

St George's Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY248371
Inspection date	22 May 2007
Inspector	Teresa Ann Clark

Setting Address	St Georges Bicentennial Hall, Church Walk, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 4TT
Telephone number	07837273357
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Registered person	St Georges Playgroup
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?

St George's playgroup was registered in 2003 to provide care for children in the local community. The playgroup is run by a committee and opens during term time, from 09.30 to 12.00 every weekday, except Wednesday.

Children attending the playgroup have access to the hall, meeting room and toilet facilities. There is a secure area for outdoor play. There are currently 38 children on roll who attend a variety of sessions. Of these, 11 are in receipt of nursery education funding.

The playgroup employs three staff. All hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are protected from the spread of infection and cross-contamination as staff follow clear procedures in order to maintain a healthy and hygienic environment. These include hygienic nappy changing arrangements and the cleaning of tables with anti-bacterial spray before snack time. Children are developing an understanding of good personal hygiene in order to keep themselves healthy, for example, children are supported by staff as they wash their hands at appropriate times. The effective sick child policy ensures that children are well taken care of if they are ill. Children are well cared for in the event of an accident, as there are clear procedures and all staff have a valid first aid certificate.

Children are suitably nourished and enjoy a satisfactory range of healthy snacks. For example, fresh fruit and toast. Children's independence skills are not fostered at snack time because staff set the tables, pour out children's drinks and hand out the snack. Fresh drinking water is available to children throughout the session to keep them refreshed and hydrated. Parents are consulted about their children's dietary requirements, which ensures children remain healthy.

Outdoor play offers the children opportunities for fresh air and exercise on a regular basis. Children access the outdoor area freely, using a range of toys and equipment. The staff plan opportunities for the children to develop large motor skills and coordination, for example, when they use the stepping blocks and climbing equipment. Children have sufficient space to exercise their bodies and at other times they relax in the cosy book corner or sit on the bench outdoors.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The play environment is well organised and maintained, allowing children plenty of space to freely explore within a safe, bright, warm, and friendly environment. Some low-level equipment and storage encourages children to develop their independence, play and learning. Child sized tables, chairs and comfortable seating is provided to ensure children's comfort. Toys and equipment are checked regularly to ensure that they are safe and suitable. The good range of toys and equipment provide a balanced range of activities for the children.

The risk of accidental injury is minimised as staff carry out regular risk assessments. The play environment is safe and suitably maintained. Daily hazard checks, combined with good supervision of children, ensures that they can play safely. Children are learning about keeping themselves safe as they learn to use tools, such as scissors and are given opportunities to learn how to climb and balance, within a safe and supervised environment. They also learn about road safety through activities, discussions and visitors, for example, the road safety officer.

Children are protected from harm as they are cared for by adults who are vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and skills. There is a written statement in line with the current Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Staff are aware of their responsibilities within these and parents are informed of the policy, so they are clear about the staff's responsibility to safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and content in the care of the supportive staff team. They enjoy close and warm relationships with adults who know them well, which increases their sense of well-being and security. Children are relaxed and confident as they enter the playgroup and enjoy chatting excitedly with their friends and adults. Children benefit from excellent relationships with staff who show a genuine interest in their development, concern and sensitivity to their individual needs. Therefore, children are happy and quickly become confident with staff and secure within the environment.

Children engage in a broad range of stimulating activities, which enhances their development. For example, children giggle with excitement as they jump up and down to pop the bubbles from the bubble machine. They develop their creativity as they make models in the construction area and engage in meaningful role play, making dinner for staff. They enjoy painting in the creative area, they mix the colours and explore the feel of the paint on their hands. They develop their language and social skills as they play cooperatively with their peers.

Staff have an in-depth understanding of each child's progress and of the next steps for their development. Activities are planned by the staff, who know the children's abilities and interests. As a consequence, children are making good progress in their development and enjoy their time at the playgroup.

Nursery education

Quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Planning is detailed and includes a balanced range of activities across the six areas of learning. As a result, children make good progress towards the early learning goals. The staff promote children's learning well and provide them with good challenges, to encourage their thinking and learning. As the children play the staff talk to them and question them, in addition to planning a wide range of learning experiences. They observe the children as they play, record their observations and identify their next steps. However, these are not securely linked to the planning to build on what children already know and understand.

Children are interested and motivated to learn. They are eager to go in the tent to explore light and dark, using torches and lights. They are happy, confident and assertive throughout the session. For example, they tell staff that they want to finish their work. They recognise their own names as they self-register on arrival and some children are beginning to write their name. They cooperate with each other as they complete a jigsaw and as they engage in role play, small world activities and construction play. Children become highly skilled communicators. They confidently speak to adults. For example, a child asks the inspector if her laptop has games on it. At circle time children enthusiastically show items that they have brought from home, explaining to the group what they are and how they work. They actively listen to a story during group time and look at books or read stories independently with peers and adults during the session.

Children count and use mathematical language throughout the session. For example, they count the pieces of play dough and how many children are sat at the table. They count the numbers of shapes they have threaded. Children use their imagination during their play with small world activities, construction toys and role play. They develop good fine motor skills as they access equipment, such as scissors, paint brushes, construction toys and dressing up toys. They benefit

from regular opportunities for outdoor play and have access to equipment that develops their large muscle skills, coordination and balance.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children have a good sense of belonging as they are warmly welcomed into the setting and are treated with equal regard. Their individual needs are well met because staff use detailed registration discussions to find out about children. This includes parents completing the 'All about me' booklet, which provides useful information about the children's likes dislikes and where they are in their development. This information is used as a starting point for staff to help with a smooth transition from home to the setting. Children settle very well because staff have a nurturing approach with them and they actively encourage 'comforters' to be brought from home. All children are able to make free choices and develop independence, which promotes their confidence and self-esteem.

Children develop an understanding and awareness of the diversity of our society as they freely access resources that reflect non-stereotyped images and learn about various celebrations, customs and festivals. Staff manage children's behaviour in a calm and consistent manner. They support children in managing their own and other's behaviour and give children lots of praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements. Children are polite, play harmoniously and enjoy the freedom to explore within appropriate boundaries. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good, thus maintaining consistency for children and enabling their individual needs to be met. Parents share information regarding their children's needs during an effective settling in process and on an ongoing basis. Parents are given good quality information regarding the nursery's policies and procedures and have various opportunities to share their views. They are highly complimentary about the standards of care and education their children receive and how open and approachable the staff team and manager are. Parents are actively involved in their children's learning as they bring in topic related items from home. The playgroup receives very good support from parents who help out on a daily basis. This gives parents an opportunity to see what it is like for their child in the setting and to be actively involved in their learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The staff team work very well together to provide good quality care for the children. Each morning they arrive before the children, to arrange the room and the resources to provide a welcoming environment. They work well together as a team, following the policies and procedures well in practice to provide a consistent approach. Staff attend regular training sessions for their professional development. They have a good awareness of routines, the setting's comprehensive policies and procedures and of their roles and responsibilities within these.

They work closely together, are enthusiastic and highly motivated and develop good levels of knowledge and understanding of child development, the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. Children are safeguarded as they are cared for by staff who have undergone a rigorous vetting procedure and have received a comprehensive induction. Therefore, children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution

is promoted. The documentation relating to the care of the children is well maintained in accordance with the National Standards.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager has clear expectations of staff and supports them well in meeting these. The quality of care and education is monitored and evaluated effectively. There are various forums for staff to share views and give suggestions for developments. The manager works directly with the children and models good practice, she has developed a positive ethos in her short time leading the setting. As a result, children benefit from positive outcomes. She works closely with the local authority to improve practice. The manager has a clear vision for developments within the setting and implements these appropriately, ensuring that staff are given relevant support and training. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

One recommendation was made at the last inspection. This was in relation to the register. The setting were asked to record the times of arrival and departure for children. The setting ensure that the register clearly shows the time for any children who come in after the session starts or leave before the session ends.

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.

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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 variety of snacks provided for the children
- continue to develop the learning environment so children have access to a wider range of resources to develop their play and learning (also applies to nursery 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):

- promote children's self-help skills at snack time (also applies to care)
- continue to develop the planning and assessment systems and next step information to identify clear learning intentions and appropriate levels of challenge to meet individual learning (also applies to care).

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