

# Orsett Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	401555
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<b>Inspector</b>	Jacqueline Oldman
<b>Setting Address</b>	Village Hall, High Road Mill Lane, ORSETT, Essex, RM16 3HB
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<b>Registered person</b>	Deborah Janet Saville
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Orsett Playgroup is privately owned. It opened in 1977 and operates from Orsett Village Hall in rural South East Essex. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens each weekday during school term times. Sessions are from 09:45 until 12:15 on Mondays, 09:00 until 11:30 on Tuesday and 09:30 until 12:00 on Thursdays and Fridays. The group also operates afternoon sessions from 12:00 until 14:30 on Tuesdays and Wednesdays. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 55 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these 53 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local and wider community. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and has strategies in place to support children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs ten members of staff. Of these, eight staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Five staff are currently working towards a recognised early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP) and Area Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO).

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children's health and nutritional needs are promoted through effective procedures and practices followed well by staff. Children are protected as staff ensure the premises is checked for good levels of cleanliness prior to opening each day. Staff have clearly defined systems to check and record what has been done so that no areas can be overlooked.

Children stay healthy because staff are proactive in gathering information about the children's specific dietary needs, prior to them starting and as ongoing practice. Information about communicable illnesses and diseases is displayed for reference. Parents understand that children must not attend if they are ill or infectious and any that become unwell whilst in pre-school are kept comfortable until they can be collected. Staff hold up to date first aid and food hygiene certificates and this ensures that children's health is promoted and staff can deal with minor accidents. The pre-school has links with health professionals and a visit is planned to help children learn the importance of good dental health and hygiene.

Children have a good understanding of simple health and hygiene practices. They independently, spontaneously and consistently follow hygiene routines. Children know the importance of washing their hands in order to remove germs and prevent the spread of infection. They always dispose of used tissues in the bin. Children can manage their personal care with increasing independence as toilet facilities are made easily accessible and a low level sink has recently been installed close to the art area.

Children benefit from staff encouraging them to enjoy healthy nutritious snacks. Children enjoy talking about their snacks as they choose from a wide variety of fruit pieces together with a biscuit. More able children are developing a very good understanding of why they eat nutritious food and how it relates to their healthy bodies. The snack table becomes a social occasion for the children and much discussion about likes, dislikes and new tastes takes place. Some children bring a packed lunch but also try the fruit offered. Fresh drinking water is made freely available and children are encouraged to help themselves when they are thirsty. At snack time they can choose from water or a carton of fresh milk. Staff gather information about any allergies or special dietary requirements so that individual needs are effectively met.

Children are developing a very positive attitude to healthy living. The programme for physical development is varied and interesting. Children eagerly play outside as they enjoy free flow between the indoors and outdoors. They ride and push wheeled toys with confidence, carefully steering and moving with control as they avoid obstacles. Children are becoming increasingly agile as they take part in exercises that help develop their coordination such as crawling through arches or standing on a balancing board. They listen to and follow instructions as they fly like aeroplanes, hop like a bunny or join in parachute games. Children rest or relax according to their individual needs.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe, comfortable indoor and outdoor environment that is risk assessed to help minimise potential hazards. They have plenty of play space and benefit from free use of the fully enclosed outdoor play space. Staff put considerable effort into making the hall

welcoming by displaying posters, photographs and signage in a range of languages for their appreciation.

Children stay safe because risks of accidental injury are minimised. Staff attend health and safety training, are vigilant and use very good risk assessment systems to reduce potential hazards. Security is given high regard and staff are vigilant in monitoring its effectiveness to ensure children cannot leave unsupervised and protect them from unauthorised persons. There are clear procedures regarding the children's arrival and collection by parents and carers and children have good opportunities to learn about road safety. All visitors are closely scrutinised.

Children learn about their own personal safety through the daily routine. They know that it is safer to walk, rather than run, while indoors and why. When joining in circle games they know they must all run in the same direction to prevent hurting each other. Children help to pick up tripping hazards and understand the importance of tidying up to keep themselves and others safe. Fire evacuation procedures have been practised and children know what to do in an emergency to keep themselves safe.

Children access a good range of safe and suitable play materials and furnishings. A range of equipment is set out ready to enable children to self-select their chosen activity. Play equipment and furniture is routinely checked for damage and cleanliness.

Children are safeguarded because key staff have attended child protection training and the procedures for protecting children are robust. Staff demonstrate a sound understanding of their child protection responsibilities, which ensures they act in children's best interests. The new lilac child protection book from the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) is readily accessible for reference to ensure their responses are in line with current recommendations.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

An effective key worker system ensures children are secure and happy. They are kept busy as they freely choose from the varied activities they want to explore and experience. Children settle quickly into the daily routine and participate fully in the activities as they move between the indoors and outdoors. The level of care, guidance and support for children is very good and is maintained consistently. Children know who their key worker is and this ensures parents have an identified person who they can share information with. Staff develop strong and caring relationships with the children and know them very well. As a result staff are able to recognise quickly when children need extra support or challenge.

As children are admitted in the term before their third birthday key staff have attended training for the implementation of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They are successfully using this framework to adapt activities for the youngest children based on their developmental targets. The daily planning of activities has regard for observations of what the children achieve and what they need to do next in their learning.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and the way young children learn. They know the children really well because they continually observe, assess, record children's achievements and use this information to set targets for their next stage in learning. However, whilst the pre-school pays careful

attention to planned continuity and progression, the system used for recording children's achievements does not demonstrate clearly how they progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Sessions are well paced and learning is promoted by the sensitive balance of adult-led activities and child initiated play. Children have opportunities to work alone, in small groups and can choose to participate in large group activities. Effective planning ensures both the indoor and outdoor areas are well resourced to provide a rich, stimulating learning environment where children play co-operatively and imaginatively.

Children respond well to the staff's expectations and listen attentively responding to what they have heard. They understand the need for responsible behaviour and the reasons for the constraints imposed on them. Interaction between the staff and children is warm and accommodating. Staff's thoughtful questioning and spontaneity encourages children to respond imaginatively. For example, when children formed a marching band signs were quickly written by staff to direct the children around and through obstacles. Staff extend the children's vocabulary at every opportunity. Children give animated and interesting responses and enjoy retelling their experiences. There are many opportunities provided for children to explore mark making, both indoors and outdoors, with pencils, chalk or brushes and they begin to write their name on their work.

Children make very good progress supported by the imaginative and varied curriculum, with its wide range of activities, both indoors and outdoors. Staff find out where children are developmentally on admission and review this regularly to ensure children continue to develop. Children persevere and concentrate and show pride in their achievements. They relish challenge, offer their own ideas and are eager to take part in games or activities where they can demonstrate their mathematical skills. For example, they eagerly offer small numbers to count up to for the start of a song, choose the tallest or shortest person to be next in a game or say the number that is one more or less than a given number.

Children are curious and questioning. They develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through the varied activity programme. They spend time indoors, outdoors, go on outings, have visitors to the setting and observe photographs. They are encouraged to make comments, question, challenge and respond to what they see and hear. There are opportunities for children to learn about technology as they use the educational software on the computer. Children adeptly move the mouse to control movements and make selections on the screen. They develop a good sense of time as they discuss events in their lives and recall days of the week or compare the weather and seasons. Children have plenty of space and develop their physical skills as they avoid obstacles or use different part of their body to develop control and coordination. They use tools, such as scissors, glue sticks and enjoy daily use of the climbing frame.

Children's imagination is developing well. They have free access to a variety of medium and materials to create highly individual artwork. They explore colour, texture and shapes using their hands and a variety of tools. Children thoroughly enjoy parachute games to express their feelings as they sing familiar songs and move in different ways changing speed and direction. They giggle as they pretend to be a penguin or explore the different sounds of instruments and begin to match movements to music. Themed props, costumes and resources are provided and children use them to react and reflect on what they know or retreat into an imaginary world.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is outstanding.

Children are warmly welcomed by name as they arrive at the setting. They feel a strong sense of belonging as they find their name card and independently place it on a chair with all their belongings. Children are actively encouraged to make choices and take decisions for themselves. They confidently choose when to have their snack, find their own name card and place it in a tin to show they have visited the snack table. Children form very good relationships with the staff and each other. They play harmoniously and demonstrate a very good understanding of fairness as they agreeably negotiate turn taking and sharing with their peers. All children's contributions are welcomed and respected and they receive plenty of meaningful praise and encouragement which raises their confidence and self-esteem.

The pre-school's very caring ethos means that children feel valued. Children of all abilities are helped to reach their full potential because the experienced staff team recognise any developmental delay or those that are gifted and talented. The special needs co-ordinator (SENCO) is very enthusiastic about her role and ensures all children receive appropriate support or challenge. She works very closely with parents, staff and other agencies to ensure that all children are enabled to participate to the best of their ability. Communication is supported by Signalong, many pictorial images and labelling to ensure that all children are fully included. Children benefit from the strong links with the school and local community. As a result there is a smooth transition when children enter the reception year.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children show fascination as they look at photographs taken in the local and wider community. They demonstrate they are learning to care for and take responsibility for their community. Children show sadness when shown a photograph of rubbish dumped in the countryside and talk about the importance of finding a bin. They willingly share, take turns and show consideration and care for others. They are able to appreciate and learn respect for a variety of cultures and beliefs through the range of multi-cultural resources and artefacts linked to planned topics and festivals. For example, children learn about Chinese New year and benefit from learning simple words in other languages as they take part in a 'Round the World' topic.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Warm and friendly relationships exist between the parents and the staff team. A wealth of written information is displayed throughout the setting. Parents receive a 'Welcome Pack' and are invited to become a parent helper. They are invited to take home 'Firm Foundations' packs which introduces the value of rhymes and songs, number play, creative activities and how children begin to read. Regular key worker meetings and good verbal daily feedback ensures that an effective two-way flow of information is shared. Parents of the funded children are made aware of the themes and the daily activities so that they can contribute and continue their child's learning at home. Parents appreciate the efforts of the staff team and commend the happy atmosphere and structure which they provide to children together with a fun approach to learning. The management are well aware of the need to keep a record of any complaints and actively encourage parents to share any compliments or comments to improve outcomes for the children.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a skilled and dedicated staff team who understand the importance of attending training opportunities to improve outcomes for children. Robust recruitment and

vetting procedures ensure that all adults are suitable to work with children and any new staff are well supported by their appointed mentor. Staff are experienced and willingly share their expertise and knowledge with each other and parents and carers. A training matrix is maintained to identify individual staff developmental needs and a training officer spends valuable time accessing appropriate training opportunities. As a result, the quality of care is good overall with an area of outstanding practice. Very good staff levels are in place to provide children with good levels of support and sufficient flexibility to allow staff to regularly attend training courses. The effective staff deployment allows all children to experience many interesting and wide ranging activities throughout each session. Indoor and outdoor space is well planned and organised to maximise play opportunities for children.

All the regulatory documentation is in place and regularly reviewed, although some require very minor updates. There is a wide range of suitable policies and procedures to support the safe and efficient management of the pre-school. The manager has methodically organised the operational plan so that it holds all the relevant information to promote children's welfare, safety and learning. This is shared with parents to ensure they are made fully aware of the roles and responsibilities of the setting.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The setting's dedication to continual improvement is evident by the groups commitment to completing the "Quality in Learning and Teaching" (QuILT) accreditation scheme. Staff fulfil their designated responsibilities very well and there is a strong team spirit. The manager ensures all staff are included in the planning, implementation and assessment of the curriculum and she carefully monitors its effectiveness. Regular staff meetings are held and an appraisal system is in place to support the staff's ongoing professional development. The manager constantly searches for ways to improve on what is already of high quality. All staff have high expectations for the children and set realistic individual targets for them. The pre-school's self-evaluation provides an accurate picture of its strengths and areas for development.

Overall children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection it was recommended the pre-school carry out a full risk assessment, including the checking of electrical appliances, update children's records to ensure they contain sufficient information and review the complaints policy to ensure it includes the contact details of the registering body. Children's welfare and safety have improved as these recommendations have been satisfactorily met.

At the last inspection for funded education there were four key issues. The provider was asked to: ensure assessments are used to help focus individual targets for all the children; evaluate and improve the organisation of the role-play to enable children to use pens to write for a purpose in meaningful activities; increase opportunities for children to explore sound by using their voices, musical instruments and taped music and provide activities that invite children to move to different sounds; review how parents receive information to ensure they are aware of their child's progress and development towards the stepping stones.

The planning and organisation of activities have been reviewed and learning outcomes for children have significantly improved. They have daily opportunities to write for a purpose during role-play in meaningful activities and regular opportunities to explore sound using their voices, musical instruments and taped music. Children enjoy moving to a range of different sounds

and choose to use instruments during free play. Staff now use assessments effectively to set targets for children's next steps in learning. The pre-school is very mindful of ensuring parents and carers are made aware of their child's progress and parents are enabled to support children's progress at home through the 'Form Foundations' initiative. However, a further recommendation has been made to review children's developmental records to show how individual children progress through the stepping stones to the early learning goals.

### **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):

- review and update the policies and procedures to ensure they meet the requirements of the National Standards and associated guidance. This refers to sickness and child protection.

#### **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):

- review children's developmental records to show how individual children progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)