

Yarnton Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	133975
Inspection date	20 June 2007
Inspector	Jan Leo
Setting Address	William Fletcher Primary School, Rutten Lane, Yarnton, Kidlington, Oxfordshire, OX5 1LW
Telephone number	01865 841327
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Registered person	Yarnton 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?

Yarnton Playgroup opened in 1969. It is a committee run group which operates from a self-contained unit within the grounds of William Fletcher Primary School in the village of Yarnton. There is an enclosed garden area for outside play. The setting is registered to accept a maximum of 16 children at any one time and there are currently 33 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 22 receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with special needs and English as an additional language.

The pre-school opens each weekday during term time, providing a morning and an afternoon session each day. The sessions operate from 08.45 until 11.30, and from 12.30 until 15.00. The children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are four staff who work with the children. The supervisor holds an early years qualification at level 3 and one member of staff holds a level 2 qualification. Two staff are working toward a relevant early years qualification.

The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about a healthy lifestyle because they spend their day in a clean environment, follow good practice regarding hygiene, and benefit from frequent bouts of fresh air and exercise. They wash their hands independently from an early age and young children happily ask for help with their personal care if needed. Snack time involves children sitting sociably at tables with brightly coloured, plastic cloths that staff keep scrupulously clean. The group employs a cleaner for the building and staff automatically mop up spills and wipe surfaces throughout the day to maintain a high level of hygiene. All staff have trained in first aid and they keep first aid boxes well stocked with up to date supplies in order to treat children's injuries appropriately. The staff make full use of the outdoor area to provide opportunities for children to play and learn in the fresh air. Children move confidently when running and climbing, and learn all about suitable clothing to protect their skin from the elements. All children get a warm welcome from staff on arrival, and most settle very quickly and feel secure within the setting. New and less confident children receive all the support they need to form close bonds with adults and become part of the group. Children have nutritious snacks of fruit, milk or water to boost energy levels and promote healthy eating. They eagerly discuss favourite foods as they munch on apple and raisins, learning some good table manners to equip them for later life. Staff do not provide plates however, and children eat directly from the tablecloth.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe because staff follow a secure entry system, provide a high level of supervision, and complete risk assessments in order to identify and address hazards. The outdoor area is clearly defined to contain children in an easily supervised space, and staff dutifully accompany children when moving around the site. For example, a member of staff leads the line when children visit the school pond, while another brings up the rear. Both count the children and remind them not to get too close to the water, helping children learn about danger in order to protect themselves when away from the site. Adults follow a daily checklist to prepare the grounds for the day and remove hazards before children arrive. Children play in bright and cheerful surroundings and have ample space to spread out safely as they play. They use a wide range of safe and suitable resources and help maintain them in good condition to learn to respect property. Children practice emergency evacuation regularly in order for the procedure to become familiar, and staff supplement fire drills with verbal instructions as a reminder of the evacuation process. There is a policy to keep a record of visitors to the site but staff do not routinely follow this procedure. In addition, children arriving late are not recorded promptly to provide an accurate record of who is on site at all times. All staff complete child protection training as part of their induction and have a sound understanding of their responsibility to safeguard children from harm. They have a clear child protection policy to ensure families know what action staff will take if they have concerns about a child, but the review of this policy is overdue and consequently, it does not reflect recent child protection changes.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Most children arrive happily and separate easily from their parents or carers. Staff provide an appropriate level of support to enable all children to join in the activities and learn to play

sociably. As a result, all children mix well and stay productively occupied throughout the day. Children choose what to do and work with different groups of friends, sharing ideas and taking turns fairly. They form close bonds with the staff and value the opportunity to join staff for planned activities, designed with appropriate challenges, to make learning fun. Staff and students join in free play without inhibitions and all thoroughly enjoy their day.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff work exceptionally well as a team, joining in activities with great enthusiasm to make learning fun. They tirelessly link learning throughout the curriculum to reinforce what children know, spontaneously taking advantage of children's unexpected interests, comments and ideas. As a result, the children learn through play, participate enthusiastically and show a high level of involvement in everything they do. Staff include an exciting range of practical activities at different levels and monitor what children can do in order to plan for their next steps. Some of the progress records have no dates making it difficult to assess children's rate of progress and help with early identification of areas requiring more focus.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is flourishing because the staff form very good relationships with the children and successfully help them to make friends. All mix well and confidently join others at both planned and free play activities. Children stick up for themselves during minor disputes and staff help them learn about the impact of their actions to prompt an apology when warranted and restore harmony. Most communicate clearly and speak confidently at circle time when joining in discussion and sharing ideas. The children talk about what they are doing and freely question what they do not understand. They enjoy books and some know what comes next in favourite stories. The children thoroughly enjoy map making to practise their mark making skills and possess good pencil control when outlining the local area and writing their name. Children show great interest in numbers. They count successfully as a group and some know what follows when dealing with double figures. Some are developing early calculation skills by for example, suggesting that they had 16 toilets in order for there to be one each. Staff make full use of map-making to develop understanding of positional language and reinforce what children know by giving directions during a walk to the school pond. Children's enthusiasm for learning about the natural and wider world is a result of the seamless links staff make when expanding conversations and interests. This makes sure all learning is relevant and memorable to the children. Children have free access to the computer and some need little help to work through the program of their choice. Use of technical equipment is limited, partly due to children becoming so engrossed in other interesting activities. The children thoroughly enjoy making models, such as sailboats to float in the water tray. All eagerly select their preferred containers for the boats and some understand why theirs does not float. Staff fail to extend the activity to help achieve floatation and give more able children experience of problem solving. Children have a good understanding of time and place by following a basic routine to know what comes next, and talking about events that are special to them. Staff make good use of the outdoor area to provide opportunities for children to develop their coordination and stamina. They run, jump and climb with ease, negotiating space successfully to avoid collisions. Children are beginning to understand the effect of exercise on their body and freely ask for drinks after running around. Children use both large and small equipment well in order to practice a variety of skills such as aiming 'sticky' balls at a target, bouncing a ball with one hand, and throwing carefully to 'shoot' a basket. They concentrate hard to master cutting with scissors but have a limited range of tools provided for construction, to help them explore the best tool for the job. Children regularly have a range of media to explore and giggle with staff as they dodge the stream of bubbles flowing down the slope of the playground during

water play outside. Others watch as staff squirt water from a bottle to write a child's names in very large letters across the playground. Some rapidly copy to create water patterns to their own designs. Children dress up and act out scenarios seen at home, caring for baby and washing clothes. Both children and staff sing together at set times of day and some children know the words of their favourite songs. All sing with gusto taking advantage of rhyming words to link sounds and letters, and they jump up and down excitedly as they clap rhythms in unison at a speedy tempo.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children feel valued because they receive a high level of attention. Staff give them choices, ask their opinions, and praise their efforts to raise their self esteem. Children with special needs receive the support they need to help them make good progress without being singled out. For example, staff discuss fruit at snack time, emphasising initial letter sounds with all who sit at the table. They strike up relevant conversations to encourage practice in forming letter sounds correctly when children have communication difficulties. All children behave well. They learn to share resources and receive support to solve disagreements. Some stick up for themselves confidently when others answer for them at register time saying 'you are not me' firmly but politely, determined to be independent. The partnership with parents and carers is good. Adults find staff easy to talk to, have access to all essential information and regular opportunities to help on a rota basis. This enables parents and carers to see first hand what their children do and become more involved in their children's learning. Staff hold social events to encourage adults to visit the setting and they make progress records readily available. Some of the policies are out of date, limiting their value. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children have a well-balanced day including adult led activities, time for free play, and opportunities to spend time both inside and outdoors. They receive a high level of supervision to keep them safe and learn about a healthy lifestyle in order to develop good habits for later life. The children form very good relationships with adults and their peers, and all benefit from the dedication and skill of the staff because they make learning fun. The staff work very well as a team and keep up to date by attending relevant training to continue their personal development. The committee gives staff their full support to ensure recruitment, supervision and monitoring systems are consistent and robust. All of the documentation, required by regulation, is in place but the formal review process is a little slow, resulting in some policies containing outdated information. Staff have a thorough understanding of the policies and practices of the setting but, at times, they compromise safety by focusing so intently on the activity programme, they fail to record information promptly and neglect some of the detail needed in the essential paperwork.

As far as the nursery education is concerned, the leadership and management of the provision are good. Children make good progress overall due to successful planning and preparation, interesting delivery of the activities, and high level of enthusiasm the staff have for their work. The committee relieves staff of some of the administrative burden by taking the lead for recruitment and staffing issues, and formalising policies to ensure consistency. They fully support ongoing personal development to raise standards and assist staff in supervising and

supporting the children whenever necessary. The committee has a very clear understanding of the responsibilities of their role and some members possess an exceptionally good working knowledge of the setting in operation. This helps create a valuable partnership resulting in children being very well served by the provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection, the group received one recommendation regarding the care aspect of the provision, and three to improve the nursery education at the setting. These recommendations required the provider to improve staff training records and ensure all staff attend child protection training; reduce the time children spend on the carpet for group discussion; provide more opportunities for children to select their own resources; and to encourage parents and carers to contribute to children's progress records.

All staff now attend child protection training, as soon as possible, once their appointment is confirmed and a record of training courses attended is held at the setting. In addition, child protection is covered as part of staff induction to make sure they know how to respond to concerns about the children in their care.

The daily routine has been reviewed and children now spend a few short periods sitting on the carpet for circle time rather than one lengthy period. This has helped children's concentration and improved behaviour.

Many of the resources are stored at low level and children now feel confident in accessing them without help. As a result, the children develop their ideas freely.

Staff continue to record children's progress using the Oxfordshire profile system and report forms. Staff now include a page for parents and carers to record their comments and share useful information to help with their children's learning and development.

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):

- keep a record of all visitors and make sure children are recorded on the register promptly, to give an accurate record of who is on site at all times
- update policies and practice documents regularly to ensure they contain all the required details and correct contact information

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):

- ensure profile entries are dated to provide a clear record of children's rate of progress and help in identifying areas of delayed 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