

Challock Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127091
Inspection date	23 November 2007
Inspector	Freeda Wildon
Setting Address	Challock Memorial Hall,, Blind Lane, Challock, Ashford, Kent, TN25 4AU
Telephone number	07740 203924 or 01233740504 (home)
E-mail	
Registered person	Kathleen Stevens
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?

Challock Pre-School Playgroup is privately owned and opened in 1995. It operates from the first floor of a modern village hall in Challock, a small village between the towns of Ashford and Faversham. It serves the local rural community and surrounding villages.

There is one play-room and the hall has its own separate kitchen and cloakroom facilities; there is one further large hall on the ground floor available for physical play. Children are also able to play outside in the adjacent playground and playing field.

A maximum of 12 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens five days a week during term-time. Sessions on Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays and Fridays are from 09.00 to 11.30 and on Tuesday afternoons, the group is also open from 12.30 to 15.00. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 29 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs three members of staff. The manager and the deputy hold appropriate early years qualifications and one other member of staff is working towards a qualification.

The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

All of the staff have up-to-date first aid training to enable them to act appropriately in the event of an accident. Accident and medication records are clear and compliant and provide parents with information to enable them to continue care at home and promote children's good health. Clear procedures have been developed for nappy changing that afford children their privacy and dignity. For example, children are changed separately within toilets away from the view of others. Staff apply effective procedures to prevent the spread of infection, such as wearing gloves for nappy changing and wiping down the changing mat each time it is used.

Children learn about hygiene practices through the routine; they wash their hands after using the toilet and before snack time. They visit the toilet in small groups and use individual towels to prevent the spread of infection. On the first day of the inspection children were observed to wash their hands after messy play in a communal bowl. This increases the risk of infection. On the second day of the inspection the registered person addressed this and children wash their hands in the cloakroom. At snack time children are provided with a piece of fruit, milk and snacks with high salt content. Water is only readily available in the summer to keep the children's bodies hydrated. Staff provide a drink at children's request. On the second day of the inspection a jug of water and beakers allowed children to have a drink when they were thirsty.

Children take part in a range of physical play activities, both inside the setting and within the adjacent village playground, all of which contribute to children's good health. Children confidently access a range of equipment and show confidence within their own body movements. The children exhibit a very positive attitude towards exercise and show enthusiasm in the activities they experience.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are secure; procedures for the arrival and collection of children ensure that they are only collected by authorised adults and therefore protected. Staff greet children and parents warmly. The walls are decorated with children's art work and photographs of children at play. This helps both children and parents feel welcome. There is a good range of age appropriate equipment accessible to the children. Regular informal risk assessments ensure that the building, toys and equipment are clean and safe. As a result, children play in a safe environment.

Children enjoy regular play outside in an adventure play area which is checked daily by staff before it is used by the children. Children know how to keep themselves safe, for example, they understand and remind each other, not to run and to mind the step. Staff give them gentle reminders about safety when using the stairs to go down to the main hall and to the outside

play area. Staff allow children to take supervised risks in a safe environment, allowing them to try new apparatus in the outside play area.

Fire drills are carried out periodically and fire detection equipment is accessible in all areas of the building to contribute to children's safety. Staff are familiar with the signs and symptoms of abuse and neglect. They are aware of the child protection procedures to follow if they have concerns about any child to ensure the welfare of children. The owner takes overall responsibility for child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy at playgroup and settle quickly. They respond positively to staff who are kind and caring in their approach towards them. Children have a variety of experiences at playgroup; they especially enjoy playing outside and playing with sand. Children play happily with one another and are learning to co-operate and share. Children's confidence and self-esteem is enhanced because the staff praise and encourage them. A consistent daily routine contributes to helping children feel secure and settled. Children can play independently and make choices about the activities. They become involved in the activities but at times they are called away for adult directed activities, such as sticking shapes on paper. This helps them identify shapes and colours but does not allow them to learn through active play. The attractive displays on the walls show staff clearly work hard to produce pre-cut templates but this does not allow children to represent their unique perceptions of the world unrestricted by adult control. Although staff are aware of the Birth to three matters framework and have attended training, activities are not planned to incorporate its use. There is no key worker system co-ordinating information about individual children's needs and learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The owner and the deputy have attended the foundation stage training. The owner is familiar with the Foundation Stage but staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage is variable. As a result, children are making satisfactory progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. The owner assesses children's learning and identifies their next steps but this information is not used to inform the planning. Although staff deliver a range of activities that cover all areas of learning this is not reflected in the planning to ensure that activities cover the length and breath of the Foundation Stage. The staff discuss children's progress between themselves. Much of the information they know about the children is committed to memory. Some staff are not aware of children's next steps and where children are on the stepping stones because they are not fully involved in recording children's assessments and planning their next steps.

Children are happy and comfortable in the setting and they clearly enjoy the activities on offer. They are well behaved and are learning to share and take turns. They are kind and helpful to each other because staff are good role models. They are learning to be independent by selecting the toys they enjoy. The role-play area is popular amongst the children; they dress up as fire fighters and enjoy doing the ironing. Some children like being builders and sing 'Bob the builder' as they use a saw and hammer. They also sing as they march their way up the stairs after physical play in the main hall. Children are happy and laugh out loud as they listen to stories because the owner tells the stories in a way that children find amusing. The book corner is well defined and attractively presented with cushions. Consequently, children visit and read books.

Staff provide regular opportunities for children to count, such as snack time, when children count the bowls needed for snack time, matching them with the number of children. Children enjoy songs involving simple calculation, such as 'five little monkeys'. Children receive opportunities to recognise their names. For example, at the end of the session when they are rewarded with a star to tick on their star chart. Children listen and take turns to speak at 'show and tell' at circle time. They talk about their home life and where they are going for their holidays. Children chat with one another and staff as they play; their vocabulary is being increased through regular story telling. Children receive opportunities to mark make and staff provide writing materials for children to write in the role-play area.

Children investigate using their senses through playing with water, sand and dough. Photographs, displays and discussions show how children learn about change and growth by growing bulbs. They learn about seasons and time, for example, growing cress, recording growth and looking back at time. They learn about new born animals because the farmer visits the playgroup with a lamb and ducklings. As yet children do not take part in cooking to help them understand about measuring, mixing and baking, and turning raw ingredients into familiar food.

Children express themselves creatively through a range of media. They paint, draw and make collages for the undersea world but the neatly cut fish shapes are the hard work of the staff. As a result, children's artistic creativity is sometimes hampered. Children use a range of equipment that enables them to develop their small muscles; they cut, paint and draw.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled at playgroup; they arrive happily and immediately go off to play. Children learn about right from wrong because staff remind them of how to behave. Sound relationships continue to evolve between the children, their peers and the staff. Consequently, children are beginning to demonstrate care and respect for others. Children's self esteem and confidence continues to evolve as staff regularly praise and encourage them in their achievements. Children are learning about taking responsibility, for example, by helping to tidy up after they finish playing.

Staff are able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and have a willing attitude. The group meets on the first floor; the owner said that she will explore avenues to accommodate children with disabilities. As yet children do not celebrate festivals from around the world helping them learn about different lifestyles, cultures and beliefs. Children learn to accept differences, although few resources reflect disability. The sessions are short, as a result children do not visit the local community. Visitors to the playgroup enable children to meet people from different walks of life. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Parents are extremely happy with the care provided at the playgroup. They are greeted warmly by friendly staff and are welcomed into the setting every day. The entrance to the playgroup is prepared each day to welcome parents and keep them informed. Parents receive policies and procedures in the prospectus. They are informed about the areas of learning in the prospectus and the areas are outlined in the front of each child's folder. However, the observations are not recorded under areas of learning. As a result, parents are not informed about their child's progress towards the early learning goals and therefore do not contribute towards the education program. Staff encourage parents to continue some play and learning at home. As yet systems are not in place

to establish children's starting points so that parents are fully involved in their child's education. The registered person is not aware of the new regulation regarding complaints, as a result parents are not informed. By the second day of the inspection the complaints procedure reflects the regulation.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Adults working at the setting have undergone checks to establish their suitability and over half hold a relevant qualification. The remainder of unqualified staff are studying for a qualification in early years. The recruitment procedures are satisfactory. As yet systems are not in place to appraise staff. The registration certificate is displayed and the attendance register confirms that the provider complies with the conditions of registration. The routine is generally well balanced. All mandatory documentation are generally well maintained and parental consents are in place. However, staff do not record accidents that happen at home.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The owner is clear about the kind of provision she operates; she feels that she wants to provide the best for children. There are no regular formal staff meetings to discuss good practice or how they might collectively improve the outcomes for children. The owner said that they meet after the session to discuss the activities. Not all staff have a good knowledge of the foundation stage. The owner takes responsibility for the planning; staff are not involved in planning. As a result, staff are not fully involved in developing children's learning. Children's development records are shared with parents but only the owner records these with some input from the staff. The owner identifies children's next steps but this is not used to inform the planning. The planning is not based on the foundation stage and the areas of learning to ensure that children are challenged appropriately. The owner takes responsibility for the day-to-day management of the group. As yet there are no systems in place to monitor, review and evaluate practice to identify strengths and weaknesses and to improve the nursery education.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last care inspection three recommendations were made. These were; to develop the framework for Birth to three; to ensure that the child protection procedures comply with the local Area Child Protection Committee procedures; and to develop a procedure for uncollected children. The Child Protection procedures have been updated and a procedure for uncollected children is in place. However, staff do not use the Birth to three matters framework to plan activities for children; therefore it remains a recommendation from this inspection.

At the last Nursery Education inspection the provider was asked to: extend the planning to ensure that all six areas of learning are covered; review the deployment of staff to enable children to benefit from staff interaction; monitor the nursery education to ensure a balanced approach is taken to planning and assessment across the early learning goals; to extend opportunities for children to find out more about diversity; and to investigate why and how things work. The provider has not addressed all of the above fully, therefore some remain recommendations from this inspection. This results in satisfactory outcomes for children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 satisfactory.

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):

- provide children with a range of materials to help them to represent their unique and individual perception of the world, unrestricted by adult ideas [also applies to nursery education]
- develop a key worker system and involve all staff in the planning of the activities and recording observations; ensure the planning covers the breadth of the Foundation Stage curriculum and Birth to three matters framework
- continue to develop staff knowledge and understanding of the complaints regulation and share the procedures with parents
- extend opportunities for children to find out more and learn about different lifestyles, cultures and beliefs [also applies to education]

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):

- develop staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation stage curriculum in order to support children's progress along the stepping stones in all six areas of learning
- develop a collaborative approach towards planning so that observations of children from each key group are used to continually inform the planning of activities [including Birth to three matters]
- develop partnership with parents so that they are involved in establishing children's starting points and contribute to the education programme [also applies to care]
- improve the leadership and management of the setting by setting in place systems to monitor, review and evaluate strengths and weaknesses in the educational programme.

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