



Broome & Ditchingham Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253980
Inspection date	26 January 2007
Inspector	Susan Smith
Setting Address	Ditchingham Village Hall, Loddon Road, Ditchingham, Bungay, Suffolk, NR35 2RA
Telephone number	07721 697974
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Registered person	Broome & Ditchingham 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?

Broome and Ditchingham Playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school and members of the local community. It opened in 1974, operating in its present location since 1981 in two rooms in the village hall in Ditchingham, Norfolk. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open from 09.30 to 12.00, Tuesday to Fridays and from 13.00 to 15.30 on Wednesday afternoons, during term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 20 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local and surrounding area.

The playgroup employs five members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is protected because staff are aware of good hygiene practices to prevent the spread of infection. For example, children are reminded to wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet and usually staff explain the reason for doing this. Consequently the risk of cross infection is minimised and children stay healthy.

Children receive appropriate care if they are ill or have an accident because staff are aware of individual children's health care needs and all the required documentation and consents are in place to support this. In addition, most staff have a current first aid certificate and have attended food hygiene training to ensure they are aware of the correct procedure to follow to maintain children's health and prevent the spread of infection. A well stocked first aid kit, the contents of which are checked regularly, is easily available in an emergency.

Children are learning about healthy eating through discussion and are supported effectively by staff to try new fruits at snack time, such as blueberries and kiwi. Children's individual dietary needs are met well with good recording procedures in place to ensure all staff are fully aware of children who have special dietary requirements. Children have free access to drinking water throughout the session to ensure they are not thirsty.

Children participate in a range of activities which contributes to their physical health and fitness both inside and outside. Indoors, children use large apparatus, which gives them opportunities to climb, slide and balance. In addition, they take part in music and movement sessions and in fine weather have access to an outdoor area where they can use ride on toys and enjoy the fresh air. Children demonstrate increasing control while using equipment such as sticky tape, scissors, a variety of mark making tools and construction sets to help them develop their hand-eye coordination. Children are able to rest or be more active according to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Positive steps are taken to promote safety within the setting and to keep children safe. Staff follow their procedures to ensure the safety of the children at all times, for example, checking the authenticity of all visitors including the Ofsted inspector.

Staff ensure proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents because they have a sound knowledge of health and safety procedures which they consistently implement. Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised because staff are vigilant. All potential risks are identified and most are minimised with daily risk assessments completed.

Children benefit from a child friendly environment where they can move around safely and appropriate safety precautions are taken. For example, fire drills are practised regularly and all emergency exits are kept clear. Supervising entry to the playgroup is managed well by staff

which ensures children cannot leave unsupervised and no unauthorised persons can gain access. The outer door is locked and parents and visitors are admitted by staff.

There is a good range of high quality toys and equipment which are well maintained. Children are able to access these independently from tables, trays and boxes situated at their height. This enables children to make many of their own choices, increases their independence and helps them to organise their own play. Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe with staff explaining some safe practices. For example, children are gently reminded by staff not to run around with a toy in their hand because they may fall and hurt themselves.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have a sound knowledge of child protection procedures. They are aware of recording and reporting procedures and fully understand their responsibilities. A child protection policy is in place which all staff know how to implement if they had a concern. However, it does not include a procedure to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff this potentially compromises the welfare of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

An effective key worker system is in place with staff knowing their key children and their families well. Subsequently, children's individual needs are effectively met and they develop confidence and self-esteem. Children feel at ease in the playgroup environment. They happily separate from their parents and carers at the beginning of the session and enthusiastically explore and investigate their environment. Staff are familiar with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and generally plan and organise activities in line with the framework for younger children. Staff are beginning to monitor the younger children's progress through observations of their play and achievements. Although, specific assessment records are being considered staff are currently adapting the Foundation Stage records to record their observations on children under the age of three.

Younger children experience a range of activities and play opportunities which overall contributes to their development and learning. Staff have a sound knowledge of child development. The daily routine has a balance of adult-led and child initiated play. Children's independence is encouraged as they are able to move around freely and make independent choices in their play. They have regular opportunities to experience creative play such as paint, gluing with a range of materials and water play. Children are absorbed in exploring what happens when they mix white paint to blue paint. They actively engage in using their imaginations in the home corner. For example, they delight in re-enacting familiar scenarios such as making cups of tea, bedtime and playing families.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of all aspects of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They use their knowledge to provide a broad range of stimulating play and learning opportunities designed to help them make good progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Planning covers the six areas of learning and is linked to the appropriate stepping stones. Observations of children are carried

out to assess their achievements and record in the individual records. These are used to identify their individual next stage of learning.

The use of time and resources are good. The sessions are balanced to enable children to experience group time, outside play and to pursue their own interests. Staff know their children well and often ask searching questions that challenge the children in order to aid their progression to the next steps in their learning. Children cooperate with the routine for example, they help to tidy up. They are beginning to learn the consequence of their actions. Children have the freedom to explore and experiment. They enjoy playing with play dough and use this to enhance their imaginary play, for example, they put the play dough into the cake tins and 'cook it' in the home corner.

Children are involved and motivated, they are keen to offer their own ideas and respond well to challenges. For example, children enjoy diligently experimenting mixing different food colourings to see the effect they have and some children confidently predict what will happen to the blue and yellow ice cubes when added to water. This enables them to use their initiative and concentrate on what they are doing.

Children enjoy sharing books with staff and relish the close interaction and attention this affords them. This helps children to appreciate books, recognise that print has meaning and seek comfort from staff when needed. Most children are confident communicators as they speak confidently and clearly with adults and each other. Children negotiate roles in their play by clearly talking to each other especially in the home corner when enacting familiar scenarios from home such as pouring cups of tea and making cakes. This enables them to form meaningful relationships with each other. Children have opportunities to develop early writing skills, for example, on the daily writing table. However, the resources are not inviting for children and they are not always encouraged to write for a purpose. This restricts their ability to explore and experiment with the a range of resources at their own level.

Children have excellent opportunities to learn about the natural world, growing and caring for plants, developing a wildlife area and composting plant waste. They design and build using the train track and large building bricks. However, opportunities to use programmable toys on a regular bases are limited. So children do not have adequate opportunities to find out about and identify the use of everyday technology.

Children have many opportunities to sort items into different colours, shapes and size. For example, children are engrossed in exploring a wide variety of different shaped and coloured boxes. They confidently name simple shapes and staff take the opportunity to introduce more complex shapes like hexagon to extend their learning. Children's simple calculation skills are promoted in a practical way, with number songs and rhymes to learn about addition and subtraction. Children confidently count up to 10 and beyond and they are encouraged by the staff to count how many children are present at registration.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals and are able to make positive choices and decisions during their time at the setting. They are developing a positive attitude to each other and gain an understanding of the wider world through discussion and resources that show positive images of difference and diversity. Children participate in a range of planned activities which enhances their understanding of different celebrations and festivals, these have included Chinese New Year and Christmas. Children have a clear understanding of their place in the community and share information about their homes and how they live.

The setting works closely with parents and other professionals to ensure children's specific needs are met. Policies are in place to care for children with additional needs and there is a nominated member of staff to seek additional support and advice from other professionals to ensure that children's needs are met. Children with additional needs and disabilities are well supported by the support worker who ensures they are fully integrated in the setting. This enables children to increase their understanding of learning difficulties and disability in a meaningful way.

Children behave well as they know what is expected of them. They are learning responsible behaviours and these are reinforced by the staff through gentle reminders and simple explanations which are at an appropriate level for their understanding. They share resources and negotiate without adult intervention. This enables them to make choices, take decisions and build harmonious partnerships. A behaviour policy is in place and shared with parents, however it does not include a procedure for the staff to follow if bullying occurs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered as they take part in the life of the setting and receive appropriate support from staff.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff have built a good rapport with parents and exchange information on a daily basis regarding any issues that may have arisen, this ensures continuity of care. Parents are encouraged to view their children's assessment records, this raises parental awareness of the Foundation Stage. Parents are asked to complete a child profile when their children start at the playgroup to help identify their children's starting point. They receive newsletters which give general information regarding the running of the setting. The group actively seek the views of parents through a suggestion book. Parents regularly participate in the parent's rota, which helps them to gain a better understanding of the activities that their children join in with. Parents fully embrace their involvement in the group, enjoying joining in with the children's play and sharing their joy and enthusiasm. This helps children to feel safe and secure. Parents comment positively about their active involvement in their children's learning and feel the staff keep them informed about their children's progress and are very approachable.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are relaxed and happy in the setting. They are safeguarded as recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with knowledge and

understanding of child development. Staff have a high regard for the well-being of all children and ensure there are robust systems in place regarding visitors. This ensures children are safe and secure. Children are well supported and staff awareness contributes to children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Most policies and procedures are in place and work in practice to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. The staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and work well together to create a caring environment for children.

The room is organised to allow children to move freely and safely and the routine of the session helps children to settle well. Staff are mostly deployed effectively within the setting, spending the majority of their time interacting with the children to support their care, learning and play. However, the organisation of snack time means that children are left sitting for long periods of time and as a result their behaviour and interest deteriorates.

The leadership and management is good. The staff team work closely together to improve and enhance the setting for the children and regularly review and monitor their procedures and practice which ensures children's needs are actively promoted. Their work is well supported by the committee who are fully aware of their role and responsibilities. The staff are a strong team who compliment each other's skills. Children benefit as the staff are enthusiastic and committed in promoting an inclusive environment in which every child matters. Staff meetings and support from the local authority help to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education to ensure that all children are making good progress. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group were asked to extend resources to promote an awareness of disabilities. They have since obtained a range of everyday resources such as puzzles which depict a positive image of disability. In addition, they have purchased a wheelchair and crutches for the children to use during topic work to promote a greater awareness of disabilities. Staff also use discussion effectively to explore difference.

The last nursery education inspection set key issues relating to reviewing the development records to make them manageable, sharing these records with parents and reviewing resources to ensure that they are sufficient to promote information and communication technology effectively. The group have reviewed its planning and record keeping and now have effective systems in place to record the children achievements. Parents are actively encouraged to look at and contribute to their child's record of achievement. This enables the parents to extend their children's learning at home. The group have purchased a 'Roma' programmable toy and has some toys with keyboards. However, these are not available to the children on a daily basis and therefore this continues to be an area for improvement.

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):

- review the organisation of snack time to meet the needs of all children
- review the child protection policy to include a procedure to be followed if an allegation was made against a member of staff

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):

- improve opportunities for children to practice mark making for a purpose, to find out about and identify the use of everyday technology and make the writing area more inviting for children.

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