

# Kinver Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 218175  |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 14 June 2007  |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Anne Georgina Phillips  |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | Edgecliff County High School, Enville Road, Kinver, Near Stourbridge,<br>West Midlands, DY7 6AH |
| <b>Telephone number</b>        | 01384 878165 and 01384873357  |
| <b>E-mail</b>                  |   |
| <b>Registered person</b>       | Kinver Pre-School Playgroup   |
| <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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Kinver Pre-school Playgroup opened in 1964. It is a registered charity managed by a voluntary committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school. It operates from a youth and community centre in the grounds of Edgecliff High School in Kinver, Staffordshire. The pre-school also has use of a classroom situated within the main school building. All children have supervised access to the school grounds.

A maximum of 26 children aged from two to under five years may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open each weekday during school term times only from 09:00 to 12:00. Afternoon sessions may operate from 13:00 to 15:30 when numbers justify. There are currently 33 children on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for early education. Children come mainly from the local area and attend for a variety of sessions.

The pre-school employs five members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications, one holds a playwork qualification and one is working towards a further qualification. The pre-school receives support from the local authority early years team and

belongs to the Pre-school Learning Alliance. Students may attend on work experience placements.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are physically, mentally and emotionally healthy. They make healthy choices and are learning about leading healthy lifestyles. Their health is supported effectively by the staff who have a secure knowledge of good health and hygiene procedures and ensure that environmental health requirements are promptly acted upon. The environment is clean and well kept and children are mostly well-protected from infection. They frequently wash their hands, for example, before sitting down for their snacks and after using the toilet or doing messy play. They ask a member of staff if they need to wash their hands when coming back to the hall after a visit to the classroom. Children access good quality facilities when using the classroom in the school but have to share frequently changed bowls of water in the hall because the water in the hand wash basin is not of a safe temperature for them to use potentially risking the spread of infection.

Children are well nourished and starting to understand how to look after their bodies which supports their healthy growth and development. They learn the value of healthy eating when learning about the benefits of different types of bread and trying fruit and vegetables as an alternative at snack times. They sit and eat sociably together and their individual needs are known and respected well. They are able to access a drink readily when they are thirsty and learn that it is especially important to do this after they had been exercising. They enthusiastically help themselves to drink of water when this is provided accessibly to them.

Children enjoy good opportunities to be physically active in the spacious environment of the hall. Rotated resources and play equipment challenge children so that they develop good control of their bodies. They skilfully ride wheeled toys, scoop and mould sand and damp compost, and develop new skills such as pumping water in the water play. They beam with satisfaction when they succeed with a new skill on the low climbing equipment with close adult support and encouragement. They especially enjoy playing with a parachute and doing their brain gym exercises. Activities are paced so that the children have opportunities to rest.

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

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in mostly child friendly, spacious and welcoming environments. Alternative accommodation is currently actively being sought in order to provide consistency and enhance experiences for children because of the logistical challenges that the split site provision creates. However, children make good use of the current opportunities to move around freely in the hall accessing good messy and physical play opportunities. They also benefit from opportunities to use the smaller environment of the classroom with its readily accessible choice of resources and activities and displays of their own work which makes them feel welcome and valued. Equipment and resources is of good quality and matches children's developmental needs well. Low level furniture, storage units or the good use of floor play ensure that children can make ready choices about their activities.

Staff are vigilant about children's safety and security. They ensure that risks to children on the premises are effectively minimised and implement good security procedures in relation to access to the premises by parents and visitors. Children are learning to keep themselves safe by observing the safety rules within the setting, for example, they know why it is important to walk carefully together between the members of staff when walking between the two parts of the setting. They know that is important to be aware of any traffic that might be using the school grounds and are constantly alert and observant. They obey the rules when using the climbing equipment by lining up and using it one at a time. They have opportunities to take part in frequent fire drills so that they will be able to react quickly if there is a real emergency.

Children are well-protected by staff who are all suitable and have been vetted. They have a good understanding of child protection procedures and give a high priority to safeguarding children's welfare. For example, by attending child protection training and ensuring that emergency contact details of the relevant agencies including those of nearby authorities are prominently displayed for staff and parents. All hold relevant first aid qualifications and the first aid box is readily accessible and fully stocked.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. Most enter confidently, enjoy their time there and make choices about their activities and care. New and less confident children receive close adult support because there is an effective keyworker system to help them settle and join in with the other children. Staff are sensitive to their individual needs making sure that any special toys and comforters are nearby. They provide reassuring cuddles and support. Older children become very enthusiastic and confident which develops their self-esteem. They enjoy playing imaginatively together. They are able to be active or play quietly depending on their needs and interests. They mostly form good relationships with one another sharing and negotiating in their play spontaneously, for example, offering to share the wheeled toys or the equipment in the water play. They respond well to adults who are interested in them and to help them face new experiences positively, for example, visiting their new school together and talking about the new uniform that they will wear.

Children are independent in making choices from a range of planned and free play activities that include a good balance of active, creative, imaginative, and quiet play. Activities are rotated daily by staff to ensure that children access a good variety of play and learning experiences. Children are eager to explore activities such as the small plastic spiders frozen in the ice cubes or how to use the pumps in the water play to fill up the beakers. They show others excitedly when they manage to make a mould of the damp compost successfully after several tries. Most activities engage them well but sometimes established routines within the setting limit the opportunities for children to as much for themselves as possible. For example, children do not have opportunities to organise their own snack time which is a missed opportunity for them to further develop their independence and self-esteem.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff get to know the children well when they start and use this awareness of their skills, interests and needs to ensure that there is sufficient challenge in most activities so that overall children make sound progress in their learning and achievement given their capability and starting points. Staff plan provide a varied and interesting range of practical play based activities covering all aspects of the curriculum

but do not always have high expectations of what the most able children can achieve for themselves. Regular assessments of children's progress are compiled into very attractive individual records with photographs and narrative which provide a clear picture of children's achievements. Keyworkers have a good knowledge of children's individual progress but there is no clear system for using these assessments to identify gaps in individual children's learning so that these they be used to inform future plans which are shared with all staff. There is not currently a formal process for ensuring that all aspects of the curriculum or covered.

Staff are generally perceptive and responsive, intervening with support and explanations to help children succeed and persevere. For example, in helping children to understand how the water pump works so that they learn to keep the bottom of the pump in the water so that it can be successfully pumped into the beaker. They expand children's vocabulary by suggesting that the white plastic spiders in the white water bath may be hard to find because they are camouflaged. They sometimes use imaginative methods to develop children's learning such as making a hexagon counting game that is reflected in its bubble pattern decoration for them to take home.

Children make especially good progress in some areas of learning such as physical and mathematical development, and knowledge and understanding of the world. Children are confident to make choices about their own activities and play which allows them to learn at their own pace. They confidently try new experiences such as moulding the damp compost, and finding out what happens when the ice cubes melt. They learn to share and take turns when using the large parachute in their group games or waiting for a turn on the climbing frame. They learn to respect the living creatures in the world around them such as the spiders that they find and see. They know that they are valued and respected when photographs of their special achievements are taken.

Children mostly respond to expectations for acceptable behaviour so that learning can take place. Children concentrate and persist well with activities that challenge them but are sometimes distracted in large group activities especially where these do not engage them fully because of the diverse needs of the group which contains much younger children. This especially impacts on their listening skills and their ability to speak and be heard in group situations. For example, children concentrate well when doing some of the actions to the rhyme 'Head, shoulders, knees and toes' without singing but are sometimes disruptive at group time before going home or when waiting to be served with a drink and snack.

Children are keen to use talk to organise and explore real and imagined experiences such as those outside the pre-school or when developing their role play in their very own improvised campsite and shop. They learn to value books by sharing a story with parents and carers at the start of each session. Some children repeat this experience with a doll sitting on their lap to whom they carefully read and explain a favourite book. Older children are beginning to identify and start to write their own names showing that they are starting to understand that print carries meaning.

Children develop good mathematical skills. They spontaneously use mathematical language relating to shape such as recognising that the triangle shape of the toast matches that of the tent in the campsite role play area and knowing that the ice cubes are like rectangles. Older children skilfully count the small plastic spiders as they melt from the ice cubes, counting the different groups of white, orange and black spiders accurately and then adding them together.

Children are curious and interested in the world around them and living things. They talk about the bug hunt they have done outside. They use binoculars to see how these change the image of the things they look at. They explain that things look bigger if you look one way and smaller if you look the other way. They try looking from a different angle such as when lying on the floor. They experiment with paper towels and the melted water from the ice cubes exploring what happens when they become wetter. They are becoming enthusiastic about recycling materials and remind parents and carers always to switch off lights at home when they are not in use.

Children relish physical play opportunities. They are developing a good understanding of how to keep their bodies healthy and act safely. They gain good control when using a wide range of small and large equipment. They use the available space to move freely and manoeuvre skilfully. They enjoy the challenge of balancing beams and climbing equipment used imaginatively. They become competent with writing and drawing materials, and experiment picking up materials of different sizes with chopsticks and tongs.

Children enjoy being creative in their role play and games. They are extremely expressive in their free drawing in which they recreate their individual interests especially their favourite film and story characters. They make individual puppets of themselves from cardboard and paint these with colours to match their own clothes.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected as individuals. Staff know individual children and their needs well so that all children and their families are actively welcomed, supported and included. Children learn to value diversity when they see positive reflections in play resources, posters and when learning about the food and cultural traditions of others. They try different types of bread at snack times and are introduced to the cultures of others such as a celebration of Chinese New Year when they try their hand at eating noodles with chopsticks.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are mostly well-behaved. They make positive relationships with staff and each other. They make active choices and decisions about their play and activities. Children develop appropriate levels of independence and self-esteem although staff do not currently have high expectations of the levels of independence that more able children could attain so potentially limiting their achievement and self-esteem. Children mostly behave well as they learn to respect boundaries and what is expected of them. They learn that the number of children at messy activities is limited by the number of aprons available. They learn to abide by the safety rules when waiting for their turn on the climbing equipment. Some children receive warm praise and encouragement which significantly boosts their confidence when tackling new experiences so that they enthusiastically go back to have another go.

Staff use mostly appropriate strategies for engaging and rewarding children. They are rewarded for helping with the tidying up with a sticker. However, routines within the setting sometimes disrupt children's concentration so that they are not fully engaged in what is going on around them. Some group times for a wide age range of children do not hold older children's attention and potentially impact on their learning.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Relaxed, warm and friendly relationships between staff and parents, and daily opportunities to exchange information ensure that

children's needs are met effectively. Parents receive good quality written information about the setting. They have the opportunity to be actively involved in children's learning by helping on the parent rota, reading their child a story at the beginning of the session, or playing with the game children have made at pre-school to consolidate their learning. Staff have a high regard for the need to maintain high levels of confidentiality about children's care and progress.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by good quality organisation. Space and resources are mostly well organised to provide enjoyable play opportunities for children and promote positive outcomes overall. Aspects of some routines have been identified for improvement in order to enhance children's independence, concentration and listening skills.

The close-knit staff team communicate well with one another about children's needs ensuring that these are met very effectively. Staff are well qualified, motivated, mature and experienced. Good induction procedures ensure that new staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Good adult: child ratios are maintained and staff are consistently well-deployed to ensure children's security, health and safety. All those in contact with children are vetted and suitable.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. A clear vision of the way forward and good communication contributes positively to children's needs being met. The whole team are actively working to improve the environment that children use to enhance their learning experiences. Staff are proactive in updating their knowledge and skills by attending a range of training courses to enhance children's learning and specific needs. A warm welcome for parents and good relationships positively enhances children's learning.

All the required documentation for ensuring children's welfare is in place. It is comprehensive and detailed. Information about children and their individual needs is readily available to staff, well kept and up-to-date. Record-keeping, and policies and procedures are used well in practice to support children's individual needs. Staff have a high regard for confidentiality of children and parents, ensuring that documentation is securely stored. Overall children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection, three recommendations were made. The pre-school was asked to improve policies and procedures, and record-keeping in relation to: the detail in accident records; recruitment and staff induction; behaviour management and sanctions.

Good progress has been made with all three recommendations so that children's welfare is more effectively promoted. Accident records are now sufficiently detailed. Recruitment and staff induction procedures are well drafted and used effectively for new staff so that they know and understand their roles and responsibilities well. The behaviour management and sanctions policy has been amended to that it no longer includes inappropriate sanctions against children as a tool in tackling poor behaviour.

At the last nursery education inspection, two key issues were identified. The preschool has asked to improve: the organisation of whole group story sessions and to ensure that the different attainments within the group were catered for and children's learning fully extended; the opportunities the children to compare two numbers and to use calculation through practical and daily routines.

Good progress has been made in relation to the latter with children now experiencing good opportunities to develop their mathematical skills in relation to comparing numbers and practising calculation in a practical activities and daily routines. They competently count during their play activities, comparing different groups of items such as the small plastic spiders that emerge from the melting ice. They quickly recognise when the numbers in groups of objects changes and are able to say whether these are more or less.

Although an action plan was put in place after the last inspection to reorganise story times so that these were split for younger and older groups of children to more effectively match their attention spans and interest levels, limited progress has been made. Children are sometimes split into the separate groups but this is not always any more effective as the premises are often noisy and echoing which makes it hard for children to concentrate and hear. The preschool is sometimes able to address the problems faced by the wide age range of children attending by operating separate sessions for the older children in a classroom in a nearby school. This ensures that there are good opportunities to develop children's communication skills but these opportunities are not consistently available to children. A further recommendation has been made at this inspection and managers and staff are actively working to find a long-term solution.

### **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 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):

- improve the arrangements for reducing cross infection in relation to children's direct access to better hand washing and drying facilities
- extend the opportunities for children to do things for themselves to further enhance their self-esteem

#### **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 the grouping of children to ensure that it does not hinder their learning especially in relation to their development of good listening and concentration skills
- improve the use of children's assessment and development records to ensure that they are used to inform the planning of their future learning in a way that is accessible to all staff

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