

# Chuckles Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 206128

**Inspection date** 22 May 2007

**Inspector** Lynn Dent

**Setting Address** Keldholme Lane Community Centre, Gillamoor Court, Alvaston, Derby, Derbyshire, DE24 0RU

**Telephone number** 756918

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Diane Rowley

**Type of inspection** Integrated

**Type of care** Full day 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?

Chuckles Playgroup is privately owned. It opened in 1986 and operates from a community centre in Alvaston on the outskirts of Derby. A maximum of 30 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 9.15 to 15.00 during term-time. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 44 children from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 33 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The playgroup currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup employs six staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a higher level qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children can explain that washing their hands and cleaning their teeth is important to maintain good health. As a result they actively participate in daily routines to maintain this. An example of good hygiene is shown as children wipe their nose and put the tissue in a bin. Older children independently maintain their hygiene and practitioners support younger children when needed. The procedures to maintain clean premises are implemented throughout the day. For example, separate tables are used to eat meals. Practitioners wear disposable gloves to change nappies and to clean the changing area. Toys and resources undergo regular cleaning. Procedures are implemented to ensure that children who are infectious do not attend the setting during recognised incubation periods. Consequently, the risk of germs spreading is minimised.

Following accidents children receive the appropriate care from practitioners who are trained in first aid. Records are kept of this and parents are informed. Medication is administered and recorded in accordance with the National Standards. Children cannot independently access water throughout the session. Therefore, they may become thirsty. However, drinks are routinely offered at snack and meal times. Children enjoy their meals as they are served in manageable portions and are nicely presented. They explain they like toast and milk because it makes them "grow big and strong". Practitioners provide a range of meals and snacks which are nutritious and include fresh fruit, vegetables and dairy products. Consequently, children develop healthy eating. Children's tastes are developed as they eat foods from around the world. Meal times are used well to help children develop good table manners. Consequently, this helps to promote their social skills. Children's dietary needs are met as this information is detailed on their records and the cook has a list readily available to ensure she is aware of these.

Children enjoy a range of activities which promotes their growth and development. Practitioners provide regular opportunities for children to participate in activities that help develop good hand to eye coordination. For example, using scissors, colouring and making models with junk. Older children show they can competently use cutlery and pour drinks at meal times. Children are learning to throw and catch balls and beanbags as practitioners practise this with them. Children develop cooperative play through team games, for example, when using the parachute. They enjoy a wide range of experiences both indoors and outdoors to develop control and coordination. Children are confident to use slides, climbing on steps to do this. All children move across a range of different surfaces with skill. Children move carefully when using bikes, skilfully moving around their friends.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The environment is stimulating for children. Practitioners arrange the room to provide different areas for activities. There are lots of posters, information, photographs and displays to support children's learning. Children have freedom to learn about their own abilities and to take risks within the safe limits set by the practitioners. For example, they use climbing frames and understand that only one person can use the slide at a time. Children clearly understand the rules which keep them safe. This is shown as the emergency evacuation procedure is practised during the inspection. Children walk to the fire exit and are escorted to a grass area in the car park. During this time they show they understand the importance of this as they wait quietly until they can return to the building. Their understanding of safety is further enhanced as

practitioners discuss ways to keep themselves safe when away from the setting. Children's safety is maintained during outings as practitioners ensure that they complete a risk assessment beforehand.

The policy and procedures for recording and reporting potential child protection concerns have recently been updated. Practitioners can explain the internal procedures for reporting concerns. However, not all practitioners are sufficiently trained or confident to implement the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures in the absence of the named person. Therefore, this could potentially delay appropriate action being taken to safeguard children's welfare. Children are cared for in a safe environment because risk assessments are regularly completed. As a result the risks of accidental injury to children are minimised. Practitioners are mindful about maintaining children's safety both indoors and outdoors. Exterior doors are kept locked, the kitchen is inaccessible to the children and the outdoor play area is checked to ensure that it is safe for children to use. Consequently, no hazards are identified at the inspection. Children have access to a wide range of toys and resources that are in good condition. Practitioners actively ensure that these are supplemented by using the local toy library. Therefore, children are able to explore their environment and the resources safely, which encourages independence and confidence.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and confident as practitioners are friendly and treat them with kindness. As a result children are settled. Most children happily leave their parents and quickly settle to the activities provided. Practitioners use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to ensure that planned activities for younger children are developmentally appropriate. This is also used by the child's key worker to monitor their progress and identify the next steps in their development. Practitioners move around the setting interacting well with children during activities. However, they are aware to allow children to play independently, giving them opportunity to develop their own play and learning. For example, children who do not normally tend to play alone are observed by staff from a distance. Practitioners take good account of children's interests and everyday events. This is shown as children look out of the window at what is happening. Practitioners encourage children to go to the outdoor play area to watch work men remove a bin from the adjacent car park. Older children can extend their play, freely access resources to support this. Younger children's language skills are developed because practitioners use simple words and echo what children say, using this to model the correct word. For example, "yep please" is repeated back as "yes please". Practitioners talk to and encourage older children to answer with sentences. Children play contentedly alongside and with their friends for sustained periods of time. They share ideas about what to draw and make when building with Duplo. Individual needs of children are met. For example, younger children's nappies are changed as required and they use cups with lids at snack time.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Consequently, overall children are making satisfactory good progress towards the early learning goals. Although records show that a few more able children are making better progress. The practitioners have completed training in the Foundation Stage of learning. Therefore, they are able to plan and implement a curriculum which covers all areas of learning and identify the aims of the activities. Play and activities provide a variety of experiences for children which are evaluated and adapted to ensure that learning outcomes are achieved. The assessment and monitoring of children begins

as they enter the setting. Regular observations by practitioners are used to monitor children's achievements and help to identify the next steps for learning. Children have time to embed their learning as activities are available for them to return to throughout the day.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. They sit and listen well. They show curiosity and persist with the activities provided. Showing they are motivated to learn. They develop good relationships with their peers and the practitioners. Most children can recognise their name in print and more able children are able to identify the sounds and letters of their names. A few children can independently write their name. However, everyday opportunities are not used sufficiently to encourage this as practitioners often write their names for them. Children can tell a story from pictures and use books carefully. They play lotto games to learn how to identify when an item is under, over or behind another object. Some children can identify numbers correctly. More able children can put the correct number of items into pots. Some children can count to 12. They are learning to order as they have opportunity to do this using number cards attached to the wall. However, there are missed opportunities to fully develop children's understanding of numbers and to solve mathematical problems during daily routines. Children identify big and little as they play games. Children develop an understanding of the world by visiting the local community and attractions. Children have access to dressing-up clothes, books and other resources which promote positive images. Consequently, they learn to respect those who may be different to themselves. Practitioners encourage children to be creative. They do not expect children to produce an end product and ask children what they are making. This is shown as children use materials to make models and use egg cups to represent wheels. Children can access and use a range of materials to draw throughout the day. Children enjoy singing, matching words to actions as they do so. They make their own music as they play with instruments.

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

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children spend their time engaged in activities which they enjoy, for example, junk modelling. All children are made welcome in the setting. Practitioners ensure they have the information required to meet the children's individual needs. Consequently, children receive equal opportunities to participate in all activities. A good range of resources which effectively promote differences in society are readily available to children. Staff use the resources well to help children understand about different role models and cultures. A range of cultural events and festivals are celebrated throughout the year. For example, Chinese New Year and Christmas helps children to develop respect for those who may be different to themselves. Children know their home life is valued as practitioners engage them in conversations about events in their own life, for example the prospect of a new baby sister. The procedures for identifying and supporting children with special needs work well in practice. The practitioners actively seek advice and support from outside professionals. Regular assessments and clear records are in place. These are used well to ensure that the activities provided are appropriate and meet children's needs. As a result children feel included and make progress.

Children's behaviour is good due to the consistent positive behaviour management and role models shown by practitioners. Children that receive stickers explain the reason for this and show a sense of pride as they wear them and show these to other adults. Rules are displayed in a positive manner. For example, "We walk indoors" and "We share with our friends". Consequently, children follow these, showing an understanding of the needs of those around them. An example of this is a child informing the inspector that he has been playing on a bike

and has given it to his friend to play. All children play harmoniously alongside and with their friends according to their developmental stage.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. They receive good information at induction and ongoing through discussions, newsletters and meetings. A notice board and displays for parents ensures they can access details about 'Birth to three matters', the Foundation Stage, the settings policies, health information and menus. Practitioners seek the opinions and views of parents through discussions or parents can write these in a book. Parents are kept informed of their child's care and learning through a range of planned meetings, shared records and informal discussions. As a result good two way communication is developed. Ideas for extending children's learning at home are shared with parents. For example, helping children to learn to recognise their name, and providing reading resources. Consequently, parents can be actively involved in their children's learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Robust recruitment and inductions procedures ensure children are cared for by suitable practitioners. Children are never left alone with students or visitors. The setting carries out checks with practitioners annually to ensure they remain suitable to care for children. Most practitioners are qualified and undertake regular training to enhance their professional development. This is made possible as the setting dedicates five days to training annually. Practitioners are encouraged to attend other training throughout the year. Consequently, children are well cared for. The manager and deputy manager hold early years qualifications and are currently working towards an appropriate qualification for their role. This will ensure that they meet the requirements set out in the 'National Standards for under eights day care'.

The manager delegates some responsibilities to practitioners. Consequently, they are committed to the care of the children and work well together as a team. Children receive appropriate support to learn through play, activities and experiences. The number of adults required to care with the children is often exceeded. The environment is organised well to provide all types of play. Consequently, care learning and play is balanced. Policies and procedures work well in practice to promote children's well-being and support their development. Detailed records are in place for children and underpin the care they receive. Overall the provision meets the needs of all children who attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the quality of care was judged as inadequate. The setting needed to improve the meals provided; ensure staff that handle food are aware of the appropriate regulation; ensure all hazardous items are stored inaccessible to children; update the child protection policy; ensure physical intervention is recorded for all children; update the complaints policy and procedure; ensure that activities sufficiently promote children's development and provide challenge for more able children; ensure the named deputy is suitable to take charge in the absence of the manager; improve the attendance record for staff and children.

The registered person has adapted the menus to ensure children receive a healthy diet which includes fruit and vegetables. Staff have received training in food hygiene, are aware of and comply with regulations relating to the handling of food. Hazardous items are locked in cupboards. Therefore, these are inaccessible to children and enhance their safety. The policy

for child protection has been updated to meet current legislation. This helps to ensure that the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures are followed. Records to show any physical restraint of children are in place and clearly show why this happens. The complaints policy and procedures have been updated and implemented to meet the latest regulations. All complaints are now recorded appropriately and available for inspection at any time. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is planned and implemented to ensure that children's development needs are met and activities adapted to meet the needs of more able children. The manager and deputy manager each hold appropriate qualification. They are currently training to Level 3 and this will be completed within the next few weeks and months. However, they both have a clear understanding of the National Standards, child development, 'Birth to three matters' and the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage'. The attendance register for staff and children has been improved to include the times of arrivals and departures. The action taken has ensured that the quality of care is now of a satisfactory standard or better throughout the setting.

At the last inspection, the quality of the nursery education was judged as inadequate. The setting needed to improve staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning; demonstrate how the education and quality of teaching is monitored and evaluated; develop teaching methods to extend children's thinking and provide sufficient challenge; ensure assessment show children's starting points, include information from parents and are kept up to date; develop planning to cover all aspects of learning and consider the learning intentions of activities.

The registered person has ensured that staff planning and working with the children in the Foundation Stage have completed training to increase their knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones and early learning goals, including training on providing a balanced curriculum, effective planning, assessment and evaluation of the activities provided. The staff work with support from a qualified early years teacher. This has had a positive impact on the quality of the nursery education. A range of teaching methods are used to develop children's learning through play. These include free choice and adult-led activities which enable children to develop their understanding and provide them with activities that are adapted to provide challenge. Records show children's achievements and identify the next steps for learning. These are updated regularly and include information from parents and used to inform future planning.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection Ofsted has received one complaint, a concern regarding the suitability of the provider relating to the level of her qualifications. A childcare inspector conducted an announced visit on 29 November 2006 to inspect against National Standard 1 (suitable person). As a result of the visit Ofsted required the provider to take action in order to ensure the person in charge of the group is suitably qualified. The provider was also required to take action to ensure Ofsted are notified of all significant events in accordance with the Children's Act Regulations under National Standard 14 (Documentation). A satisfactory response has been received to the actions set and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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.

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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 that children can independently access drinks at all times
- ensure all staff are trained and able to implement the Local Safeguarding Children Board reporting procedures in the absence of the designated member of staff
- ensure that the manager and deputy manager hold a qualification appropriate to their post.

#### **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):

- use everyday opportunities to encourage children to develop independent writing, this is in respect to more able children writing their names
- Use everyday opportunities to further develop children's understanding of numbers and to solve mathematical problems.

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)