



Corse & Staunton Playgroup (School Site)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101662
Inspection date	27 February 2007
Inspector	Ruth Tharme
Setting Address	Staunton & Corse School, Staunton, Gloucestershire, GL19 3RA
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Corse & Staunton Playgroup (School Site)
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?

Corse and Staunton Playgroup operates on Tuesday mornings from 09.00 to 11.30 in the school hall at Corse and Staunton Primary School. The playgroup is attended by pre-school children from surrounding villages.

The playgroup is registered to provide sessional day care for 24 children aged from two years to five years-of-age. The children have access to the main hall, the side room and the toilets but must remain under direct supervision at all times. There are currently 13 children on the roll, all of whom receive funded nursery education.

The children are cared for by three regular staff members, one of whom holds a level three childcare qualification. Staff are assisted by parents who undertake rota duties. There are no

children attending at present for whom English is an additional language or who have learning difficulties or disabilities.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

A suitable system is in place to ensure that an accurate record is maintained of all accidents involving children. Details of what happened, and of any treatment given are recorded, and entries are countersigned by parents. A member of staff who is qualified in first aid is present at all sessions and first-aid equipment is readily available so children can be treated promptly following minor accidents.

Hand-washing procedures are generally well implemented but children share water and towels when washing their hands after craft activities which poses some risk of infection. A cleaner is employed and staff maintain equipment well so facilities are generally clean for children to use. Good health is actively promoted as children take regular exercise and enjoy the fresh air. They make good use of the school playground and field.

Children have access to drinking water at all times. There is a jug of water and clean cups available throughout the session and children are able to help themselves. Staff keep up-to-date information about dietary requirements to ensure that children are fed according to their individual needs. Snacks are generally healthy. Children enjoy a selection of fresh and dried fruits.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The bright hall provides a welcoming environment for the children. The premises are clean and are appropriately maintained to ensure children's comfort and safety. The hall is large and airy, providing ample space for the number of children attending. Space is relatively well used so children have room to play and move around freely.

There is a sound range of equipment available which is presented at child height so they can access it with ease. Resources include both natural and made materials so children have access to a varied range of media.

Staff are generally well deployed so children are appropriately supervised during free-play activities. There is a regular risk-assessment programme which means that staff are able to recognise and address potential hazards.

There are written evacuation procedures but they are not clearly displayed. This means that they are not readily available to ensure safe evacuation in an emergency. Children are not able to leave the premises unsupervised. Doors remain locked throughout the session.

Staff are able to recognise a child who may be in danger. There is a programme to ensure that all staff attend child-protection training. Written procedures are up-to-date and provide staff with clear information about what to do to ensure that children are protected, should staff have concerns about their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The range and balance of activities generally helps children to make progress in all areas of their development. They enjoy play both in and out-of-doors. Staff keep records of all activities provided so they can ensure that children take part in a range of experiences over time.

Time is given over to free play so children have opportunities to make decisions for themselves. Outdoor activities such as playing in muddy puddles with wellington boots provide opportunities for children to explore and investigate.

Children feel safe and relaxed in the setting. Staff are friendly and approachable and have a warm relationship with the children in their care. They take time to observe children's progress so they can plan effectively for the next stages of their development. They ask open questions to encourage children's conversation and thinking, for example, discussing past experiences such as what happened when it snowed or what children did on holiday.

Funded Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making sound progress towards the early learning goals.

Staff are generally knowledgeable and have a clear understanding of the stepping stones. Planning is firmly based on the observation and assessment of children's progress. The system used allows staff to identify the next stages of children's learning so they are able to plan effectively for future progress. Written plans clearly show how individual children are supported.

Challenges set are generally appropriate but children sometimes lose concentration during whole group activities which are not sufficiently supported by staff.

Some resources are poorly presented and children make little use of them. Books are presented in a box so children cannot see what is available and are not drawn to use them. The flexible use of time means that children are able to fully complete their activities.

Children show curiosity and are able to persist for extended periods of time at a chosen activity, such as making a model from clay. They relate and make attachments to others in the group, forming firm friendships and seeking out others to share their experiences. They show an awareness of the boundaries set but behaviour occasionally deteriorates during whole-group activities which are not well organised or supported. Children have an awareness of, and show an interest in, cultural differences, enjoying the celebration of festivals such as Chinese New Year.

Language for communication is promoted as children join in with repeated refrains such as the 'time to stop and listen' song. Children respond positively to simple instructions, tidying up when asked. They use talk to recount past experiences and in imaginary situations, acting out a story with small-world toys and dolls. Staff use letter sounds so children are able to identify their names on place mats. The use of books is limited. The book corner is poorly presented and books are rarely used to support activities so children make little use of them. Some children are beginning to ascribe meaning to their marks, using pens and pencils to record information in the travel agent role-play area. They engage in activities requiring hand/eye co-ordination, lacing cards or using chop sticks.

Children confidently count the number of children present at circle time and some are able to recognise and name numbers written on the playground. However, there are few opportunities for children to calculate or problem solve which limits their mathematical development.

Children enjoy opportunities for exploration and investigation, showing curiosity and interest in a computer. They use simple tools such as scissors and a stapler competently but there are few resources readily available for children to use for their own purpose. Activities generally have a predetermined outcome. The children are gaining a sound understanding of information and communication technology. They make use of keyboards, telephones, calculators and a camera in their play.

Creative development is generally well promoted. Children recognise and name some colours. They explore what happens when they mix paints, blending red and yellow to make orange when decorating a Chinese dragon. They enjoy singing, joining in with familiar songs such as 'Incy Wincy Spider'. Role play and small-world games develop children's imagination.

Children judge their body space well in relation to others. They find their own space at circle time. They show an awareness of their own needs, asking when they need the toilet and helping themselves to a drink when they are thirsty. They show increasing control when using equipment such as the climbing frame and are able to manipulate materials to achieve a planned effect, for example, making a model from clay.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff know how to implement the equal opportunities policy for the benefit of all children. They are involved in formulating and updating policies so they are well equipped to implement them effectively. All children have equal access to toys and activities. Staff support them to make choices for themselves from the equipment and experiences on offer. The celebration of festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year promotes children's knowledge and understanding of other faiths and cultures.

The play leader has completed relevant training and has developed firm links with other professionals so she is well placed to ensure that children with learning difficulties or disabilities are appropriately supported. Procedures ensure that parents are asked to provide relevant information which is necessary for the care of their child.

Staff are clear about procedures so they are generally able to manage children's behaviour effectively. The written policy provides sound information and guidance for all staff. They model good behaviour and praise children when they behave well, but the poor organisation and resourcing of some whole-group activities means that children lose interest and behaviour deteriorates.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are provided with clear information about the setting, including an explanation of the curriculum their children are following so they are generally well informed. Records are shared and staff are available to speak with parents on a daily basis to keep them up-to-date with their child's progress in the setting. However, parents are not encouraged to share what they know about their child's progress, or to become involved in their learning so staff and parents are generally less well equipped to support children effectively.

Care is provided in accordance with parents wishes. Staff seek written consent for outings, and request specific information on the registration form to ensure that care is appropriate. On arrival, children are not generally greeted at the door and parents are given little support to leave their children making parting more difficult for some children.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Procedures for appointing and vetting staff are generally appropriate. A record is maintained of staff qualifications, references and suitability checks. There are currently no arrangements in place for re-checking, to ensure the ongoing suitability of staff. Children are supervised at all times to make sure that they are not at risk from unsuitable adults. The play leader is appropriately qualified to provide care for young children. She holds a relevant level 3 qualification.

Levels of adult support are generally sufficient as high ratios are maintained throughout. There are basic arrangements in place to ensure that suitable cover is provided should the play leader be absent. Two members of the committee hold relevant qualifications and have had suitability checks completed, allowing them to step in should the need arise.

Procedures for staff induction are informal. Currently there is no system in place to check that staff receive all the information and training they need to perform their roles effectively.

Records are accessible on site, and are stored securely so confidentiality is maintained. There is provision for parents to countersign entries to show that records have been shared. The certificate is displayed in the main hall so parents have access to information about the conditions of registration.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Committee members have job titles but do not have clearly defined roles so it is not clear that specific responsibilities are always clearly addressed.

There are some effective strategies in place to assess the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. The play leader has completed an informal review, staff have regular appraisals and a self-evaluation form is in use. The effectiveness of the funded nursery education is monitored and evaluated with input from a Foundation Stage Consultant.

There are clear links with the school. Children take part in school activities and staff liaise regularly with the reception class teacher. Links with other settings are less well developed so children leaving to attend other schools are less well supported.

The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection three recommendations were made for the improvement of the quality of care provided. Since then, the group has made significant progress. The actual times of arrival and departure are now clearly recorded so an accurate record of children's attendance is maintained. Parents are asked to give prior written consent to seek medical advice or treatment so children can receive the attention they need promptly in an emergency. Procedures have been reviewed so children are not at risk from infection when washing their hands after using the toilet.

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.

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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 hand-washing procedures following craft activities do not promote the spread of infection

- review the organisation of whole group activities so staff are able to manage children's behaviour more effectively
- review induction procedures to ensure that they are robust and that children's safety and wellbeing is ensured

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):

- provide more opportunities for children to develop their mathematical skills and review the presentation of resources to encourage children to make better use of them
- develop strategies to encourage parents to share what they know about their child's progress, and become more involved in their learning

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