



Gosport Opportunity Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110526
Inspection date	28 November 2005
Inspector	Michelle Ann Parham
Setting Address	1 Phoenix Way, Rowner, Gosport, Hampshire, PO13 0BE
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Registered person	Gosport Opportunity Group
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Gosport Opportunity Group is an established pre-school and holiday play scheme, registered to look after a maximum of 26 children under 8 years of age. It is managed by a committee of interested volunteers, and has held charity status since its conception. Children aged between 2 and 5 years are in attendance during term time for sessional and full day care. The setting operates from 09:00 until 15:00.

The holiday play scheme is open to children from 3 to 7 years, and currently operates

during part of the summer holidays from 09:30 until 14:30. In addition it is open for part of the Easter holidays from 09:30 until 13:30.

There are currently 37 children under 5 years on roll. This includes 10 funded 3 year olds, and 5 funded 4 year olds. No children currently attend who have English as a second language. The group supports children with special needs and works closely with local schools, health professionals and providers of specialist care. There are eight staff employed on a full and part time basis to work with the children, the majority of whom hold relevant early years qualifications.

The group's admissions policy stipulates that all children are welcomed but that children with a special need are given priority. Transport, for a maximum of 9 children at any one time, is provided in the group's minibus to assist children to access the provision. A parent and toddler group operates from the building which enables parents and carers to share experiences and gain support.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise and weather permitting, benefit from regular outside play every session. In inclement weather the children are able to use the soft play room which includes a ball pit. Subsequently they have good opportunity to develop co-ordination and physical skills at the setting. Children handle tools and equipment well. For example, using a stapler for the first time, spooning flour carefully into the cake mixture or making their own parcels for the post office. They gain confidence and a sense of achievement in their efforts. Children negotiate their way well, stepping over play resources on the carpeted area and around the furniture in the setting. They have a good sense of space and show increasing control over their movements.

Children have a good understanding of personal hygiene and are becoming increasingly independent in their personal care. They know to wash their hands after using the toilet and before mealtimes and wash their own cup after drinks. Children know to put on their coats to keep warm for outside play and are beginning to gain increasing control in doing so. Their good health is promoted as practitioners have effective procedures, for example wearing disposable gloves to deal with accidents, providing separate disposable towels, using anti-bacterial spray to clean table tops and toilet areas and encouraging regular hand washing routines. Good procedures are in place for dealing with accidents and a high percentage of staff have a relevant first aid qualification. This ensures children are kept healthy and accidents and illness are dealt with effectively.

Children learn about healthy eating as they enjoy the nutritious fruits and savoury snacks the setting provides. Topics and general conversation promotes healthy lifestyles. They have fresh water throughout the session which they can access independently. This prevents them from becoming tired and de-hydrated and improves concentration. Practitioners have a good knowledge of children's individual

dietary requirements and effective procedures are in place to ensure they are addressed.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children have a safe, secure environment as the setting is self-contained and practitioners have identified and minimised all risks and hazards. Visitors to the group are announced via an alarm signal which notifies practitioners of someone entering the premises. Effective procedures are in place for the collection of children and arrangements are agreed beforehand with parents. Risk assessments are undertaken, including visits into the community to ensure hazards are identified and minimised. Practitioners are vigilant in their supervision of children and this is promoted because the setting offers a high staff-child ratio. This ensures children remain safe and secure. Furniture and equipment are of good quality, well maintained and conform to safety standards. This ensure they are safe to use and do not present a hazard to children.

Children are protected because senior practitioners have good experience and understanding of child protection. They have awareness of the different types of abuse and possible signs and symptoms that may indicate that a child was at risk. They are aware of their role and responsibility to protect children and of the agency to contact with concerns. Subsequently all procedures in place to promote the safety and welfare of children and ensure the setting meets this outcome effectively.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident in their relationships with the practitioners and each other. Following a settling-in period they attend the setting happily, enjoying play and learning opportunities. They know the routine well and settle quickly and confidently on arrival. They happily leave their parents and join in the selection of activities provided for them and are beginning to self select some stored play resources. This develops independence and responsibility.

Regular observations are undertaken and practitioners are extending their knowledge and working practice of the Birth to Three Matters framework. They link the framework effectively to plans and adapt activities for younger and less able children. This ensures that all children are supported and promotes their development into strong and healthy children who are skilful communicators and competent learners.

Practitioners talk to children about family and home life increasing children's sense of belonging and helping form secure and trusting relationships. Children develop good personal care skills as they access the toilets autonomously and gain increasing control in putting on their coats independently. They are beginning to work well in small groups as they co-operate and help each other when packing away activities and sorting equipment. Children are happy and engaged in their play, they are well

cared for due to practitioners understanding of their individual needs.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching is good. Children are making progress in their learning because the practitioners make good use of the stepping stones and early learning goals. They incorporate the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage into practice and children gain from the staff's knowledge and understanding of child development and how children learn. Verbal evaluations of activities are undertaken, however no formal written format is in place to assess success and improvement. Children's learning is promoted through practitioners open questioning and interest in the children. Practitioners organise the daily routines well and children have the opportunity to participate fully in a balanced programme which helps to promote their learning in all areas.

Children develop a positive attitude to their learning as they share in a range of practical activities, for example making letters, post bags and parcels for the post office and then going out into the community to post them back to the group. They choose from a range of resources to develop their skills, such as modelling and mark making using a variety of materials. Children gain an interest in numbers as they copy number lines, work with numerals and join in familiar rhyming songs.

Children express their ideas and imagination through a range of situations, such as role play in the post office, home corner or dressing up or with transport vehicles on the carpeted area. There are ample opportunities for children to explore and experiment with a variety of art materials as there is a designated art room. Children express enjoyment and pride in their creations often seeking out particular practitioners to show them to. Activities and resources that reflect diversity are in place, which helps children become aware of a wider society, developing self-esteem and respect for others.

Children have good opportunity to make marks, and a specific area is in place within the setting. Resources are also provided in the home and role play area which further extends children's learning and play. Children's spoken language is developing and progress is recorded in assessment files. Older children are confident to talk about their experiences at home, a birthday party they have attended or about what they think happens next in a story. They are happy to interact with their peers and with staff members. They also feel confident to speak when in a large group, or when playing with their friends. Children's levels of concentration are developing and the majority of the children enjoy listening to stories, both in groups and alone, in the comfortable book-corner. They have resources and opportunities that promote word and letter recognition as well as reading and linking sounds to letters, thus developing their literacy skills.

The children have good opportunities to learn about shape, size and numbers, thus gaining knowledge and mathematical ability. However, every day routines and activities do not encourage their calculating skills. For example, at mealtimes when counting out the cups and finding out how many more are needed or when adding spoonfuls of ingredients at baking activities. Children's curiosity and investigation skills are encouraged as they have some opportunity to explore and initiate their own

choices of play through independent access to resources. They enjoy design and using different materials in junk modelling. Children are gaining a good knowledge and understanding of the world. They explore their surroundings, finding out about spiders, butterflies and tadpoles, going out into the community, using interactive equipment and technology. They have a good sense of time and place as they adapt well to the routines of the day, often telling younger children that it is tidy up time and group time.

Good opportunities are in place for children to develop skills using a range of tools and materials. They enjoy creative play with glue, paints and play dough. They manipulate tools successfully such as ink and stamps, tape and scissors showing increased control and co-ordination. They use their imaginations well, enjoying role play opportunities on the carpeted area or in the home corner, pretending they are police officers or postal workers.

Practitioners work directly with the children for the majority of the time. Interaction is good; they use open questioning to encourage thinking and ensure all children are included. Practitioners work well to support learning through play and practical experiences. For example, through discussing phonics at meal and circle time to extending activities to visits into the community. They provide an environment which is organised and child centred.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are developing a strong sense of themselves as practitioners provide an environment where they are welcomed and encouraged to participate in all activities. They enjoy their time in the setting, gaining confidence and self esteem because practitioners praise and encourage effort and achievement. All children demonstrate a good sense of belonging as they respond to familiar adults and settle well into the daily routine. Children with special needs are supported particularly well during their time in the setting. Practitioners work closely with parents and other relevant professionals to ensure all children's individual needs are fully met. Activities and resources that reflect diversity are in place, this helps the children become aware of a wider society, thus developing self-esteem and respect for others.

Children's behaviour is good. They benefit from positive role models provided by practitioners and respond well to adult intervention and reminders to share or take turns, gaining an increased understanding of right and wrong. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the open, warm, welcome that families receive. Parents are given good information about the setting through notice boards and frequent newsletters. They are updated and informed of their children's learning and progress through discussion and termly reports and are able to view records of achievement on request. Parents are welcomed for their support and contribution to the group, as volunteer helpers or committee members and can attend at any time to discuss concerns. The group gives priority to children and families in need and works closely with parents and other professionals to

support the child and family unit as a whole. A complaints procedure is in place, however there is not currently a formal record of complaints that parents can see on request. This is a requirement of the group's registration.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management is good. A high percentage of practitioners are qualified and are encouraged to attend training workshops to develop their professionalism. There are effective procedures in place to ensure that only suitably vetted persons undertake personal care needs of children, and that sufficient practitioners are deployed correctly to support them. Regular monitoring and annual appraisal is undertaken by senior staff, which ensures practitioners training needs are identified development of work practice. This in turn has a positive impact for the children's learning and care. Practitioners work well as a team and they meet regularly to discuss working practice and children's needs. They have clear direction and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Procedures are in place for the induction of new practitioners. However, they do not currently cover all working practices and policies of the setting, which does not ensure consistency.

Practitioners have sufficient knowledge of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage to help children achieve and make good progress. They are in the early process of using the Birth to Three Matters framework ensures younger children are sufficiently supported and provided with care and learning opportunities to enhance their development.

Most policies and working procedures are in place. However, there are weaknesses in recruitment and vetting procedures which is a breach of regulation and could place children at risk. Group sizes and good ratios within the setting contribute to children's good health, safety and learning. Effective deployment of practitioners promotes positive relationships and ensures children's needs and individual routines are met. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was requested to develop a procedure to follow in the event of a child being lost, improve systems to record when visitors are present, develop induction of new staff to cover child protection, develop partnership with parents by making available a written statement on special needs which is consistent with current legislation and an incident record relating to behaviour.

The group has addressed all of the above issues, however still needs to ensure that the induction of practitioners is fully comprehensive. The improvements implemented so far ensure better partnership with parents and safety of children within the setting. Current induction of staff does not ensure good working practices are adhered to.

In regard to nursery education the group were requested to extend planning of activities for more able children, develop practitioners knowledge and understanding

of the early learning goals to link to planning of activities and assessment of children, improve staff appraisal system with regard to training needs and quality of teaching, extend opportunities for children to explore the written word, practice linking sounds and letters, talk about themselves and their own experiences and develop knowledge and understanding of the world.

The group have addressed all of the above issues. This has a positive impact on the quality of teaching and learning for the children and the development of practitioners understanding and skills.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 there are no complaints to report.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- provide a formal record of complaints made by parents, which can be seen on request
- ensure robust recruitment and vetting procedures are in place for staff
- further develop current induction of new staff to cover all working practices and policies of the group.

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):

- introduce further opportunities for calculating

- formalise assessment of activities to include written evaluation for success and improvement

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk