



Buckingham Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113393
Inspection date	08 January 2007
Inspector	Rosemary Musgrove
Setting Address	Scout Hut, Eastern Avenue, Shoreham-By-Sea, West Sussex, BN43 6PH
Telephone number	01273 440893
E-mail	
Registered person	Buckingham 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?

Buckingham Playgroup opened in 1968 and is a community run group. It operates from the Scout Hall in Shoreham, West Sussex. It provides sessional care five days a week during term time from 09:15 - 12:00. The playgroup serves children from a wide catchment area. There is an enclosed outdoor play area.

The playgroup is registered for 30 children. There are currently 43 children on roll of whom 26 receive funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports one child with learning difficulties and three children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs nine staff. Five hold appropriate childcare qualifications.

The setting receives support from a mentor from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children participate in a good range of physical activities, which contribute to their good health and development. Each day they enjoy the fresh air as they enthusiastically take part in outdoor activities. This means they gradually develop and acquire the skills necessary to control their bodies. Children enjoy choosing their favourite vehicle from a wide range, such as go-carts, scooters and sit in cars. They move confidently around the outside area and show an awareness of others. Whilst outside the children make sandcastles or energetically kick a football around. Inside, they do plenty of physical exercise. For example, they love joining in with the action tapes and enthusiastically wiggle, clap their hands and stamp their feet.

The setting has a good understanding of healthy snacks and drinks. Children enjoy choosing their morning snack from a range of healthy options. Each day they have either fruit or vegetables. These include carrot sticks, cucumber and apple. Other healthy options are cubes of cheese, houmous, toast and crackers. Snack time is a pleasant social occasion. Children and an adult sit around a table and chat. Children select either milk or water and then pour their own drink. This means they develop good independence skills. When they finish their snack, they confidently take their beaker and plate and place it in a washing up bowl. Children independently help themselves from a jug of fresh drinking water throughout the session.

Many staff hold a current first aid qualification. This means they can administer first aid in the event of an accident. The setting has a clear, detailed policy on ill children. Children who are infectious do not attend, this ensures that diseases are not spread. The setting has obtained written permission from parents to seek emergency medical treatment and they maintain clear records when a child has an accident. They have individual health care plans for children with specific medical requirements. They know how to maintain medication records and are trained in the use of epi-pens and inhalers. This means they can support children with these medical requirements.

Children are cared for in an environment that is clean. There are procedures in place for maintaining appropriate levels of hygiene. For example, staff are very vigilant in the regular wiping of tables with anti-bacterial spray. Children show good levels of independence in their personal care through effective daily routines. They confidently wash their hands and independently turn the taps, use liquid soap, dry their hands and dispose of the paper towel.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their play in a suitable and welcoming environment within the Scout Hall. A number of attractive posters and display boards help to create a warm, child friendly atmosphere. The indoor space is very well-organised. This means that children move around safely and

independently. Each morning staff set up interesting areas of learning, a good range of resources and different activities for the children to choose. These include a role play area where they eagerly chat with friends about the play food, a floor area with a track and vehicles and a cosy book corner where they enjoy browsing quality books. Children within the setting really do show good skills of making their own choices and selecting their preferred activity.

The setting has effective systems in place for the arrival and departure of children. If children arrive or leave at a different time, staff record this in the daily attendance record. This means they always know who is present. The setting has clear, well-documented contingency arrangements, such as, the procedures to follow if a child is lost or uncollected. Staff know the precautions to take in order to keep children safe on outings. For example, they carry out a full risk assessment when they visit the local park. Children learn how to keep themselves safe when a speaker talks about the importance of road safety.

Children take part in regular fire drills. This means they know how to look after themselves and evacuate the building in the event of an emergency. The Scout Hall has fire extinguishers and a fire blanket and these are regularly serviced, however, there is no fire detection equipment. The setting understands that it is important to read and adhere to all fire officer recommendations, in order to protect the children. Staff have identified and drawn up detailed lists of potential hazards and risk assessments in order to protect children and keep them safe.

The senior supervisor has responsibility for child protection issues and has completed relevant training. Children in the setting are well protected because the majority of staff have taken part in child protection training. They have a good knowledge and understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. They know what action to take and the procedures to follow if they have concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a stimulating environment that makes them feel secure and welcome. Staff are very dedicated and take time to develop close relationships. This means that children arrive happily, settle well and are absorbed in meaningful activities throughout the morning. The good staff ratio coupled with their quality and enthusiasm, mean that children receive support and encouragement while at the setting. As children choose their own activities, such as painting, staff intervene, in order to develop and extend their learning.

Children choose from an array of exciting activities and resources. These include dressing up, creative activities, malleable play and a musical area. Young children spend time concentrating on activities. They paint their hands to do a hand print, roll out dough, or explore mark making with an impressive range of pens and felts in the graphics area. Children develop their creativity and imagination through activities such as role play. In the kitchen area, they prepare a delicious breakfast of croissants, while outside they play with dinosaurs in the sand tray. Throughout the session, children display high levels of enthusiasm, motivation and independence. As they participate in activities, such as building a tower of soft blocks, staff stand back and observe, yet also develop their language skills and offer support when needed.

Staff have a good understanding that young children develop and achieve at different rates. They consider this when planning the activities and talking with the children. They have a good working knowledge of 'Birth to three matters'. This means that children under three have experiences that are suitable for their age and stage of development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The majority of staff have a good working knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the areas of learning. The setting has recently changed their approach and made a very good start on curriculum planning. This is linked to the areas of learning. The medium term planning is detailed and clearly shows which stepping stones will be covered when children explore the various workshop areas. Staff make detailed, meaningful observations of the children and the key worker records these on the child's developmental records. However, these are not effectively used to inform the children's future learning. Each child is the proud owner of a unique, developmental booklet. This contains personal photos and statements about their learning and gives parents a very informative account.

Children in the playgroup are motivated and thrive on new challenges. They concentrate well and are thoroughly absorbed in self-chosen activities for extended periods. These include digging for treasure in the garden, setting up furniture in the doll's house or writing a letter to a family member. Children show a very good level of independence, particularly in the graphics area where they select their own resources. They take care of many of their personal needs, such as trying to put on their boots. Strong relationships are evident throughout the setting, children behave well and have a good self-esteem.

Children speak with confidence during a variety of stimulating role play activities, for example, when they talk on the telephone or play with the farm animals. They love experimenting with pens and show a good level of control during mark making activities. They are confident to choose their own resources, such as, rulers, paper and crayons. Many children know that writing is a form of communication. Children enjoy selecting and browsing books, alone, with a friend or an adult. They enjoy story time and listen with enthusiasm to the story of Cuddly Duddly, when they have opportunities to extend their language skills.

Children see numbers in the environment, for example, number cards and puzzles. They are encouraged to use appropriate mathematical language, such as, when building a tower they are motivated to go higher. They develop a sense of time when they set the sand timer for their turn on the computer. Children are progressing towards the early learning goals and some can confidently count to 20 in a familiar context.

Children are confident and use the computer independently. They demonstrate good mouse control skills during sequencing or number activities. In the summer, children enjoy planting pansies and marigolds in tubs outside and create food for their bird feeders. They are fascinated when they use magnifying glasses to investigate the creatures in the outside area. Children are beginning to develop an awareness of the wider world. During the holidays, Toby Bear went to South Africa with a member of staff. This helped the children to understand about homes, schools and people in another part of the world.

Children have free access to a good range of tools and resources. They demonstrate proficient skills in using equipment safely, for example, scissors, rolling pins and small spades. Children enjoy musical activities and are fascinated by the different sounds they make. They enthusiastically play the hand bells, castanets and bongo drum. They have many opportunities to express themselves through a wide range of different mediums. They create junk models, do lots of free painting and create a collage from old Christmas cards.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children and their families are welcomed to the playgroup. They value and respect the individuality of each child and their family. Staff take time to foster good relationships with children and cater for individual needs and preferences. Children learn to think about the needs of other people. They take part in community events, such as the Big Toddle, when they raise money for charity. Children find out about diversity in the world on a daily basis. The setting has integrated many appropriate resources into everyday play and these include dressing up clothes, Chinese plates, Indian cooking utensils and play figures that show people with a variety of disabilities. Children celebrate festivals from their own and other cultures. At Christmas, they design and make wrapping paper, while during Diwali they make glittery pictures and explore a sparkly treasure basket.

The setting positively welcomes children with learning difficulties. This means that children learn about the needs of others and begin to develop a positive view of diversity. A member of staff is responsible for children with additional needs and she has attended appropriate training. There are good systems in place to support individual needs. Close liaison with parents and outside agencies means that children's learning targets are well planned for and met.

Children behave very well and respond to any request for good behaviour. The behaviour management statement promotes positive behaviour. Children benefit from staff that are calm, consistent and are good role models. Staff are polite and courteous as they talk to the children and actively listen for their reply. Children have lots of praise and encouragement. This means they have a good self-esteem and a positive attitude to learning. These aspects of the provision foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents receive a range of information through an information board and regular newsletters. A selection of files are always available for parents to browse. These include a prospectus which gives details of the playgroup, 'Birth to three matters' and Foundation Stage information. Parents have formal meetings at the setting when they discuss their child's progress and look at their developmental records. This contributes to parents being informed about their child's learning. Parents are happy with the service provided and particularly value the good organisation, the regular feedback from key workers and the quality of the staff.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Buckingham Playgroup has a dedicated team of staff who work very well together. The enthusiasm they have for young children and their learning is a strong, positive factor within the setting. They strive to improve by continual reflection of current organisation and practice. They are suitably qualified and have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Each member of staff has a training plan and attends appropriate courses. This means the care and support that children have, helps them to feel secure, happy and confident. Staff deployment is effective and children are well supervised at all times. They enjoy their play in a well-organised environment. The stimulating areas of learning invite and encourage them to select their own resources and make independent choices.

All mandatory documentation required for the safe and effective management of the playgroup is in place. This is generally maintained to a good standard, is well-organised and securely stored. The setting has a number of policies and procedures that are available for parents and carers. This contributes to the welfare of the children. Regular informal discussions, written information and good developmental records ensure continuity of the children's care.

Leadership and management is good. The senior supervisor has regularly updated her knowledge and kept abreast of current legislation. There are effective recruitment procedures in place, an informal induction programme and a new written system for staff self-appraisal. This means that suitable people look after the children.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to ensure that the regulator's contact details were included in the complaints policy.

The setting has included the regulator's contact details within the complaints policy.

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):

- ensure all required fire safety precautions are in place.

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 observations and assessments effectively to plan the next steps in the 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