

St Philips Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 316836
Inspection date 11 May 2007
Inspector Christine Marsh

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Registered person St Philips Playgroup

Type of inspection Childcare

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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St Philip's Playgroup has been registered since 1999. The playgroup operates from St Philip's Community Centre which is owned by the Parish of St Thomas and St John in the Radcliffe area of Bury. The building is conveniently situated close to Bolton Road, which provides a main link to roads leading to Radcliffe Town Centre and other local towns.

St Philip's playgroup is registered to provide care for 24 children. There are currently 31 children on roll, of whom 14 children are two year olds, 15 are three year olds and two children are four year olds. The sessions operate from 9.15 until 11.45, on a term time only basis. The playgroup have sole use of the community centre during operating hours, the children have access to one large playroom and bathroom facilities. The kitchen area is used but access by the children is always restricted.

There are five staff four of whom have appropriate early years qualifications. The other member of staff is working towards a qualification. The playgroup is supported by a management committee who play an active role in the support and development of the group. Links are established with the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm environment where staff generally promote satisfactory hygiene practices. For example, children are taught to wash their hands when they have been to the toilet. However, they do not wash their hands before they have their snack, which could cause the spread of infection. Two members of staff have current first aid certificates and a third is booked on first aid training later this month. Their knowledge helps to protect children in the case of any minor accidents that could occur.

Children have continual access to fresh drinking water which keeps them refreshed. At snack times they have a choice of milk or fruit juice, and a snack such as fresh fruit or a biscuit. Snack times are pleasant social occasions where staff sit with children in a circle and engage them in conversation. Children have a beaker or a feeder cup depending on their individual developmental needs.

As the setting does not have access to outdoor play facilities, physical play takes place in the hall. Children are seen peddling happily round the room on bikes playing follow the leader games. As well as this free play, games involve children moving from one area to another such as 'Coloured Corners' or 'Shape Corners' are played. These games involve children in enjoyable physical activity and reinforce their understanding of different colours and shapes. Sometimes the whole hall is cleared and large ball games are played. Children enjoy these physical activities which contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

Children play with a variety of construction materials and use malleable materials to develop their fine motor skills. They engage in drawing and mark making activities, and make biscuits or pizzas which staff cook for snack time. Children enjoy eating the food they have helped to prepare.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

A warm and welcoming environment is created by the staff who work well within the constraints of the multi-user centre. The premises are safe and secure. Staff are on the door at arrival and departure times, and parents sign children in on arrival, and out on departure. Staff register children in the main room at the beginning of sessions. Children are kept safe as staff are always aware of how many children are on the premises.

Children are cared for in an environment where staff undertake daily risk assessments to ensure their safety so that they can move around freely and safely. Emergency evacuation procedures are thorough and take place through both exits. This means that children are familiar with the procedures in the event of an emergency. Children are also learning to keep themselves safe through the topics staff plan for them. For example, staff talk to children about fire safety as part of their topic work on Bonfire Night. Their welfare and protection is further promoted by the staff's sound knowledge of child protection procedures.

Children are taken on outings to a zoo and a pantomime. These outings are by coach. Staff and parents go so that there is a high ratio of adults to children. Appropriate seat restraints help

to keep children safe during the journeys. Children enjoy these different experiences and having their parents accompany them.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are very happy and well settled in the setting. They are familiar with the routines which helps them to feel secure. Children engage in a variety of activities that are available during the session. They choose freely from the materials on offer and enjoy their time in the playgroup. Some activities such as jigsaws, sticking shapes to make train pictures, and modelling material are on tables. However, children on bikes sometimes bump into the toys and games on the floor, such as trains and dolls, which inhibits those children playing with these toys. A good range of toys and games are available. These are rotated to maintain children's interest.

Planning is based on topics, each of which lasts for several weeks. Children are currently learning about shapes. They have a good knowledge of circles and triangles, but their understanding of the concept of rectangles and squares is less secure. Consequently, this topic is continuing for another couple of weeks to provide opportunities for children's learning to become more secure. Assessments of children's learning is recorded in terms of the Foundation Stage areas of learning, however, many of the children are two year olds, and this curriculum framework is intended for older children. Staff have a sound knowledge of child development and this informs their interactions with children who benefit from being valued and understood.

Children regularly enjoy singing action songs. They sing 'Five little speckled frogs' and jump into the 'pool' at the appropriate point in the song. Many of the songs involve counting and children eagerly show the correct number of fingers as they sing. Staff use circle times to consolidate children's knowledge, such as colours and shapes. Children willingly engage in these informal discussions about the topics they are learning. They discuss their ideas with staff. Their ability to use language effectively is shown when they say 'splish, splosh', describing the torrential rain on their way to playgroup.

Friendships are evident between children as they seek out their friends for bike riding activities, or to push prams with dolls in, or do construction activities. Children are frequently seen smiling widely as they chat and discuss their games with each other. Dressing up is a favourite activity and children carry on other games wearing their costumes for long periods.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the good relationships and daily contact between their parents, carers and staff. The key worker system works very well. Children choose their key worker so that it is an adult who they particularly like. This is seen as children carefully seek out their key worker as a special adult to play with them, or sit next to them at snack time. When children are unsettled or tired they are seen looking for their key worker to snuggle up to, and reassure them. Key workers change their key children's nappies, and support parents and carers with toilet training. Good relationships are evident between staff and parents.

Parents comment on their children being happy at the setting, and how they are learning and developing through attending. Staff update parents and carers about their children's learning when they bring their children, and parents are informed about the topics children are learning through monthly newsletters. Staff promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory

practice through their teaching, and in their relationships with children. Staff know children well and this helps to ensure that their individual needs are met successfully. Children who are unsettled or who need additional support are sensitively supported, cared for, and fully included. Resources promote positive images of children and people with disabilities, and staff discuss issues with children encouraging them to be supportive towards others, and to view difference in a positive way.

Children are well behaved and well mannered. Staff encourage this through the use of a 'Please and thank you' song, as well as being good role models themselves. The behaviour policy further reinforces the good behaviour that children demonstrate. Children are praised for their good behaviour which promotes their self-esteem and makes them feel valued.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The manager looks for ways to improve the setting's provision and encourages staff to attend training to keep their knowledge up to date. All staff are vetted and there are contingency plans in case a member of staff is ill. The ratios of adults to children are always appropriate. The daily routines and deployment of staff provide a secure environment with a varied range of activities to promote children's play and learning. The staff work well together as a team and children benefit from the consistent expectations and happy atmosphere within the playgroup. Documentation and procedures are all in place, and parents and carers sign to say they have read them. These measures help to keep children safe, and to promote their physical and emotional well-being. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to implement a key worker system and record children's interests and developmental progress. Staff have attended training on the key worker system and this has been successfully implemented. Children's interests are recorded on the initial form and developmental progress and additional interests are noted in children's individual files. These files are given to parents when children leave. Children's emotional well-being is further supported by these measures, and their parents and carers are kept informed about their development and learning.

The provider was also asked to address a number of issues to do with policies and documentation. These issues have been appropriately addressed and further protect children helping to keep them safe.

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 can be seen on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

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):

- develop planning and assessment procedures for the under threes using a scheme such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- consider the organisation of resources so that floor space and table activities are used to the best advantage
- review routines to raise children's awareness of good personal hygiene practices.

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