

Mayflower Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113597
Inspection date	19 January 2007
Inspector	Felicity Gaff

Setting Address	Evangelical Free Church, New England Road, Haywards Heath, West Sussex, RH16 3LE
Telephone number	01444 459980
E-mail	
Registered person	Mayflower 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 good. 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?

Mayflower Playgroup was established in 1973. Mayflower Playgroup is a registered charity run by the Evangelical Free Church in Haywards Heath, West Sussex. Children have access to a secure outdoor play area. The playgroup is open on Mondays to Fridays from 09:15 to 11:45 during school term times. A maximum of 26 children aged from two to under five years may attend the setting at any one time and there are 40 children on roll; of these, 30 children receive funding for nursery education. The playschool currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, as well as a number who speak English as an additional language. Children are drawn from the surrounding urban area. There are 10 permanent members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications and one other is working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well supported by the maintenance of all the required documentation. Staff promote children's welfare to a good standard by ensuring they are fully aware of parents' wishes and of children's individual health issues, such as allergies. Children begin to learn how to care for themselves as they develop independence in their personal care. They are effectively protected from illness and infection because they are cared for in clean, hygienic and well-maintained premises. They enjoy healthy snacks and meals, and staff encourage them to experiment with unfamiliar foods. Children eagerly describe and compare an attractive selection of vegetables, and staff plan interesting opportunities for them to taste them, for instance by making vegetable samosas. Staff use the available outdoor space to ensure children have regular access to active physical play. However, plans do not identify how opportunities for active physical play will be presented, developed and adapted to challenge children of different ages and abilities to extend their skills. Assessments of what children do and achieve are brief and intermittent. As a result, staff are uncertain of how to use the resources they provide to promote children's physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in secure, safe and suitable premises that are organised to provide a warm welcome to children and their parents. Staff establish effective procedures to assess how the available space is used to minimise risks to the children. Children use good quality furniture and resources, which are maintained in a suitable condition and are replaced when necessary. Play materials are attractively displayed before the session starts, so that children are eager to play with them. However, staff do not routinely provide a positive role model to the children by replacing scattered toys promptly during the session to create an orderly environment. Staff attend child protection training to improve their awareness, and update their written procedures to conform to current requirements. There are appropriate arrangements to ensure that all staff and parents have sufficient understanding of child protection issues, which helps to safeguard children from harm or abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel secure and at ease in the setting because staff organise a consistent, welcoming environment and provide interesting and attractively displayed play resources. Staff work effectively with parents to help children settle. They have realistic expectations; for example, they respect children's decisions not to join in group activities until they are ready to do so. Children are proud to develop independence as they manage their own personal needs, for instance when changing their shoes. They become engrossed as they play with interesting and attractively displayed 'small world' materials. As there are sufficient, stimulating resources to go round, two-year-old children contentedly play alongside others and begin to cooperate. Staff treat children with courtesy and respect, listening with interest to what they say and providing explanations for requests. As a result children begin to learn to consider other people's needs and so find strategies to solve disputes for themselves. However, staff do not use regular assessments of what children know and understand to plan systematically challenging play

activities. For example, staff introduced a practical activity that children could only partially complete because they had not had the opportunity to master the required skills first.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make adequate progress because staff provide an acceptable level of routine provision to support their learning. Staff read stories expressively to the children, who respond eagerly, confidently suggesting their own ideas as to what will happen next. They have good everyday opportunities to recognise their own names. They recognise numbers and count confidently to five or more. The provision of well resourced workshop areas and appropriate themes and topics allow children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They have suitable opportunities to explore and experiment with a variety of creative materials and techniques. However, plans and assessments do not ensure all areas of learning are fully covered. For example, it is unclear how children learn to differentiate between the sounds in words or solve simple number problems. Some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world are rarely considered. Staff make intermittent observations of what children do and achieve but do not use them to plan for their future learning. Plans are vague and do not clearly identify what the staff want children to learn, or how they need to adapt activities to meet the needs of children of different ages and abilities. Where extension activities are identified for older or more able children they are often vague, irrelevant or unrelated to the main activity. As a result, children's progress is inconsistent.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff are very sensitive to the individual needs of children and their families, and act decisively to ensure they are all fully included. They make sure that information is given to all parents in an accessible form. The playgroup is sponsored by the church as a Christian group and this is made very clear to parents. However, it is open to children of other faiths or none, and staff plan activities to acknowledge and show respect for the full variety of cultural backgrounds from which children are drawn. Children forge links with the local community as they visit the nearby shop and church café or welcome visits by local police, nurse and fire fighters. Children begin to recognise own needs and respect those of other people. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. There is effective provision to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and staff make appropriate adjustments to the established routines to accommodate individual needs. Children learn how to behave because the staff have realistic and consistent expectations. They provide clear explanations so that children understand what they ought to do and begin to work cooperatively together. However, staff occasionally call to children across the room, which does not promote a calm and ordered atmosphere. When toys become scattered, staff do not always help children learn to respect play materials by routinely replacing them. Partnership with parents is good. Staff make good arrangements to exchange information with parents both formally and informally. They provide an attractive notice board, which is clear and well-maintained showing parents that they are treated with respect. Parents appreciate the positive attitude of the staff and feel they are welcomed as partners, that they are consulted and their views taken into consideration. Parents extend their children's learning by taking home activity packs to share together at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. There are clear policies and procedures providing a suitable framework to support children's welfare and learning. The provider ensures Ofsted are notified of relevant changes and carries out appropriate checks to establish that staff are suitable to care for children. Staff regularly attend training courses to enhance their knowledge and understanding, and to update their qualifications. There are qualified and experienced bank staff available to provide cover when needed, which ensures consistent, reliable care for the children in an emergency. Children's personal records are stored discreetly to protect their privacy. The leadership and management of the nursery education are satisfactory. Although there is good routine provision, the manager does not ensure staff make regular, evaluative observations of what children achieve to plan for their future learning. This means observations are not available to assess how well children are learning and to plan to meet their different needs.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to conduct a risk assessment, improve the child protection arrangements and develop children's play and learning. The provider now carries out periodic risk assessments of the premises, which contribute to children's safety by identifying hazards and identifying any actions needed to minimise them. There is a clear child protection statement, which supports staff effectively in safeguarding children from abuse or neglect. The effective organisation of play resources and the good deployment of staff promotes satisfying play for the children.

At the last inspection of nursery education the provider agreed to improve the organisation of resources and deployment of staff and to develop provision across all areas of learning, particularly mathematical understanding and opportunities for open-ended creative experiences. Staff organise everyday routines effectively to develop children's personal, social and emotional development, their communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. They are appropriately deployed and organise resources well so that children make good use of all the play opportunities provided. There is a suitable variety of creative experiences offered, which allow children to learn through all their senses.

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 good. 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):

- improve planning for and use of outdoor area to promote children's physical development

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):

- improve planning and assessment procedures to ensure children make consistent progress across all areas 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