

Barton Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507929
Inspection date	27 April 2007
Inspector	Lorraine Sparey
Setting Address	Barton Methodist Church Hall, Cliffe Road, New Milton, Hampshire, BH25 7NA
Telephone number	07957643869
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Registered person	Barton 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?

Barton Playgroup opened in 1992. It operates in the church hall of Barton Methodist Church and serves the local area. Children use the main hall and two side rooms. There is a small area directly outside the main hall which is used for outdoor play.

A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time and there are currently 26 children on roll. This includes 15 children who are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:15 to 11:45 on Monday to Friday, and on a Thursday there is a lunch club from 11:45 to 12:45.

A team of six staff work with the children, of whom three have early years qualifications and three staff are currently on training programs. The setting receives support from the Hampshire Early Years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children follow good hygiene practices. They automatically flush the toilet and wash their hands after using the facilities. They know and understand when and why they need to clean them. A child tells the adult 'We get germs on our hands' another child joins in saying that they need to wash their hands before snack time because 'Food gets dirty'. Staff provide good resources to support children's independence in their personal care. Children confidently wipe their hands and faces after eating using a baby wipe, disposing of them appropriately in the bin. They use liquid soap and paper towels to reduce the spread of cross infection. Children's awareness is further increased by staff implementing effective hygiene procedures such as cleaning the tables with antibacterial spray and preparing snack whilst wearing gloves. The children have their own cups and bowls which are colour coded to minimise cross infection.

Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills, using large muscle control. They regularly use the parachute and climbing frame. They have some opportunities to play outside in the fresh air, the outdoor area the children use is directly outside the playroom but is very small and difficult to make secure. To overcome this staff provide opportunities for children to go on local walks for example to post a letter or marching round the building. Children recently as part of their theme enjoyed looking for bugs in a neighbouring garden.

Children's health is further promoted by staff providing healthy and nutritious snacks such as a variety of fresh fruit and a plain biscuit. Snacktime is used as an opportunity for staff to develop discussions about healthy foods and maintaining healthy lifestyles. Children pour their own drinks of water, squash or milk. Any dietary needs are recorded and respected. One day a week children are given the opportunity to bring a packed lunch. Staff provide parents with information on healthy options. Staff sit with the children to promote good table manners and make it a social occasion.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, welcoming and well maintained environment. Staff place a high emphasis on safety. They effectively implement a range of procedures to maintain a secure environment and support children's safety. They use a number wheel to immediately identify the number of children leaving the playroom to use the toilets, and daily safety checklists. Children's awareness of maintaining their own safety is promoted because staff are proactive in encouraging children to recognise any potential dangers. At circle time an adult asks the children if they can remember some of the rules for keeping safe. A three-year-old immediately says 'We don't run' and the adult congratulates them. On occasions children become absorbed in their role play and run around the play area. An adult immediately asks them if they feel it is safe to run indoors. One child replies 'No we may fall on the slippery floor' the adult reinforces 'That's right', explaining that they would not want the children to hurt themselves. Children safely choose from a broad range of quality toys and equipment. Staff encourage children to use the equipment safely, such as using scissors and using knives with care. This prevents injuries to themselves and others.

Children's safety is further promoted by completing regular evacuation drills. This means children become familiar with exiting the building quickly and safely in the event of emergency. Staff

record to identify any issues that need following up. Children are well protected from harm and neglect because staff have a clear and secure understanding of child protection. They demonstrate a good awareness of signs and symptoms of abuse and effective procedures to follow in the event of a concern being raised. The setting has a policy which is being updated and is shared with parents to ensure that they are aware of the staff role in this area.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and confident in the setting. They quickly develop positive relationships with their peers and the staff. Children benefit from the staff's commitment to providing stimulating and interesting activities. Staff actively participate in children's play and learning, and are skilled at knowing when to allow children to develop their own ideas. For example, during an activity children were pretending to be pirates, one child tells the adult 'We need a map to find the treasure'. The adults enable the children to make their own map, and treasure, coins made from silver paper. Children freely choose from a broad range of quality toys and resources which are changed throughout the morning to maintain children's interests.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff demonstrate a very secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They successfully plan a broad range of activities to enhance children's development and learning. Activities are evaluated to ensure that the identified learning outcome is met. All staff complete regular observations on the children's progress which are then used effectively to inform planning, to ensure the next steps in their learning. Staff use a variety of effective teaching methods such as open-ended questioning 'How many wings can you see on the butterfly?'. During the cooking activity making butterfly cakes an adult asks 'Do you know why hundreds and thousands are called that?' one child replies 'because there are loads'. Staff ensure that children are appropriately challenged adapting activities to stretch the more able children and adjusting to individual children's levels. Staff work hard to create an inviting environment where children can develop their own ideas. There are suitable procedures to ensure that children with special needs are encouraged to develop and progress. Staff support children for whom English is an additional language, providing resources and liaising closely with the parents to ensure that they are fully included in the setting.

Children are motivated in their learning and quickly settle into their chosen activity. They are developing good relationships with the adults and their peers. One child notices their friend walking past the window. They are very excited and call out to them. An adult suggests going to the door to meet them. They quickly become involved in a pretend party. One of the children demonstrates some dance moves which the younger child eagerly copies. Children are independent and regularly pour their own drinks and use the toilet unaided. Children are confident speakers, engaging in sustained conversations and use language to explain their ideas. Several children decide to go on an adventure. A four-year-old tells the adult 'We are going to the mountain to kill Captain Hook' they go around the room selecting various things for their adventure, putting them into a rucksack. Another four-year-old shows the adult a pretend petrol pump saying 'Look it says the first of April'. The adult replies 'That's April Fools day' the child goes on to explain what that means. 'You say to someone that they have a spider on their head and then you say April fool'. Children enjoy listening to well read stories and frequently contribute what comes next in the story. One child tells the adult who is reading Jack and the Beanstalk 'In my story at home it says mummy mummy give me an axe'. The adult explains to the children that sometimes the same story can vary slightly and have different

words. Children confidently self register when they arrive. They select the apple with their name on and hang it on the tree. At snack time they successfully remove their name to indicate they are having their snack.

Children confidently count to 18. They spontaneously count in their play and during activities. A three and four-year-old enjoy a maths activity weighing fruit, recognising who has the heaviest fruit. They talk with a member of staff about the shape of the fruit. One child says the banana is curvy. Children correctly use mathematical language in everyday play. Children recognise numbers that have some meaning to them and the majority recognise one more or one less than. A four-year-old talking with an adult about their age says 'I'm four, how old are you?' the adult says 'I'm a big number', the child replies '10' and enjoys guessing up to 18. Children enjoy regular opportunities to explore and investigate. Several children enjoy blowing through straws making patterns in the soapy water. Children recognise they are making a different pattern with the bubbles. One child comments 'Look my bubbles are very big'. They enjoy learning about the natural world through planting cacti and other flowers and watching them grow. They observe insects in their natural environment and enjoy using reference books to identify them. During a recent theme about butterflies children made caterpillar and butterfly cakes. An adult shows the children a battery operated bug that uses its front legs to draw patterns. Children enjoy changing the positioning of the front legs and the coloured pens making different patterns. They competently use the mouse and operate simple programs on the computer, learning about technology.

Children show good spatial awareness when moving around the play areas. During a parachute game children successfully changed sides without bumping into each other. They learn to control their bodies moving in a variety of ways through dance, exercise and using the parachute. Children's small muscle control is developing well, they demonstrate increasing control when using a variety of tools such as knives to spread the icing on their cakes and pencils when writing their own names on their creative achievements. Children enjoy using musical instruments recognising different sounds and following simple rhythms. Children's imagination is developing really well. Children enjoy using the well resourced role play area and create their own ideas often for acting out roles for sustained periods. Children's creativity is expressed in a variety of ways and mediums. Children enjoyed using various textures to create their own butterfly collages. One child is totally absorbed in cutting out 'Pilchard' a Bob the builder character from the large material sheet. Others enjoy using feathers, material and card to create their butterflies. One child points to the butterfly saying 'That's their antenna' the adult congratulates him 'That's clever of you to remember that'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very child centred environment. Staff display their creative achievements and photographs of children involved in activities. This enables children to gain a sense of belonging and builds their confidence and self esteem. Parents are welcomed and their contributions valued. For example, staff complete an initial assessment of each child which is shared with parents and their views actively sought. This enables staff to ensure that they are meeting the children's individual needs. Children are actively encouraged to talk about their families and significant events. One child tells an adult 'When I go on holiday, I'm going to be four'. Children with additional needs are supported within the setting. There are suitable procedures to ensure that children for whom English is an additional language are well supported. Children's awareness of the community and wider world is increased through topics and resources. Children have opportunities to use a range of musical instruments from around the

world and dress up in costumes. They celebrate a range of festivals throughout the year further promoting their understanding of diversity. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is good. They are polite and well mannered saying please and thank you at appropriate times. Staff are positive role models in the way they speak to the children and each other. They regularly praise children's achievements. Children are encouraged to develop a sense of pride in their environment and help to pack away the toys.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They receive detailed and comprehensive information in the prospectus relating to the Foundation Stage curriculum, six areas of learning and children's assessment records. Parents work closely with their child's key worker and are encouraged to support their child in their learning. For example, enabling their children to bring in objects that relate to the theme. One parent informed that her son had found a spider in the garden and enjoyed showing the staff and children. All parents consider that staff are very good at keeping them informed of their children's progress and have viewed their child's records in addition to receiving a written report. Regular newsletters keep parents informed of forthcoming events and topics. One parent comments that they feel the group is exceptionally good and communication is excellent.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides care and education. There are effective recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. Children benefit from the staff's commitment to training. The majority of staff are qualified or on training programs. The committee is very supportive of any training. The person in charge is completing a foundation degree, which means she is up-to-date with current childcare practices. Staff work very well together as a team and this shows in the children's progress. Staff work hard to create a welcoming and child-centred environment which is particularly difficult as the premises are used by a variety of other users. The space and resources are used effectively to support children and a high staff ratio ensures that all children are well supported in their development and learning. All the required documentation is in place although some of the policies and procedures require updating to reflect current legislation.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The person in charge is a strong leader and receives good support from the management committee. The setting is very committed to reviewing practice and has a realistic view of the strengths and areas where they can improve. Staff recognised the snack time was not particularly well-organised and children were sitting waiting. This has been changed and children now choose when to have their snack which allows them more time to complete activities. This works very well however, at other times during the session children are not always fully engaged in activities and at times leads to children losing focus in their learning. There are effective procedures to monitor nursery education such as the person in charge monitoring activities and children's progress, attending local cluster meetings where they share good practice and regular visits from other professionals.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to carry out regular staff appraisals and ensure that training needs are identified and met. To conduct a risk assessment on the premises identifying actions to be taken to minimise identified risks. Lastly to ensure that staff have

induction training which includes health and safety and child protection policies and procedures within the first week of their employment. The setting has made good progress and now completes annual staff appraisals which identify any training needs of the individual and that would benefit the setting. Staff complete written risk assessments and daily checklists which promotes children's safety. Staff now have an induction programme which includes all the policies and procedures. However, this is not always completed within the first week of employment.

At the last education inspection the setting agreed to improve staff understanding of the stepping stones so effective observation and assessments can be used to plan for individual children's progression, including children with special educational needs. To improve planning to ensure children experience all aspects of learning and activities are presented at the right level with appropriate support. They also agreed to provide opportunities during routine and everyday activities for children to recognise numbers, practise problem solving and observe and use writing in a variety of situations. Lastly they agreed to develop a system to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the provision for nursery education. Staff demonstrate good knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones. Planning is linked to child observations and assessments which ensures that children's next steps in their learning is planned and effective. Children have lots of opportunities during the session to recognise numbers and practise problem-solving. The planning incorporates opportunities for children to practise these skills. The person in charge is responsible for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the nursery education provision. She has devised detailed procedures to ensure that the provision is good quality and enables children to progress up well in their learning.

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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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):

- continue to update the policies and procedures to ensure that they reflect current legislation

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 review and develop the organisation of the activities to ensure that all children's needs are accommodated

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