

Allsorts Pre-school Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	304949
Inspection date	27 March 2007
Inspector	Zoe Smith
Setting Address	St John's School, Grimshaw Lane, Bollington, Macclesfield, SK10 5LY
Telephone number	01625 572025
E-mail	
Registered person	Allsorts 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 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?

Allsorts Pre-School Playgroup has been registered since 1990. It is based at Saint John's Primary School in the Bollington district of Macclesfield. The group is open from 09.00 to 12.00 every weekday during school term times. They have sole use of their classroom base during hours of operation. Children are able to participate in outdoor play activities in the school playground.

The group is registered to provide sessional day care for a maximum of 16 children aged between two and five years. Nursery education is provided for three and four year olds. There are currently 13 children on roll all of whom are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. They are able to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The group is committee run. An appropriately qualified person is employed to manage the group on a day to day basis. The manager is assisted by a team of four staff, all of whom hold recognised childcare or teaching qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are finding out physical activity is fun and good for their health. They participate in a wide range of physical play activities, both indoors and outdoors. Children exert lots of energy as they enthusiastically play on the large climbing frame. They pull themselves up to the platform using a rope, clamber over the bridge and confidently jump off the platform or slide down using the slide or fire-fighters pole. Children enjoy kicking, throwing and catching footballs. These activities promote the children's development of gross motor skills and provide lots of fresh air and exercise.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment. Effective hygiene practices and routines are implemented to help keep children healthy. Children know to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. They enjoy spending lots of time drying their hands using the hot air dryer and then showing staff how clean and warm their hands are. Several members of staff have current training in administering first aid. All the necessary permissions and records are in place regarding the administering of medication and accidents to children. Regular visits and talks from a nurse, dentist and optician are helping children to learn how to look after their bodies, teeth and eyes.

The group takes part in Cheshire's dental health scheme. Children enjoy a healthy and nutritious snack which includes fresh and dried fruit or a savoury snack. They sit around the table happily chatting to each other whilst enjoying their food. Special dietary needs and requirements are discussed and agreed with parents. Fresh drinking water is readily available to quench children's thirst and keep them hydrated. Children participate in activities and discussions that reinforce the benefits of healthy eating. They use play fruit and vegetables to make meals in the home corner and enjoyed making porridge for snack.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure, safe and well maintained environment. Displays, educational posters and examples of the children's creativity are displayed on the walls. This makes the children's room welcoming, stimulating and child-friendly. A risk assessment of the premises has been conducted and effective safety precautions are put in place to minimise identified risks. For example, the premises and outdoor play areas are kept secure and plug socket covers are provided. An impact absorbing surface in the outdoor play area helps to reduce the risk of injury if a child falls whilst playing on the climbing frame. High adult to child ratios keep children safe on outings. Children are learning about fire safety, they know and regularly practise the procedure for emergency evacuation. They are enthralled when the fire service visits to discuss fire safety and prevention. They sit in the fire engine, help the fire-fighters use the hose and try on their helmets.

The safety and protection of children is of utmost importance to staff. They are well deployed and diligently supervise the children at all times. Stories, discussions and activities help children learn about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe. The community police officers regularly visit to talk to the children about safety and how the police are there to help them. Children enjoy trying on their fluorescent jackets, the different types of police hats and helmets and taking it in turns to wear handcuffs. Children choose what to play with from a wide range

of safe, good quality resources, which are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Parents regularly take part in fund raising activities to raise money to enable the group to replace and purchase new resources. The safety and protection of children is given priority. Children are safeguarded because staff are well trained in and have a good understanding of child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children explore a wide variety of age appropriate activities, toys and equipment, which are designed to be enjoyable and interesting. Staff knowledge of early years guidance, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework is good. They use the framework to inform the planning of activities for younger children to ensure they make good progress in all areas of their development. Children have lots of opportunities to develop their imaginations through make believe and pretend play. They make good use of the home corner, preparing snacks for the dolls, dressing up and mending things using the tools and workbench. Children enjoy playing with the train sets, building a track and happily taking trains on journeys around it.

Sensory, messy and creative play is well provided for and very popular with the children. They thoroughly enjoy activities involving sand, water, dough, cutting and sticking and painting. They enthusiastically rake and dig in the sand and then fill buckets up to make sand castles. However, there is a tendency for some creative activities to be adult-led. This limits opportunities for children to freely explore creative materials. Children enjoy building with construction toys and completing jigsaws and inset puzzles, carefully matching and manipulating pieces into place.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's learning is well supported and promoted by the staff team who have an excellent knowledge of the individual abilities of children. If a child finds an activity too simple, it is adapted to make it more interesting and challenging. This helps to ensure teaching builds on what children already know. However, planning and assessments do not consistently identify the next steps in children's learning and therefore some learning opportunities are not used to their full potential. A broad range of interesting and enjoyable activities are provided that cover the six areas of learning. Children receive lots of individual attention and skilful questioning techniques effectively support and help them to consolidate their learning.

Children are happy in the friendly and relaxed environment. They have positive relationships with each other and staff. Children are becoming increasingly independent as they attend to their own personal care and put on their own coats in readiness to play outside. However, at snack time their drink and snack is prepared and served by a member of staff. Therefore opportunities are missed for children to develop new self-help skills and independence.

Children's spoken language is developing well. They are articulate and confident speakers and spontaneously initiate conversations and recall events. For example, they talk about their birthday party and the presents they received. Children know that print carries meaning and are beginning to develop early writing skills. They make good use of the well stocked writing area to make marks and practise their early writing skills. Some children copy their name from a template and others write it on their own in their Easter cards. A love of books is fostered at the group. Children look forward to group stories, which are brought to life through the use a

range of resources, such as wooden people and picture cards. Children enjoy snuggling up to a member of staff to look at a book on their own and choosing a 'bedtime story book' to take home.

Children have a good awareness of number and enjoy counting and calculating. They eagerly count how many children are present and then count out enough cups for each child. Older and more able children calculate the total number of children present by adding together the number of children sat in the book corner and the number of children sat at the table. Children sort and compare the plastic bears and animals and then put them into groups. They use a range of mathematical language to describe shape, size, position and quantity. Children estimate how many cups of lentils they think are needed to fill a large container and then count out how many it actually takes.

Children competently use a variety of information technology resources and electronic toys in their play, including calculators, a computer and a remote controlled bug. They follow simple instructions, skilfully control the mouse and manoeuvre the bug round the room and furniture. They explore what happens when ice is put in water and when it is placed near something warm. Children are enthralled when they participate in activities that help them find out about the lifecycle of frogs. Every day they enthusiastically check to see how the tadpoles are developing.

Children play imaginatively in the role play corner and express themselves using a variety of media, such as construction toys, shapes, creative materials and musical instruments. They enthusiastically join in the group singing sessions and play musical instruments. They design and make crowns to wear and then dress up and pretend to be a 'fairy queen'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They have access to a range of resources that provide positive images of diversity, such as books, jigsaws and imaginative play equipment. Children participate in activities that help them learn about their own and the customs, religious and cultural beliefs of others. They dressed up in traditional Chinese costumes, made lucky red money envelopes and ate a Chinese feast to find out about the Chinese New Year celebrations. Children make cards with chickens on for Easter and look forward to joining in an Easter egg hunt. These activities are helping children to learn about the wider world and to respect and value differences. All children are welcomed and play a full part in the group. The setting has an extremely proactive approach to meeting the additional needs of children, staff work very closely with parents and involved agencies. This ensures that children's individual needs are effectively planned for and children are very well supported and make good progress.

Staff skilfully support and encourage children to play fairly, share and take turns. They carefully negotiate with children to resolve minor squabbles in an amicable way and without the need for sanctions. Children respond to the frequent and meaningful praise they receive and behave well. Discussions and stories are used to help children learn what is right and what is wrong. Children are finding out about and becoming a part of the local community. They enjoy taking part in Bollington's annual village parade. Children are learning to care for others who are less fortunate than themselves. They brought in toys from home to fill shoeboxes for the Operation Christmas Child charity event.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents are made to feel very welcome at the group. They are spoken to in a professional and friendly manner by staff. Parents speak very highly about the group, staff, the care provided and the good progress their children are making. Newsletters and daily discussions keep parents up to date about events at the group and their child's day. Children's developmental records are used to effectively monitor children's progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Parents are able to arrange an appointment to discuss their child's educational progress in more detail and to look through their development record. Positive steps are taken to ensure parents are kept well informed about all relevant policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are happy and content in the friendly and well organised environment. They quickly settle and become engrossed in their play and activities. There is a very stable staff team; there have been no staff changes since the last inspection. Children benefit immensely from the consistency and continuity of care this provides. Effective induction, recruitment and selection procedures are in place to ensure if new staff are appointed they will be appropriately vetted and their suitability assessed. Staff treat all children as individuals and skilfully interact with them to support and encourage their learning and development. The small group enables staff to get to know individual children very well and helps children to feel secure and confident.

The leadership and management are good structure, the manager and staff work extremely well together. They hold regular planning meetings and daily discussions to ensure every session is well planned and captivates the interest of all children. High priority is given to staff development and training. Staff enhance their skills by regularly attending short training courses on specific subjects, for example, developing communication skills, maths in a box and writing individual education plans. This brings about continual improvements and developments to the quality of care and education provided. All required records and documentation are in place, they are clear, well maintained and retained for inspection. Sensible policies and procedures are used to underpin staff practice and the care provided.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last nursery education visit two key issues for action were agreed to develop the quality of teaching and learning. More challenging opportunities are now provided for older and more able children to practise using their knowledge of letters. Parents are now provided with information on the Foundation Stage, stepping stones and early learning goals. Newsletter's emphasis is given to showing parents how they can be involved in supporting their children's learning. These improvements are helping children to make good progress through the stepping stones and towards reaching the early learning goals.

At the last care inspection one action and four recommendations were agreed to improve the standards of care. The manager has successfully completed an appropriate childcare qualification. She now has up to date training and skills to enable her to manage the setting effectively. Three members of staff now have an appropriate first aid certificate and written parental permission for seeking emergency medical treatment has been obtained. This ensures the children's health and well-being is protected at all times. Hygiene procedures have been improved with regard to the serving of food and drinks to the children. This reduces the risk

of cross-contamination and illness. Full details of the regulator are now included in the complaints policy. This ensures parents know how to contact the regulator if they have concerns that cannot be resolved. Methods for managing bullying have been formalised and are included in the behaviour management policy. This ensures consistent handling of incidents when they arise.

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 good.

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):

- increase opportunities for children to freely explore media and creative materials (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- develop the range of activities to provide children with more opportunities to learn new self help skills and to become increasingly independent
- develop assessments and planning to demonstrate how the next steps in children's learning will be promoted to ensure teaching builds on what children already know.

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