



Youlgrave Playschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206915
Inspection date	07 March 2007
Inspector	Diana Pidgeon
Setting Address	Youlgrave Scout and Community Hall, Alport Lane, Youlgrave, Bakewell, Derbyshire, DE45 1WN
Telephone number	01629636887 or 0774519366
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Registered person	Youlgrave 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 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?

Youlgrave Pre-School Playgroup operates from the Scout and Community Hall in Youlgrave. The playgroup is provided by a voluntary management committee and serves the village of Youlgrave and the local rural community.

There are currently 20 children on roll, seven of whom are in receipt of funded education. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The group opens five days a week during school term time only. Sessions are from 09:15 until 11:45.

There are four part-time staff who work with the children, two of whom hold recognised qualifications. One of these is currently working towards a National Vocational Qualification in childcare and education at level four and a further member of staff is working towards a level three award. The setting receives the support of advisors from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through the daily routines. They routinely wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their snack and the improved arrangements for this ensures any risk of cross infection is minimised. Additionally children are beginning to recognise when they need to wipe their noses and most children independently take a tissue from the box, use it and throw it in the bin. Appropriate steps are taken by staff to sustain suitable levels of hygiene, such as wiping tables before snack is served. Arrangements to protect children from the spread of infection remain sound, with appropriate guidance for parents regarding the exclusion policy for childhood illnesses and the procedures for administering medication. Children receive appropriate treatment in the event of any minor accidents as there is always a member of staff present with a knowledge of first aid. Any such events are recorded promptly and shared with parents to ensure children's continuing health needs are met.

Children enjoy a healthy snack of fresh fruit or vegetables during the session. They sit in small groups around tables, which promotes their social skills. Children eagerly try the chopped fruits that are offered in individual bowls and readily identify fruits such as apple, orange and banana. Children pour their own drinks at snack time, with staff providing appropriate support when needed. They choose between milk and juice for the main drink and water is available throughout the rest of the session to ensure children do not become thirsty. Appropriate systems are in place to identify any special dietary requirements children may have and these are respected.

Although the playgroup has no outdoor area, daily routines ensure children have sufficient opportunities to be active and develop their physical skills. For example, they ride wheeled toys and join in ring games and dance sessions. Children enjoy joining in action songs such as 'Dingle Dangle Scarecrow', which help them develop coordination and control of their bodies. They learn to climb, crawl and negotiate space safely through the variety of play provided. Children new to the setting receive sensitive support to help them settle and this meets their emotional needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. They are warmly greeted by staff as they arrive and quickly settle to play because activities that interest them are readily available. The hall is suitably organised to provide sufficient, safe space for children to play both actively and quietly. For example, when using wheeled toys there is a clearly defined area in which to ride away from children playing with toys on the carpets. The premises are secure and staff ensure

they are appropriately positioned at the start and end of sessions meaning children cannot leave unsupervised. Most risks are identified and now assessed in a formal way. This complements the daily checks made by staff as they prepare for children's arrival and improves overall safety. However, some further identified risks, such as children's access to the kitchen area, are not included and means the risk assessment is not yet comprehensive. Children's awareness of safety issues is raised through topic work and staff advising them. For example, staff explain where to ride the wheeled toys safely so as not to hurt others. Children practise the fire evacuation procedures on a regular basis and this contributes to their understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have attended child protection training and are aware of the relevant policy and procedure to guide their practice. This ensures all staff understand the local procedures they must follow if concerned about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally happy and settled in the playgroup, because staff are welcoming and give them lots of support to enable them to separate from their parents and carers with ease. A range of age appropriate play is set out at the start of each session and this enables children to quickly become involved in an activity of their choice. Younger children enjoy practical experiences such as painting at the easel, moulding with play dough and playing in the water tray. Older children begin to form friendships and often seek out others to join in their games. For example, several children play cooperatively with the train set. During these free play activities all children are engaged and interested, and often benefit from adult attention which helps to extend and promote their learning. The daily routine is being changed and whole group times are now relatively short, which means all children are more able to focus. For example, at circle time children's attention is generally held as children greet each other enthusiastically. However, at times adult led activities with the whole group still fail to keep all the children engaged because these do not take account of children's differing needs. In contrast, younger children sit attentively in a small group at story time and eagerly wait their turn to lift the flap on the story book. Staff's use of the 'Birth to three matters framework' is still limited. While planning is in place, this does not always fully address the learning needs of the youngest children. Consequently their learning opportunities are not yet maximised.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have attended training on the Foundation Stage and received helpful support from external advisors, which has improved the overall planning and delivery of activities. Children benefit from a wide range of interesting themes around which activities are planned. The introduction of focussed activities that identify what the children are expected to learn contributes to children being appropriately challenged and helps them move forward in their learning. Planning of such activities is still relatively new and continues to be an area for development. Staff engage with the children well during free play and through their spontaneous questioning and guidance they encourage children to think and promote their confidence and self esteem.

Children are mostly interested in the activities provided. Older children concentrate well and persevere to complete their chosen tasks, such as completing a jigsaw puzzle. Some children initiate their own ideas. For example, when using creative materials one child chooses to write a letter and makes an envelope. Children's independence is generally encouraged and all children attempt to pour their own drinks and put on their coats. Older children show care and kindness towards their younger friends as they help them at the snack table and show them how to tidy toys away. Children begin to communicate well, greeting each other and using phrases in both English and French. They recognise their names as they hang their name plates on the wall at the start of the session. They enjoy looking at books and benefit from a planned time to do this in small groups. Consequently children handle books carefully and some begin to be able to retell a story from the pictures. Children make good use of the increased opportunities to make marks and practise writing for a purpose. They make their own bills using a notepad and pencils in the garage role play area and write letters during planned use of writing materials. Additionally paint and chalks are out for children to use in free play, considerably improving their access to mark making equipment.

Children's mathematical development is now satisfactory as staff pay more attention to this within planning. Children recognise simple shapes, for example they recognise the shape of the tile they sit on at circle time. Children begin to use mathematical language as they describe the position of play people in a focussed activity and understand 'in front' and 'behind' as they queue for the bathroom. Children compare capacity and weight as they scoop dry sand into containers, identifying who has more. Most children begin to count by rote, for example when counting children present. At snack time children on each table begin to solve simple problems as they count their own cups. Children learn about different cultures and beliefs through topic work and specific activities relating to festivals. They are developing an understanding of local customs, such as well dressing, through appropriate use of the local community. Children begin to observe change through a variety of activities including those linked to the seasons. They watch as the flowers and buds in the vase open during the course of a week. Children enjoy constructing, for example they put together a train track with a member of staff's help. While they have some access to toys such as tills and activity sets, their access to other everyday technology is limited.

Children's physical skills are developing appropriately. Use of large equipment and small equipment help children develop balance and control. They negotiate space and move around safely as they ride wheeled toys around obstacles. Children have improved access to a range of small tools, such as scissors, rulers and stencils which they use with increasing control. Children's creativity is fostered through painting, drawing and free access to craft materials. Less emphasis is placed on adult led and prepared activities, leaving more opportunities for children to express their own ideas. For example, children's pictures are displayed that show their own interpretations of other artists work. Children join in enthusiastically with singing, music sessions and ring games. They learn to clap to the beat and express themselves in movement and dance. They listen and respond to a wide variety of music. Improved opportunities for role play means children are able to act out their ideas and make up games with their friends. They particularly enjoy the garage and petrol station area where children take turns to mend the vehicles and serve petrol to others.

Staff have made some progress in changing the daily routine, although recognise that further monitoring and evaluation is needed to ensure it meets all children's needs. Children often work in small groups, for example when listening to a story, and this enables older children to concentrate and contribute their ideas in discussions. At times whole group activities, such as movement sessions, still fail to engage all of the older children fully. Staff have implemented a new form of assessment recording, which is based around children's progress towards the early learning goals. This is still at an early stage and does not yet make best use of the staff's observations of the children or highlight their next steps in learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed into the setting and develop a sense of belonging as they see examples of their art work displayed around the room and register their attendance by adding their name to the board. They begin to take some responsibility, for example by pouring their own drinks. This helps to promote their independence and fosters their self esteem. Older children take pleasure in helping their younger friends and generally show kindness and consideration towards them. Children mostly behave well. They learn to share and take turns, because staff use appropriate methods to support their learning. For example, the use of an egg timer to indicate the length of a turn provides a visual reminder for children who are riding wheeled toys. While children listen well in small groups, some larger group activities still do not fully engage all children and their behaviour begins to distract others. Children's individual needs are generally recognised. There are appropriate systems in place to support any children with learning difficulties or disabilities. The setting's coordinator has experience of working with parents and other agencies to ensure children are provided with suitable resources and activities to meet their individual needs. Children begin to form positive attitudes towards others and develop an understanding of their own and the wider community. They begin to appreciate the customs and cultures of others through celebrating festivals and within their topic work. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Friendly relationships are formed with staff, which enables information to be exchanged daily about what the children have done during the session. Parents receive an information booklet that contains relevant detail about the setting and its policies. Further written information is provided about the current topic and how parents may contribute to this. Focussed activity plans are now displayed on the notice board for reference, meaning that parents are now better informed about what their children are learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Since the last inspection a new voluntary committee has been elected and they work effectively with the staff to ensure all the required initial improvements have been successfully completed. Improvements in the recording of accidents and incidents means that confidentiality is now maintained. All the required documentation remains suitably in place. Guests are now asked to sign the visitor log book and this improves the overall safety for the children. A complaint

record system is established and ready to use, should the setting require it. Staff understand how this should be shared with parents, so improving their access to potentially important information. Children benefit from having sufficient staff working directly with them to enable them feel secure and to meet their needs. Appropriate recruitment and induction procedures are in place. These ensure children are cared for by suitably vetted adults. Yearly appraisals are conducted to identify staff's training needs and this helps to ensure the qualification requirements are met.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff show commitment to improvement and are fully supported by an active and interested committee. The staff's training needs have been identified and a plan is in place to improve their knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. As a result of the steps already taken staff have significantly improved the planning of the focussed activities, begun to undertake increased observations of the children and are developing the assessment systems. Recent changes to the daily routine and improved grouping of children for key times, such as story time, means that some activities are better matched to children's needs. Systems to evaluate practice and monitor the quality of the funded education are limited. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the quality of care was judged as inadequate. The playgroup was asked to improve children's development records and use them to plan a range of activities appropriate for their stage of development and individual need. They were also asked to put a complaint log in place and to make sure documentation is kept confidential.

A complaint log has now been established and staff are aware to use it to record any complaints received in the future and their outcome. This log is available for parents to see on request and means the requirement is now met. Several steps have been taken to improve the confidentiality of records held. Accidents and incidents are now recorded so that parents, in signing the record, are unable to view any other entries. Where incidents involve other children staff are now aware not to name these children in any report to be shared with others. Staff files now contain relevant information to evidence that criminal record bureau checks have been taken in line with recommended guidelines. These steps promote confidentiality and ensure that the documentation held supports children's safety and welfare. Staff have taken some steps to improve the records of children's achievements, based upon observations of what they do and know. Although these are still at an early stage they are also focussing attention on reviewing the organisation of the sessions and grouping of children in order to make activities appropriate for individuals. Staff have arranged to attend further 'Birth to three matters' training and it is recommended from this inspection that the setting continues to develop this aspect of practice.

At the last inspection the quality of nursery education inspection was judged as inadequate. The playgroup were asked to improve the staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum; to improve planning in order to identify children's next steps in learning; to improve the planning and delivery of focussed activities and to provide children with more opportunities to practice writing for a purpose. With the help of an advisor from the local authority the playgroup set out an action plan to show how these improvements would be made and some progress has been made in all areas. Staff have attended some training to

raise their awareness of specific areas of the curriculum. Through the implementation of a new form of assessment closely linked to the stepping stones they are becoming more familiar with how children make progress towards the early learning goals and the breadth of the curriculum. There are now suitable opportunities for the children to practice their writing for a purpose, for example by using notepads and pencils in the role play area. Overall greater emphasis is placed on providing opportunities for children to make marks and practice their emergent writing, and as a result some children are beginning to give meaning to their marks as they play. The organisation and planning of focussed activities has been reviewed so that this activity takes place during free play. These mostly have defined aims and have a learning intention that is understood by the member of staff leading the activity. Staff are mostly able to differentiate activities for the differing abilities of the children and are beginning to record observations of the children to feed into the assessment records. Consequently, children enjoy these activities and are generally appropriately challenged. Although thought goes into planning, this is not yet fully reflected in the documentation and remains an area for development.

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 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 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):

- continue to monitor and review the organisation of sessions to ensure the routines and grouping of children meets their individual needs and promotes their development
- improve the learning opportunities for children under three by implementing an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- extend the formal risk assessment of the premises to ensure all identified risks and hazards are included

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):

- continue to develop the use of observation and assessment of children's achievements in relation to their progress towards the early learning goals and use these to plan for their future progress
- continue to develop the planning of focussed and adult-led activities to clearly identify learning intentions and how these are adapted for children's varying needs
- develop further monitoring systems that can be used to evaluate the quality of the nursery education, to identify and support staff training needs and to plan for future improvements.

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