

School Lane Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109894
Inspection date	28 June 2007
Inspector	Alison Jane Kaplonek
Setting Address	WALLOP COUNTY, SCHOOL LANE, NETHER WALLOP, STOCKBRIDGE, HAMPSHIRE, SO20 8EH
Telephone number	01264 782051
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Registered person	School Lane Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

School Lane Playgroup opened in 1981. It operates from a purpose built building in the primary school grounds and serves the local area.

The playgroup is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children from two to five years. There are currently 36 children on roll, including 31 funded three and four year-olds. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup is open five days a week during school term times, with morning sessions from Monday to Friday from 09:00 until 11:30. Afternoon sessions are held on Monday and Thursday 12:30 to 15:00. In addition a lunch club operates on Monday to Thursday 11:30 to 12:30. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There is one full-time and five part-time staff working with the children. Four of the staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3 and one is training at present. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's physical needs are well met because staff follow effective procedures. They consult with parents about the children's health needs and keep appropriate documentation and agreements on site. The majority of staff have current first aid training and ensure that it is regularly updated. They check the cleanliness of all areas of the building each day.

Comprehensive health and safety policies are in place, and include clear procedures to be followed in the case of an accident or if children are taken ill. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own personal care and can independently access the toilet and washing facilities. They often help themselves to tissues if they need to wipe their noses.

Children are provided with healthy and nutritious snacks such as a choice of apple or pear at each session. They bring their own lunch boxes if they choose to stay for lunch club and parents are encouraged to ensure that the contents are nutritious. Children enjoy the social interaction with their friends and staff during snack and lunch times. They are regularly offered drinks and can access their bottles of water at any time. However, children lack opportunities to become independent as staff serve the children with their fruit and drinks during snack time.

Children are beginning to develop physical control, experiment with movement and improve their manipulative skills during a generally good range of activities, both indoors and outside in the school playground. They learn to develop control of their bodies, for example as they balance on the beams or practise the egg and spoon race for sports day. Some children are gaining an awareness of the space around them as they move between activities. Children use a satisfactory range of equipment, tools and materials safely as they paint, build and shape dough.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a safe and very secure, purpose built environment, where entrance to the building is monitored at all times. Children are able to move freely around the room accessing the range of resources available to them each day. Staff are alert and reduce the risk of accidents by carrying out daily risk assessments on the premises and equipment. Children are protected by staff who follow effective procedures, such as recording accidents or the administration of medicines. Children and staff are familiar with the fire evacuation procedure which they practise regularly.

Children are protected by staff who have a sound understanding of child protection procedures and keep local contact numbers accessible. They record any concerns they may have about the children in their care and understand that they have a duty to report these concerns to the required authorities. Parents are able to access the pre-school's child protection policy which is displayed on the notice board.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The pre-school room allows plenty of space for children to move around in and take part in a range of activities. Children are treated with concern, and are praised for their achievements

and good behaviour. Staff value the children's work and use much for display purposes, providing a colourful environment.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Children have access to a generally good range of resources many of which are stored in containers that they can reach themselves. Other resources are put out as they are requested by the children, although many children are not confident to do this as the learning environment is often not well organised. Children can use the craft area or floor space for some activities while others are laid out on table tops. Staff draw up long term and weekly plans and identify learning in all six areas. However, the plans do not show clear learning intentions linked to the next steps in children learning and both children and staff are unsure of the outcomes expected from some of the activities. As a consequence some children are not involved in purposeful play, but wander aimlessly. Regular observations and assessments are completed for all children in receipt of funding for nursery education, although staff are not secure in their knowledge of the Foundation Stage of learning and often over estimate children's abilities. As a result, the assessments are not used to inform future planning and children are not progressing through the stepping stones as well as they could.

Some children chatter while they play and enjoy interaction with staff members and their friends. They use language to explain what they are doing, for example talking to each other about how they have built cars with the construction kit or how the shaving foam feels in their fingers. They all enjoy story time and are beginning to be able to recognise their names as they self register. However, they have few opportunities to develop their writing skills during their play. Children count confidently to five. They explore shape, size and quantity during a range of practical activities such as water and sand play or when talking about the shapes of buildings. Children are being introduced to mathematical language such as tallest and shortest. However, they have limited opportunities to count during everyday activities, recognise numbers or to solve simple number problems.

Children explore with dough, collage materials and paint. They make and design with junk materials and construction kits and are beginning to learn how to use some electronic toys. They talk about their families, their likes and dislikes. They are also beginning to learn about the different cultures of others as they talk about Chinese new year. They explore colour and texture and use their imaginations, as they paint a picture, play with the shaving foam or role play 'going on a journey'. They enjoy singing familiar songs and sometimes have the use of a range of musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are all treated with respect and their individual needs are generally well met. Some children are gaining in confidence and independence and are able to request certain resources and initiate their own play, for example asking for small world toys and making up their own game. Children generally behave well and enjoy the praise and stickers they receive from staff as a recognition of their achievements. However, the lack of clear rules and routines and the staff's lack of confidence in implementing the curriculum and managing the children's behaviour, means that some children are not always focused or involved in the routines of the session. The pre-school values all children and welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities. Staff liaise with other agencies to provide support for all children who attend, but do not draw up individual education plans to ensure that children make the best possible progress.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are able to gain information about the policies and procedures, plans and activities provided, via newsletters, information boards and folders which are freely available. They each have a home/school diary in which they can share information about their children on a daily basis. Parents know who their child's key worker is, which ensures continuity of care for the children. They find staff approachable and feel able to discuss their child's care and welfare. They can volunteer to help at a session if they wish.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's health and safety is assured in the pre-school environment. They are cared for in secure premises where staff are appropriately checked and qualified. The operational plan is comprehensive. Good essential records are kept for each child and shared with the parents, and daily registers are completed each day. Staff work directly with the children, and maintain a good ratio of adults to children. Staff have a rota and cover the essential tasks well, such as snack time, toileting or messy activities. At other times, they are less clear of their roles and responsibilities and do not always provide the necessary support for all children.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. There is a clear management structure and a key worker system in place to ensure consistency of care for all children. The registered person is committed to improving the care and education for all children and has recently started to implement appraisals for all staff to help identify areas for development. Evaluation of some activities is carried out daily, although this does not always lead to effective monitoring of the provision for nursery education. Overall the nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the pre-school were asked to update all policies and develop induction procedures to cover all policies and procedures including knowledge of the early learning goals. Since the last inspection many policies have been updated and staff and parents all sign to say they have read them.

The pre-school were also asked to improve the organisation of group activities to ensure appropriate support and challenges are provided to extend all children and to improve opportunities for children to recognise and use numbers to develop their mathematics skills during everyday activities. Since the last inspection almost all the staff are new. There has been no improvement in the nursery education for children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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

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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):

- increase the staff's knowledge and understanding of behaviour management to enable them to encourage children to remain focused and involved in the routine of the session
- ensure that the provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities fully supports the needs of the children and ensures that they make progress in all areas of their development
- ensure that staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities to enable them to deploy themselves sufficiently well to support all children, and ensure that the provision for nursery education is appropriately evaluated and monitored

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):

- increase the staff's knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage curriculum and how young children learn to enable them to promote children's learning in all areas
- re-organise the learning environment to ensure that an appropriate range of activities is provided to enable children to be independent learners who are involved in purposeful play
- evaluate and improve the system for planning and assessment, ensuring that assessments are accurate, are used to inform future planning and are clearly linked to the stepping stones for learning

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