

# Sutton-on-the-Forest Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	400379
<b>Inspection date</b>	13 June 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Linda Cook
<b>Setting Address</b>	Grey Village Hall, Main Street, Sutton-on-the-Forest, York, North Yorkshire, YO61 1DP
<b>Telephone number</b>	07821 277545
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<b>Registered person</b>	Sutton on the Forest 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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Sutton-on-the-Forest Playgroup was first established in 1987 and serves a rural community near the city of York. It provides sessional care from the village hall each weekday morning from 09:15 until 11:45. A lunch club is also provided and used regularly by a small group of children. A separate rising fives session is provided in a mobile unit located in the grounds of the village school each Monday afternoon between 13:30 and 15:30. This session operates from January until July and only those children who are eligible to start full time education in the September term are invited to attend.

The management committee has overall responsibility for the playgroup and the playgroup leader is responsible for the day to day running of the setting. There are five members of staff at the setting including three who are level three qualified. Parent helpers attend the sessions on a rota basis.

The playgroup is registered for 20 children aged between two and five years of age. There are currently 20 children on the register, of whom 13 are in receipt of nursery education funding.

The setting welcomes children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children for whom English is an additional language.

Play activities are provided in the main hall and children have use of an enclosed garden for outdoor play. There is a toilet block with facilities for nappy changing and a large kitchen area that is not accessible to the children. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment where they learn the importance of good hygiene routines. They learn to become independent in their personal care needs, washing their hands before eating and after messy play and visiting the toilet. They are provided with liquid soap and paper towels and a poster in the toilet area reminds them to wash their hands. They are protected from infection because staff ensure tables and food preparation surfaces are kept clean using anti-bacterial sprays and implement a clear sick child policy. Accident and medication records are appropriately maintained and all staff hold current first aid certificates ensuring children are cared for appropriately in an emergency.

Children are well nourished and learn to make healthy choices in their diet. They enjoy varied and nutritious snacks each day which include a variety of fresh and dried fruit. At snack time they choose from milk or water and they are able to access drinking water throughout the session. They begin to learn the importance of a healthy diet through discussions with staff and related topics.

The children enjoy fresh air when they access the secure outdoor play area when the weather allows. Their opportunities are curtailed because the ground remains wet and muddy after rain. The playgroup have submitted plans to develop the area and to improve children's learning opportunities outdoors. Children develop their physical skills to a good level as they use the climbing and balancing equipment. Indoors they are provided with opportunities to move to music and complete action rhymes. They are made aware of the importance of exercise in a healthy lifestyle when they complete topics about their bodies and staying healthy.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, welcoming environment, which has good evidence of their play and activity. Space is effectively organised into different areas of play and this enables children to move around freely and safely. Children develop their independence as they make choices from a wide range of toys and resources made available to them for self-selection. Resources are clean, well maintained and age appropriate.

Children are kept very safe as there are a good range of safety measures in place. These include socket covers and fire prevention equipment. The outside door is locked when the session is in progress and there are clear collection procedures. Risk assessments are completed and reviewed to ensure any risks are identified and minimised. For example, parents help to escort the children safely to the local school where the playgroup runs a separate session on a Monday afternoon, for children who are due to start school. Children build a good awareness of safety

as they are taught to cross roads safely, practise the emergency evacuation procedure and through discussions with staff who are vigilant and give children's safety high priority.

Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect. Staff are aware of the types of abuse and the signs to look for and some staff members have attended training on child protection. They have a sound understanding of the procedure to follow if they have concerns.

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

The provision is good.

Children settle very well at the playgroup due to the effective implementation of the settling-in policy and the welcoming environment created by the caring staff. Children are confident when they arrive and they separate well from parents and carers. They find their name card and post it in the container provided before they eagerly seek out friends and their chosen activity. They develop their independence to a good level as they operate independently in the environment. They spend their time purposefully and remain motivated, interested and involved throughout the whole session. The planning process, and knowledgeable staff team ensures all children enjoy a wide range of activities which enable them to build on what they know and can do and generally make good progress in their all round development.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn effectively. They plan an interesting curriculum with a broad balance of activities which meet the children's needs and interests. Planning clearly links to the early learning goals, the associated stepping stones and covers all areas of learning. Staff conduct thorough observations and evaluations of what children can do, and ensure that the child's progression is recorded in their development file. However, while this is a small group and staff are very aware of the individual children's capabilities, the systems in place do not clearly show how the links between planning and assessment are used to plan for the individual next steps in children's learning. Staff show particular skill at extending children's learning and thinking through the use of appropriate questioning techniques. They encourage the children to use their imagination to predict what might happen next and to contribute to discussions. They generally ensure the resources are used effectively and support the planned activities and encourage children to explore and investigate.

Children are learning self-care skills, such as pouring their own drinks at snack time, accessing the toilet independently and putting their own coats on. Children show sustained concentration when listening to stories or when exploring an activity. They are developing good communication skills, they initiate conversation with adults and their peers. They are eager to share their experiences with staff and to involve them in their play.

Children learn to recognise their name in print as part of the arrangements for registration and snack time. Some capably write their name on their work while others form recognisable letters. They have opportunities to practise their writing skills in a well resourced mark making area. The children recognise letters and their corresponding sounds. Each week there is a letter of the week which consolidates their learning.

Children are developing a good understanding of number. All children count to 10 and more able children beyond. They begin to recognise numerals as part of the arrangements for snack time and from posters that are displayed. They recognise simple shapes naming them correctly

and demonstrate an understanding of size and positional language when they talk about bigger and smaller, under and over.

Children learn about the world around them when they monitor seasonal changes, talk about the weather, complete topics on animals and plant flower tubs. They display strong exploratory senses when they investigate using magnets on a sand tray. They celebrate festivals from their own culture and that of others; visitors to the setting bring added stimulation and interest. Their session at the local school each week helps them prepare for their next steps in life and aids a smooth transition to school. While children do have access to a computer, this is limited and not available at all times, which limits their opportunities to develop their use and understanding of information technology.

Children use their imagination well in a variety of role play scenarios and play cooperatively together. For example, in the home corner where they pretend to cook meals and make cups of tea for each other or dress up as super heroes and go off to rescue people. They enjoy a range of craft activities often linked to the planned activity and spend considerable time creating the effect they desire. However, there are less opportunities for children to be spontaneously creative. A variety of craft resources are not always available to the children and while there is a broad range, they are all on one small trolley, which means they are difficult for the children to see, make choices from and access.

Children develop their fine motor skills to a good level as they confidently use scissors, pencils, paint brushes, glue sticks and hand tools for planting outdoors. They move around the setting with control and extend their gross motor skills as they use climbing apparatus indoors and outdoors and manoeuvre wheeled vehicles. They enjoy music and access a very wide range of musical instruments which they use with a music teacher who makes regular visits and introduces the children to many different types of music. At circle time they joyfully join in with an increasing range of children's songs and action rhymes.

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

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals. The staff use their knowledge about children's individual needs, their interests and their families very effectively to help them to feel settled. Children develop their independence to a good level as they attend to their own personal care needs and are encouraged to make choices as they choose activities and resources with appropriate levels of support from staff where necessary. Systems are in place to ensure children with learning difficulties or disabilities are made welcome and receive the support they need to fully participate in all the activities.

Children are learning to take responsibility for their behaviour because the staff follow positive and effective strategies for helping children learn to manage their feelings and emotions. Children learn the boundaries and guidelines and are beginning to understand the consequences of unwanted behaviour. Staff are good role models, having high regard for each other and the children. Children's behaviour is good; any difficulties are managed in a sensitive and positive way. Staff offer lots of praise and encouragement to promote good behaviour, which results in harmony for all. Children are learning right from wrong because staff are consistent in their approach and provide gentle reminders to reinforce boundaries. As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The parents of new starters receive written information in the form of a welcome booklet and they are invited to make pre-start visits with their child. Registration forms and a 'This is me booklet' are completed by parents to ensure each child's individual needs are known and accommodated. Parents are kept well informed of their children's progress through discussions with staff. The children's assessment files are kept on the premises which parents are welcome to access at any time on request. These are given to the parents when the children leave. Information about the Foundation Stage of learning and activity plans are also made available to parents.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff are committed and work effectively together as a team and are well supported by the management committee. They attend regular training to update their knowledge and skills. All staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning and are all involved in the planning and assessment process. The playgroup has introduced a system of self assessment which they continue to develop in order to monitor the effectiveness of the education provided.

Effective recruitment and induction procedures are in place; this ensures children are cared for by suitably qualified and experienced staff who have been subject to appropriate vetting procedures. All requirements of the National Standards for documentation and record keeping are in place and stored appropriately to maintain confidentiality. These include attendance registers and appropriate accident and medication records. There are clear policies and procedures in place, which are available on the premises for parents to access at any time, and which safeguard children's health and welfare. All staff have high regard for the well-being of the children and ensure policies and procedures work well in practice.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the playgroup was asked to; ensure children have equal access to all areas and free choice of play materials, to inform parents of Ofsted's contact details and ensure systems for record keeping maintain confidentiality.

The group has increased the range of resources that are available to the children for self-selection at each session. The children access all areas and choose freely from a wide range of activities and resources. Ofsted's parent poster is displayed on the parents noticeboard in the entrance and the systems for record keeping have been reviewed and where necessary, amended to ensure confidentiality is maintained.

## **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 complaint 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):

- develop the outdoor play facilities as identified in the group's own development plan.

#### **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):

- increase children's access to a range of craft materials to encourage their spontaneous creativity
- increase children's access to information technology, in particular their access to a computer
- strengthen the links between planning and assessment to clearly show how the individual children's next steps in learning are planned for.

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