also recommended that the nursery: conduct a risk assessment on the premises identifying actions to be taken to minimize identified risks including regular checks on electrical appliances; devise a system for planning and implementing a suitable range of activities for children between two to three years, which is appropriate for their stage of development and based on their individual needs; ensure all policies and procedures contain sufficient detail and staff are secure in their knowledge of them; ensure attendance is accurately recorded according to arrival and departure times; ensure fire drills are carried out periodically and take into account the patterns of

attendance of children and staff and fire detection equipment is accessible in all areas of the building; and ensure volunteers and committee members are given full information and guidance on their roles and responsibilities.

Within nursery education the nursery were asked to: improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, to plan and provide a coordinated programme of daily opportunities; ensure the use of assessment in order to identify what children need to learn next and to use these to inform future plans; improve the organisation by ensuring that staff are consistently involved in children's play providing clear explanations of opportunities available and guidance to effectively manage behaviour, in order to consistently support children's needs; ensure effective systems are in place to regularly monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the setting and that of the educational programme; and provide children with more opportunities to increase their independence through the routine.

The setting have made sure that the premises are secure and staff monitor access at all times. Children's behaviour is good as they receive ample support from the adults at the setting. Staff have a good understanding of issues surrounding child protection and what to do if an allegation is made against themselves, safeguarding children from harm. Daily risk assessments of the hall and the outside play area, and the regular checking of electrical appliances protect children from harm. The group plans age appropriate activities for children aged two years using the Birth to three framework. However, activities are not always based on children's individual needs and this remains a recommendation. All policies and procedures are in place and staff are aware of their contents. Children, staff and visitors times of arrival and departure are recorded. All children participate in a fire drill at least once a term and fire detection equipment is accessible, helping to keep children safe. Committee members and volunteers have full information on their roles and responsibilities, ensuring that they support the group.

Staff have improved their knowledge of the Foundation Stage staff by accessing training and receiving support from the local authority. They use this knowledge to plan activities. Assessments are used to plan for children as a group but not always for children's individual learning and this continues to be a recommendation. Staff are consistently involved in children's play and children respond to this with pleasure. Consequently, behaviour is good. The setting have started to monitor the educational programme but systems are not effective and this continues to be a recommendation. Children make choices about what they wish to play with, promoting their independence.

### **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.

## 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):

- ensure good hygiene practices at all times to minimise the risk of cross infection
- improve staff knowledge of how to use children's assessment records effectively to plan appropriate activities that take account of children's individual needs, and evaluate what children have learnt
- add to the resources that promote equality of opportunity and reflect positive images of diversity including gender, culture and disability

#### 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):

- enable parents to contribute towards their children's learning
- put procedures in place to monitor the delivery of the Foundation Stage Curriculum

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)