



Ring Of Roses Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220092
Inspection date	09 March 2007
Inspector	Susan Marriott
Setting Address	Memorial Hall, High Street, Great Doddington, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, NN29 7TQ
Telephone number	07940 333784
E-mail	
Registered person	Ring of Roses 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?

Ring of Roses Playgroup was established in 1996. The playgroup is run by an elected committee. The playgroup operates from Great Doddington Memorial Hall in the village of Great Doddington, near Wellingborough. The group has access to a large hall, kitchen and toilets. They have use of a recreation park and the Infant School playground for outdoor play. The playgroup is open Monday to Friday mornings from 09.15 to 11.45 during term time only.

The playgroup is registered for 24 children. There are currently 30 children on roll, of whom 16 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The children come from the surrounding rural areas. The playgroup is able to provide for children who may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and any who may have English as an additional language.

Five members of staff work with the children. The supervisor holds a relevant Early Years qualification. One member of staff is working towards an appropriate childcare qualification. The playgroup receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because staff follow generally effective health and hygiene policies and procedures. Sick children are excluded from the provision to minimise the spread of infection. The premises are maintained in a properly clean state. Tables are regularly cleaned with anti-bacterial spray to prevent cross contamination. Staff wear protective clothing when changing nappies to prevent the spread of infection. Children wash their hands before snack and staff always remind children to wash their hands after visiting the toilet. Children are beginning to learn about germs through the daily routines when the supervisor prompts staff to remember to promote discussion about the reasons for hand washing. Children receive appropriate treatment in medical emergency because most staff hold suitable first aid qualifications. The first aid box is accessible and the contents are checked regularly. Staff record accidents and include the relevant details.

An extensive range of snack foods such as jacket potatoes and cheese, crisps, biscuits, malt loaf and fruit are presented for the children at a group snack table system. However, many of the foods offered are very substantial and some are likely to contain high levels of salt or sugar. Staff do not always sit with the children and miss opportunities to talk about everyday events. They are distracted by organisational issues such as putting equipment away. Food preparation is done in the kitchen out of sight of the children. This removes an opportunity to develop more detailed conversations about the food. Children have the choice of milk or water, which they do not always pour themselves. Children do not become thirsty whilst playing because each has a labelled bottle of water which is accessible by the children themselves.

A range of equipment used under adult supervision, enables children to develop confidence in meeting physical challenges, increasing their skill and control in moving, climbing and balancing. An indoor session demonstrates that staff are able to appropriately differentiate between the stages of development of the children. Younger children enjoy sliding and rocking on toddler-sized equipment, whilst the older and more able children are challenged by a higher slide, a heavier rocker and a high balance beam. Staff are beginning to work to defined learning intentions for physical activities and this is improving the quality of play and learning.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept very safe in the setting because the staff successfully adapt the village hall premises to ensure a safe environment in which to play and learn. For example, they secure the door to the toilet area with rope to prevent the door swinging and trapping little fingers. Staff give excellent priority to the security of the premises and the supervision of the children. Visitors to the setting must announce their arrival by knocking on the door or window to alert staff to

attend the locked entrance doors. Visitors must show their identity documentation and sign the visitor book. This system protects children from unvetted persons entering the premises unescorted and ensures that access to the children is suitably monitored. Fire evacuation procedures are clearly displayed and staff carry out drills to ensure the safety of the children. Thorough and relevant daily risk assessments are completed on a regular basis. Children learn to keep themselves safe in the setting because staff are appropriately vigilant and explain the consequences of unsafe practices. For example, children who run are challenged by staff who explain that someone may be hurt.

Children are warmly welcomed by the friendly staff and are well cared for in a pleasant, suitably safe and secure indoor environment. Staff wear new, brightly patterned tabards so they are instantly recognisable to parents and carers, presenting a professional image. Staff have to set out the equipment every morning before the children arrive. They have to clear it away at the end of each session, because the hall is used by many other community groups. However, the staff do their best to make the hall child-friendly. They display cardboard posters of group art work, propped up on the floor and set out the activities attractively to stimulate children's interest. Equipment and resources must be safely stored in the store cupboard and children choose from the pre-selection made by staff on a daily basis. This rather limits children's ability to make independent choices in some areas of learning. The large hall is set out with activities relating to the six areas of learning and a book area is made inviting to children with cushions.

Children's welfare is adequately safeguarded because they are protected by informed adults who understand current child protection policies and procedures in line with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. The supervisor is very clear about the procedures she follows and plans to update her training and cascade this to the staff team. The written policy does not yet contain a clear procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a staff member or volunteer.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The friendly staff work well together as a team. They follow children to the activities which attract their interest and provide generally effective support to draw learning from play. This promotes positive outcomes for children. Staff provide positive role models and give highly sensitive support to all children. They demonstrate a genuine affection for children; they respect children's feelings, value their comments and clearly enjoy their company. Children are happy, settle quickly and relate well to other children and staff. Staff encourage and build children's vocabulary through constant praise and recognition. Staff adapt their questioning to reflect each child's stage of development. This helps them meet the needs of all children. Staff are beginning to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to underpin the foundations of the educational programme for any younger children. Younger children happily play together, and are beginning to take turns, share and to talk to others. They experiment with crayons, pencils and chalk, and explore sand, paint and dough.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals given their ages and starting points. Staff engage with children at the activities of their choice and they interact appropriately to draw the learning from play. Staff work well as a team to prepare toys and equipment in advance and mostly achieve a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Staff have a reasonable knowledge of the Foundation Stage and plan to provide an overall balance across all six areas of learning. Planning largely reflects the curriculum guidance but activities are not always appropriately referenced to the stepping stones to ensure a clear focus to secure and progress children's learning. Staff make highly detailed and conscientious observations of children's achievement, arranged under the six areas of learning. However, these are not referenced to the stepping stones and there is no system to track children's progress through the stepping stones. The assessment of what children know and can do cannot yet feed into planning in a logical way to inform the next steps in children's learning.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is nurtured very well. Children enjoy the activities on offer, and are beginning to concentrate and persevere well to complete tasks. They show care and concern for one another. Relationships are very good. For example, several children dress up and play their own game of dancing in a circle to the taped music. When one stumbles, the others ask if their friend is alright. Staff positively encourage children to share and support play effectively to achieve this. The staff praise the children for their helpfulness which reinforces children's self-esteem and confidence. Staff make generally good use of books and story time. They are gradually building up their own collection of home-made story sacks and speak confidently about the use of headphones, taped stories and various strategies to promote children's interest in books. However, there is less variety in the provision to promote early mark making in preparation for handwriting. Children count out 14 building bricks and become increasingly familiar with mathematical language as they talk with staff, but many opportunities to incorporate mathematical learning are currently missed.

Some aspects of knowledge and understanding of the world are very good. Children play with a wide range of small world toys and actively participate in role play, re-enacting their experiences. For example, some children play on a wooden 'A' frame for climbing, wearing hard hats and using plastic saws and hammers as they pretend to 'mend the roof' in their 'building' scenario. Children have access to a computer on site for basic mouse and keyboard skills. However, regular activities to promote children's exploratory impulses and investigative skills are given less emphasis. The staff make excellent use of the local facilities to supplement the provision for physical development. For example, children walk around the church to visit the flower garden and enjoy access to the infant school playground and the nearby park. Children are also supported in the development of the fine motor skills required to use tools, pencils and crayons to handle small objects with increasing control and precision. Children experience a variety of media such as paint and glue, and staff stand back and mostly allow the children to express their own original ideas rather than imposing a pre-determined end product.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children from the local community are warmly welcomed and included in all activities. Toys, books and equipment reflect some positive images. Simple activities are planned to highlight festivals and themes around the world and these help to increase children's awareness of other cultures and develop a positive attitude to others. The group has a good practical awareness of how to include and appropriately care for children with special needs. A comprehensive policy is in place regarding special needs which details how the service will be provided to children. The very good levels of support ensure that all children are included and receive a great deal of individual attention so that their needs are effectively met. Staff praise children frequently, ensuring that they develop confidence and self-esteem and understand when they have done well. Behaviour is generally good but staff do not always challenge instances of poor behaviour in a consistent manner and this provides the potential for children to pick up mixed messages. For example, when the children go for a walk to a small garden area, some of them begin to pick the spring flowers to make a posy for mummy. Staff ask them to stop and provide the explanation that there won't be any flowers left for others to enjoy. However, some children carry on picking the flowers and finish with a nice handful of flowers for their mum. Children who did as they were asked look puzzled and disappointed as they line up to walk back to the hall, because some of their friends have got a present for mummy and they have not. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff continue to strive to develop a positive partnership with parents to support children's progress in learning. The setting complies with new legislation issued October 2005, regarding the complaints process. The group is currently improving the information for parents and a new prospectus is work in progress. This contains general care information and improved information about the educational programme. Staff are developing ways of sharing information about the children who receive nursery education. Parents are able to see their child's records and may contribute to them. Parental comments are actively sought through questionnaires and verbal feedback. They are acknowledged and taken into account by the staff when discussing policy matters. This two-way sharing benefits the child and enhances their learning. The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Increasingly positive outcomes are promoted for children through the generally effective organisation of the setting because the supervisor, staff, committee and advisory services work closely together, consistently aiming to improve practice through discussion, evaluation and monitoring. The newly qualified supervisor demonstrates a good knowledge and understanding of the National Standards and is gradually applying this expertise to all aspects of the group operation. All staff hold appropriate clearances but the group continues to fall short of being able to fully meet the qualification requirements in the national standards. Generally effective recruitment and induction procedures are in place. The system for recording children's attendance is manageable and accurately reflects the numbers of children on the premises. This ensures children's safety in an emergency situation. Group sizes and staff deployment

contribute positively to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. A recent review of documentation and actions arising from the completion of the self-evaluation form, remain as 'work in progress'. Successful completion of these tasks is likely to substantially improve the quality and standards of provision. Job descriptions are now in place and clarify the roles and responsibilities of the staff and committee, providing a sound basis upon which to move the development of the group forward.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The supervisor is gradually introducing new ways of organising the provision to improve the educational outcomes for children. For example, she has introduced a brief early morning staff meeting so that she can communicate the learning intentions for each of the activities set out. She is working with the committee members to encourage the staff to be more proactive in planning and organising the learning environment. Staff are increasingly receptive to ideas and suggestions and have the confidence to experiment with systems to find out what works for them. The group is beginning to learn how to use the self-evaluation form to monitor and evaluate their practice, under the guidance of their local authority advisors. This covers both the care and educational provision, in order to improve the quality and standards of teaching and learning. Taken overall, the provision meets the needs of all children.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection of day care, five recommendations were raised to improve the quality and standards of care for children. These related to ensuring that fresh drinking water is available to children at all times and ensuring that aspects of documentation were amended to meet requirements. Children are able to access their own named water bottle on a designated table. The setting has added the contact names and telephone numbers for the local police and social services department to the child protection policy. This also now contains the procedure to be followed in the event of allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer. The setting has ensured the written statement on behaviour management includes bullying and that the registration system includes hours of attendance of children, staff and visitors. The setting now requests written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. The actions taken have ensured that the setting meets the national standards and regulations and this has improved the safety and welfare of children attending the group.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require the provider 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 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):

- review the snack provision to ensure that children receive nutritious foods in adequate quantities for their needs
- devise a procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a staff member or volunteer
- develop activities, play opportunities and first hand experiences which allow children to build on their natural curiosity as learners and to develop their language and mathematical thinking
- ensure a consistent approach to managing children's behaviour.

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 planning, correlating with the stepping stones to secure and progress children's learning across the ability range. Identify what the children are intended to learn from each activity, providing variety and choice
- continue to develop the observations and assessments of children's learning, ensuring that observations correlate with the stepping stones and that records enable children's progress to be tracked against the stepping stones. Use the information gained to inform the next steps in children's 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