

Reigate High Street Play Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	122638
Inspection date	06 June 2007
Inspector	Claire, Alexandra Parnell
Setting Address	Methodist Church Hall, High Street, Reigate, Surrey, RH2 9AE
Telephone number	01737 221718
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Registered person	Reigate High Street Play Group
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?

Reigate High Street Play Group has been established for over 30 years. It operates from two large rooms within the Methodist Church in Reigate town centre. Toilets and hand washing facilities are easily accessible from group rooms and staff have access to kitchen facilities. The playgroup serves the local area. It is open from Monday to Thursday, from 09:15 to 11:45, an afternoon session operates on both Monday and Tuesday, from 12:15 to 14:45.

There are currently 51 children, aged from two to five years, on roll. This includes 42 children who receive funding for nursery education. Staff have some experience in supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

A team of four staff work with the children. All four hold an Early Years qualification.

The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and is a registered charity.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good procedures are followed and understood by children to promote their personal hygiene. Children help themselves to accessible tissues, wipe their noses and dispose of them hygienically. Most children take themselves to the toilet, where they quickly learn to be independent due to accessible steps for the toilet and sinks and accessible soap and individual towels to prevent cross infection. Children are developing a clear understanding of why they need to wash their hands, stating that they need to take the dirt and germs off their hands so they don't get stomach aches.

Accidents and medication administration is recorded well which supports children's ongoing health needs. Accidents and existing injuries are recorded effectively with clear information about the incident. Written consent and relevant information is sought to enable staff to administer medication safely. Administration is recorded well to ensure information is passed back to parents about when the medication was given and by whom.

Children receive varied snacks of different fruits and biscuits. Children are encouraged to try new fruits to develop their tastes and food experiences. Drinks are freely available to children but they are all encouraged to drink either milk or water at snack time to ensure their thirst is quenched. Children are developing a good understanding of healthy eating and know that if they eat healthy foods it makes them grow and is good for their bones.

Children have plentiful opportunities to exercise and experience fresh air. Every day children have access to a good range of equipment to extend their existing physical skills and movements such as climbing frames, barrels, mats for rolling and dancing. Children access fresh air through staff's inventive use of very limited outdoor space. Therefore children's physical wellbeing is promoted well.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a regularly checked, safe and secure environment. A daily risk assessment is carried out to ensure potential hazards are identified and action is immediately taken to prevent harm to children. Good security measures are in place to ensure children cannot leave the premises unattended. Staff are vigilant and effectively supervise the children to ensure they are all accounted for at all times, especially when children are using small enclosed areas outside the hall.

Children have access to a good range of safe and appropriately sized equipment for their size and stage of development. They access further resources from boxes kept at either child or floor level to ensure children can access these safely.

Children receive simplified explanations about safety to promote their developing understanding of keeping themselves and their peers safe. These explanations relate to running in the hall and using equipment appropriately, such as the climbing frame. Clear procedures for outings are in place to ensure children are well supervised out of the setting. Written consent is sought to ensure staff have permission to take children on regular walks and local trips. Children are evacuated safely from the building due to regular fire drill practises. Children are developing a clear understanding of what the whistle means and what to do to remain safe.

Children are protected and their welfare is fully promoted due to clear guidance for staff and parents as well as knowledgeable staff. A fully comprehensive child protection statement gives clear information as to the responsibilities of the staff and what action is taken when concerns arise.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children are happily engaged in free choice activities, due to the good range of activities pre-selected for them and the effective interaction from staff, to ensure they are all busy in their play. A good selection of additional resources are accessible for children to make further choices, extending their learning and enjoyment in the activity. Staff cleverly entice children of all ages to participate in play, especially in small group activities and discussions, varying the questions and the focus on their learning. This is clearly demonstrated in the water and sand play, as well the subtle encouragement for children to enjoy books and stories within the book corner. However, children's differing abilities are not always recognised and accounted for in large group activities, due to the extension for more able children's learning. Therefore younger and less able children quickly lose interest, sometimes disrupting other children's participation. The staff have some limited understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and are therefore not always recognising the impact large group activities has on children's participation.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are encouraged to participate in all activities, with effective interaction from all staff to ensure that this happens. Staff show interest in children's learning and effectively extend their learning in all situations through purposeful questioning. Children with English as an additional language are given good levels of support, due to the staff's discussions with parents. They ensure children learn through expressions and gestures as well as emphasised spoken word. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are given effective support. Staff use their knowledge of the children well to provide opportunities for full participation and inclusion in all activities. Staff liaise well with parents and other professional to provide a consistent programme of learning. Staff plan children's learning opportunities as a team and carefully link activities with the learning intention and the resources available. The learning intention is effectively linked to the aspects and areas of learning demonstrating that staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Some evaluative observations are made of children's learning which are linked to the stepping stone of development. However, some observations do not clearly demonstrate how children have achieved this stage of development. Therefore, observations and records of children's achievements are not used effectively to inform the future planning of development.

Children are developing a good understanding that print has a meaning by using books effectively and listening carefully to stories. They are learning to form letters correctly and make marks for a purpose; to label their own work. Some children are developing a clear knowledge of letter sounds names and formation. They communicate clearly and confidently with each other and the staff to make their needs known.

Children have a good understanding of mathematical concepts and use these effectively throughout their play. They are learning to count, some associating amounts without counting; such as stating that they have four marbles and that they are four too. Children use resources

well to associate with size and shape, recognising that binoculars make objects bigger and smaller.

Children are fascinated with how resources work and the changes that happen to them. They effectively explore and investigate different properties such as magnets, sand, water, sand timers, binoculars and a multitude of malleable materials. Children learn about different cultures through regular celebrations and planned topics, such as India and Chinese New Year.

Children have great opportunities to make and create whatever they want, either through paint, collage or 3D modelling. Children confidently follow a rhythm and incorporate musical instruments and props into their songs and dances, freely expressing themselves through music. Children thoroughly enjoy participating in role play situations, confidently acting out roles that they regularly see adults do, such as shopping.

Children demonstrate good fine motor skills through purposeful activities, such as rolling dough with tools and finger, pouring and scooping in sand and water play and mark making using pincer grips.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individuality is reflected throughout their care due to the staff's effective use of recorded information about their individual backgrounds and needs, such as religion, special words and family circumstances. Children learn about diversity by accessing resources that portray positive images of today's society such as multi cultural books, dressing up, dolls, puzzles as well as regular celebrations of festivals. Staff challenge children's comments about gender roles to re-enforce equality within the play setting.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are supported well within the setting.

The majority of staff's good behaviour management results in well behaved children. Children receive plentiful praise and are encouraged to try new activities and skills. They are reminded to say please and thank you and automatically receive recognition for this. Most staff re-enforce positive behaviour with praise and distract unwanted behaviour effectively, therefore children quickly learn the difference between right and wrong. Significant incidents are recorded and discussed with parents to ensure children receive consistent strategies to endorse positive behaviour.

Children encourage others to participate in their play, actively sharing equipment with their friends. Children show excellent levels of concentration and interest in their play due to their enthusiasm to learn. Children organise themselves well taking responsibility for their resources, especially during tidy up time. They show developing confidence to express themselves and make their needs known to staff and other children, such as informing staff that they haven't got a drink yet and asking to go to the toilet during group activities. Children show pride in their achievements. Developing good levels of self esteem by sharing experiences from home and within the setting. Therefore social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents have a very informative prospectus accessible to them at all times. Which contains comprehensive information about both care and educational aspects of the setting. There are frequently asked questions and answers within the information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the funding of nursery education. The information

makes parents aware of the committee's responsibility to the group and the staff's role in the care of their children. Parents feel very positive about the group, with regular reassurance about what their children are doing on a daily basis. Parents feel confident that the activities their children are participating in are providing them with a stimulating learning opportunity. However, parents have limited access to children's profiles, so therefore do not know how they are achieving certain aspects of their development. Parents are requested to give written consent for additional aspects of care, such as emergency treatment and outings. Their children's records are regularly updated to ensure staff have accurate information to offer appropriate care to their children. Parents have access to an effective complaints procedure which includes documented and actioned concerns.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are cared for by a longstanding team of staff who have relevant checks to ensure that they can have unsupervised access to children. The staff ensure other users of the building do not have unsupervised access to the children in their care. The committee and staff are highly aware of informing Ofsted of changes in circumstance; such as a change in the committee.

Child to staff ratios are carefully monitored and effectively adhered to, ensuring children are cared for by the correct number of staff. Children receive high levels of effective supervision and interaction from staff, who clearly demonstrate their enjoyment of working with children. Therefore children settle quickly and are happy and content in their familiar surroundings.

Children's records and documentation are well organised and kept secure and confidential to promote children's welfare.

The leadership and management of the educational system is good. A very pro-active committee and committed staff team are very aware of their responsibility towards the ongoing welfare and education of the children in their care. They effectively assess systems and identify changes that need to be made to provide good quality learning experiences for children. Staff's development is ongoing and they regularly attend workshops within the Local Authority. Regular appraisals have been identified as a way forward to ensuring staff's development is evaluated and provided for, to ensure children are offered a continuously and progressive education programme.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the group were given five key issues regarding the nursery education and were given two recommendations to improve the quality of child care.

The staff now have a better and developing understanding of how children develop and how to use planning and observation to aid children's progress through the Foundation Stage. However, observations are not always used effectively to demonstrate how children learn or how to use them to inform future planning. The children do have a clear directive for learning through play situations with both adult lead and child initiated activities.

The planning still does not clearly show how children's different levels of abilities are met. However, staff do demonstrate some practical skills of differentiation by simplifying and extending questions within children's play. Large group activities still have an impact on the

younger, less able children's development, as some aspects are too complex, therefore some children lose interest, disrupting the rest of the group.

Children's learning of mathematical concepts are mostly within play situations such as adult lead activities discussing practical ideas using numbers, amounts, value, shape and size. Children use practical situations well to calculate simple additional problems.

The new committee have actively taken a clear responsibility for the staffing of the group including contracts and ensuring staff have an adequate break when working all day. However, staff do not currently have appraisals to discuss their development and practice but this is discussed at length in staff and committee meetings. Appraisals are on their agenda to introduce this year as part of their yearly action plan.

Risk assessments are carried out on a daily basis, due to other users in the hall in the evening and within the church during sessions. A record of identified hazards are kept and action is taken immediately to ensure children's safety is promoted. Fire drills are carried out regularly but are not always recorded accurately. Children are very aware of what to do in an emergency and can explain in details the procedure to follow.

Separate forms for individual children are now used to promote safe administration of medication. These are kept confidential and secure with all other children's details with clear information about consent, when it is to be given, when it was last given and by who. Parents sign to confirm that they have been informed of this information

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that requires 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

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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):

- Use an appropriate framework such as the Birth to three matters framework to incorporate younger children's differing abilities into planned activities
- ensure children's attendance is accurately recorded at all times

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 effectively to show how children achieve and to inform future planning of children's development
- extend existing systems to inform parents of children's achievements within their profiles

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