



COLLEGE ROAD PLAYGROUP

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	509103
Inspection date	30 January 2007
Inspector	Julie Biddle
Setting Address	College Road, Harrow, Middlesex, HA1 1BA
Telephone number	020-8863-7837 & 020-
E-mail	
Registered person	The Committee of College Road 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?

College Road Playgroup has been registered for 30 years. It operates from the first floor of the Harrow Baptist Church, situated in Central Harrow. It has use of three interconnecting rooms. There is no outdoor play area. The playgroup serves the Church community and the local area.

There are currently 25 children from two years nine months to five years on roll. This includes 20 funded places. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:30 to 12:00.

Seven staff work with the children. Over half the staff have early years qualifications.

The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The playgroup is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene through daily routines, such as hand washing before eating, however, this is not extended or reinforced by staff. Satisfactory hygiene procedures in the setting ensure children are protected from unnecessary illness, for example parents are informed of infectious illness in the setting. Children are beginning to have an understanding of healthy eating as they make choices from a variety of healthy options at snack time, such as fresh fruit and vegetables. Children and staff sit together at snack time creating a relaxed and social atmosphere. This atmosphere promotes the children's social skills and manners. Throughout the session drinking water is available in the play room. However, it is not easily accessible for children to independently access a drink for themselves and staff do not remind children to have a drink.

Children are beginning to develop a positive attitude to exercise which is enjoyed on a regular basis, however opportunities are limited. Children show great delight and excitement when exercises are included at circle time; they enjoy hopping and skipping, however lack of planning means this time is not fully utilised. Children enjoy themselves as they climb, balance and bounce on large play equipment, such as a climbing frame.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe, happy and secure environment in which they want to learn and play. The environment is well organised, allowing children to move around freely and with confidence. Children have access to a satisfactory range of toys and resources that help to meet their learning and developmental needs. Children are able to make independent choices as play equipment and resources are stored at low-level. Children are developing a sense of protecting themselves as staff talk to them about safety, for example, not to run inside so they do not fall and hurt themselves. They are cared for in a child focused environment where risks are identified and reduced to safeguard the children, for example, staff inform each other when they are leaving the room. Children are kept safe in the setting as staff monitor children's arrival and departure, ensuring children cannot leave unnoticed.

Children are protected because staff have a sound and clear understanding of their role with regard to child protection issues and know how to implement local procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the setting. They arrive happy and confident and quickly settle into the session as they make choices about their play. Children have fun as they play enthusiastically

with a satisfactory range of toys and resources. Children receive lots of attention and have a good relationship with staff which increases their sense of well being and security. Younger children's care and wellbeing is generally promoted as staff have an understanding of how to meet their needs.

Younger children take part in all the activities offered, for example, they have great fun playing with play dough and painting with marbles and paint. They are beginning to develop their communication skills as they attract the attention of staff who respond enthusiastically to their requests and needs. They laugh and have fun as they energetically join in familiar songs, for example, 'The wheels on the bus'. Children enjoy opportunities to express themselves through imaginative play in the home corner and with the varied range of dressing up clothes. Staff encourage the children in developing their fine motor skills and creative abilities as they support their choices when painting or drawing.

Nursery Education

The quality of the teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a limited understanding of the Foundation Stage and stepping stones. Some staff are less knowledgeable in questioning children to extend their learning. Staff give plenty of attention and support to the children. They have good relationships, and children are treated with respect, this is reflected in the children's good behaviour, and motivation to participate and learn.

Children have some opportunities to develop their independence skills as part of the daily routine. However, this is not always encouraged. Children are confident in the setting and really enjoy playing together. They are learning to be thoughtful towards each other as they understand about taking turns and sharing. Children are confident and enthusiastic about communicating with staff and each other. Children are beginning to understand that labels and print carry meaning. Children are provided with some opportunities to practise writing for different purposes. For example, children had great fun writing letters and posting them in the letter box. Some children respond with interest at story times and are interested in looking at books independently.

Mathematical skills are promoted as the children count confidently to 10 and beyond as part of daily routines. Children discuss colour, shape, and size routinely, such as "look at the yellow circle." They calculate as they sing familiar songs, such as 'Five little ducks'. They are beginning to use language to describe and compare shape and size. They have great fun using a magnifying glass, " you look bigger through this side" Children really enjoy using keys of different shapes to open doors and discover what's behind the door.

Children have some opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through discussion and topics. They really enjoy learning about other cultures through books and dressing up resources, such as wedding outfits. Children help to improve the environment as they plant bulbs and watch them grow. Children are developing knowledge and understanding of sense of time through discussions about past events with staff and their families. Staff encourage children to express feelings. They have a great time exploring colour and texture, for example as they paint. They show confidence and increasing control as they are able to manipulate a range of small tools and equipment successfully. For example, children are

competent in cutting with scissors and are able to manipulate the play dough with rolling pins with good control.

Children are excited as they play on large equipment; they display satisfactory skills as they independently climb, jump and balance with confidence. They are developing good coordination as they spread butter on crackers and cut vegetables to place on the crackers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are confident in the setting because staff value each child as an individual. Children are respected as individuals and are given appropriate praise and support which enhances self-esteem and confidence. Children enjoy being with familiar and trusted adults, who act as role models. Children are engaged in meaningful play; their behaviour is good. They are learning to distinguish between right and wrong, through example and positive encouragement. Children are learning about the world they live in as they have access to resources and equipment that promote positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and differing abilities. They learn, for example, about traditions in their own and the wider community through a range of books and dressing up clothes, for example wedding outfits. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children's individual needs are recorded and respected by all staff, meaning that their welfare is promoted.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are welcome into the setting as the staff have a positive attitude towards this area of childcare. The staff ensure their ways of working include all children and enable them to reach their full potential.

Partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Newsletters are issued to keep them informed of events and plans. Parents spoken to on the day of the inspection were happy with the information they received. Children benefit from friendly, informal relationships between staff and parents, which is enhanced by the implementation of the key worker system. Staff obtain detailed information about each child's individual needs from parents to ensure that children receive the appropriate care. Parents can discuss their child's progress with the staff at any time. However, parents receive only basic information about the Foundation Stage and little information on how activities are linked to the Foundation Stage.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. The manager has a commitment to improvement and development of the staff and setting, by accessing training courses. Support is given to staff, both informally on a daily basis and formally through staff appraisals. The nursery welcomes support from advisory teachers to implement the Foundation Stage of learning.

The manager and staff generally work well together as a team, and focus on the needs of the children. However, the manager tends to take control and staff members are sometimes unsure

of their role. Staff work with parents to ensure they have a good knowledge of children's individual needs. Staff are generally well deployed in the setting ensuring children are secure, confident and happy.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because the required records and documentation are in place to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the setting. The written policies and procedures practised by staff also help ensure children's wellbeing and protection.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure that children could access warm running water, this is now in place meaning children can wash their hands and maintain hygiene standards. The provider also agreed to record visitors to the setting this is now done meaning children are safe and secure in the setting. The provider has now ensured that Ofsted's contact number is available to parents, meaning parents know how to contact the regulator.

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

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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 children have opportunities to access resources and experiences to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world around them
- use everyday activities and routines to extend children's opportunities for independence and learning (also applies to nursery education)
- ensure plans include opportunities for children to experience a range of physical activities

- ensure that children can access drinking water independently and pour drinks for themselves
- ensure Ofsted are notified of significant events at the earliest opportunity or within 14 days.

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 staff have opportunities to improve knowledge of Foundation Stage of learning
- make improvements as indicated in the care section above
- ensure parents have information regarding the Foundation Stage of 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