

Layham Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251554
Inspection date	05 June 2007
Inspector	Deirdra Keating
Setting Address	Village Hall, Layham, IPSWICH, SUFFOLK, IP7 5LZ
Telephone number	07708 428767
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Registered person	Layham 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?

Layham Playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the playgroup. It opened in 1975 and operates from the village hall in Layham.

The Playgroup is open from 09:30 to 12:15 on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday morning during term time. A lunch club is available on a Monday and a Thursday until 13:15. The children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 22 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 15 receive funding for early education. The setting supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The Playgroup currently employ six members of staff. Of these, four hold early year's qualifications. 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 health is promoted well because staff follow sound and consistent procedures that are documented and shared with parents. Clear policies underpin all areas of practice and parents are kept updated of current issues. An informative notice board provides guidance on communicable diseases and sun protection. Children understand good health and hygiene practices because staff ensure that they wash their hands thoroughly after using the toilet and before snacks. Children are protected well from accidents as two members of staff have first aid training. A fully stocked first aid box is easily accessible and the contents are regularly checked and documented. Accident and medication records are meticulously maintained and all consents are correctly sought to ensure that children can receive the best care should they have an accident or minor emergency.

Children gain a very good understanding of healthy eating through their involvement in the preparation of food. They are actively involved in preparing the morning snack in a clean kitchen where high standards are maintained by staff who have attended food hygiene training. Clear guidance and cleaning rotas are displayed on the wall to ensure that good hygiene practice is followed at all times. Snacks feature a good range of fresh fruit, cheese, breadsticks and rice cakes. Children benefit from the healthy and nutritious foods that are varied and well presented. Staff work very closely with parents to ensure that all individual dietary requirements are carefully recorded and respected. Children confidently select their plates and cups as they sit and enjoy a relaxed and social snack time where adults take time to sit and talk to the children. Fresh drinking water is available at all times for children to independently access. This ensures that children are well hydrated throughout the session. Children rest and sleep in a pop up tent that provides a quiet and cosy area. However, this does not provide adequate space for the number of children who attend the group to rest and sleep according to their needs.

Children have the benefit of lots of fresh air as they have free access to a small appealing garden area that is located at the back of the building. Fields and trees surround the garden and provide a natural and peaceful environment in which children can gain exercise. They spend a good proportion of time outside where they enjoy a range of activities including hoops, balls and games. Nature walks and trips to the park and farm help children understand the benefit of a healthy and active lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm welcoming environment that is safe and well maintained. The hall is cosy and colourful with creative use made of space, giving defined areas in which children can learn and play. Resources are stored for children to self-select which promotes their independence and decision making. A good and varied range of equipment provides children with a balance of activities. Children are interested and stimulated by the toys on offer that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Equipment is well maintained and checked regularly to ensure it is safe. Staff take positive and effective steps to minimise any potential hazards to children. Fire prevention equipment is all in place and staff carry out regular fire drills which are recorded and evaluated to ensure children understand what to do in the event of a fire. Health and safety checks are conducted daily and the premises are safe and

secure. Outings are risk assessed and written permission is sought from parents. Children learn about keeping safe through themes such as safety week and other relevant topics.

Children are protected well from potential harm because staff are vigilant and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the protection of children. A very good ratio of staff have undertaken recent safeguarding training. This ensures that staff have a good understanding of how to put the appropriate procedures into place should a concern arise about a child. The designated child protection coordinator ensures that procedures are up to date and information is clearly displayed for parents. A concise written statement underpins all areas of practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the setting and are happy, settled and secure. They are warmly welcomed by friendly staff who are intuitive of their needs. Younger children's learning is promoted well through activities adapted from the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Children learn about shapes and colours using tactile materials and wooden bricks. Younger children use all their senses to explore good quality equipment. Special low-level display boards with well known children's characters and three dimensional numbers provide reflective and sensory experiences that children can explore using all of their senses. Sessions are fun and varied with a good balance of activities that help children progress in all areas of development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff provide good opportunities for interesting and well planned activities using their knowledge of the Foundation Stage. However, not all staff have enough knowledge of the Foundation Stage. The accommodation has been adapted to provide a rich learning environment, which has been creatively extended to the outside area. The session is well paced with a good balance of adult-initiated and child-initiated activities. Staff contribute to the comprehensive planning at regular meetings which clearly identifies learning intentions for children. Focused activity plans outline intentions and staff evaluate the children's learning during activities by making observations. An effective key worker system enables staff to assess and monitor individual children's progress. Detailed information collected during home visits enables staff to determine children's starting points in line with frameworks that are relevant to their age and stage of development. Stimulating and interesting activities are planned to capture children's interest and ensure that activities are inclusive to all children. Staff make the most of all activities and extend children's thinking by asking open-ended questions. They consolidate children's learning well by following activities such as a windy walk with a parachute game and discussion about the weather. Step by step profiles built on written observations show children's progress and ensure that children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children have a good attitude to learning and are purposefully engaged throughout the session. They are encouraged to show care for their environment by being special helpers. Children eagerly and effectively tidy up showing care for one another as they work well together at tidy up time. Children operate well in the setting and show increasing independence as they manage to put on their coats and hats before going out to play. The children self-register on arrival giving them a good sense of belonging and encouraging them to know that text carries a meaning. Children are making very good progress in their speaking and listening skills. They speak with emerging self-confidence at group time where they enthusiastically act out parts

in a story. Skilled staff bring the story to life using props and engaging the children as characters. The children relish this activity revisiting the story corner later during the session where they independently enjoy the books using the props.

Children are making good progress in their mathematical development. The room has many numbers and displays that are sensory and tactile. They enjoy a broad range of colourful equipment and activities which enable them to learn about shape, space and weight. Children count regularly as part of their daily routine. They count each other at snack time and develop their mathematical language as they add two groups together. Children sort shapes in a small group and recognise the similarities. They count fruit in the role play and begin to recognise numbers using a till and price tags. Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them through a range of different activities. An outside area that is extremely well resourced enables children to explore natural materials outside in the fresh air where their curiosity and interest is enhanced. Children plant vegetables and observe how they grow. An appealing digging box with soil and plant pots enables them to experiment with different materials. A good selection of tools are available, including magnifying glasses and illustrated information sheets. Children show a good interest in IT and confidently operate the computer. Photographs taken on the digital camera during the morning session are loaded on to the computer to create a slide show which promotes interest and discussion as children recall the mornings activities.

There are many opportunities for children's creative and imaginative play. Children focus intently on small figures and ships that are displayed in a transparent water tray. They use one object to represent another as they improvise in their imaginative play. Children use a good range of musical instruments where staff help them explore different sounds and tempo. A wide range of physical activities helps children develop their confidence and skills. Children manipulate play dough using various tools with precision and control. They use finger puppets and thread cotton reels in order to develop hand-eye coordination. Action songs encourage children to use all of their bodies and follow instruction as they work as a group. Large scale activities such as an obstacle course and group games enable children to move in a range of different ways.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The children in this setting are valued and have an extremely good sense of belonging. Special books made up of large photographs of the children give each child a personal sense of meaning and belonging. Staff actively seek comprehensive information in a tailored home visit to ensure they can best meet individual needs and build detailed profiles. An extremely effective key worker system ensures that each child has a staff member who takes a special interest in them. Children are encouraged to discuss their home lives, this helps them feel accepted and part of the wider community. All children are included as knowledgeable and experienced staff support and adapt activities extremely well to promote full inclusion and provide one to one support. Different sized groups encourage children to socialise and build relationships with each other. Children learn about other cultures and beliefs through exciting hands on experiences where they are encouraged to express their individual ideas. They celebrate a wide range of festivals including Chinese New Year, Divali and many traditional days. Themes and topics develop children's understanding of other countries and customs. A broad range of resources such as figures, games and dressing up clothes are used to reflect positive images of wider society and help children understand their differences and similarities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The setting has an extremely positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Knowledgeable staff have undertaken training to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This enables them to meet individual needs extremely well complying with the required code of practice. Resources have been creatively adapted to incorporate individual needs, picture time lines of the session's routine and pictures of all activities enable all children to understand what happens next. Staff have a good understanding of how to best support children working closely with parents and utilising relevant and professional support in order to meet the needs of each child. Comprehensive policies underpin practice and provide specific guidelines to behavioural expectations within the setting. There are a few simple rules which are displayed for the children. Children's behaviour is extremely good and minor disputes are dealt with appropriately by thoughtful staff who take time to listen to children and establish the cause of the dispute. Staff give calm and meaningful explanations and use strategies such as a timer. Children are given plenty of warning in order that they can finish activities of their choice before they tidy up. Staff use positive reinforcement and give good explanations about the ground rules. Any behavioural incidents are confidentially noted and shared with parents at the end of the session.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents are warmly welcomed into the setting by approachable and friendly staff and are clearly relaxed and at home. Staff proactively involve parents in all aspects of the group. Parents are extremely helpful and involved in maintenance of the hall and fundraising events. Parents are also invited in to share children's records and speak to staff. Their views are valued by staff who have put out a suggestion box with printed slips to encourage parental comments and feedback. A notice board provides comprehensive information for the parents including relevant contact numbers for Ofsted. Good information is given to parents regarding children's progress towards the early learning goals. Photographs are shared with parents at the end of every session which enables them to see their children accessing the play based curriculum. Staff are readily on hand to provide more details and give parents and carers a good understanding of how their children are progressing. Detailed and informative written agreements provide details of children's needs in order they can be looked after according to their parent's wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by suitable adults who are motivated and have had all necessary checks to ensure children's safety. Clear policies effectively underpin all areas of practice. High adult to child ratios ensure that children receive good support. Children's care learning and play is supported well by the procedures in the operational plan. Arrival and collection times are recorded correctly and safely managed by careful staff. All documents are in place to support the smooth running of the group. These are regularly reviewed and stored securely. The supervisor has a good understanding of the National Standards and her responsibility to comply with the details of the registration.

The leadership and management is good. The group is led by a strong and dedicated supervisor. Staff work closely with the voluntary committee to form a cohesive and dynamic team. Regular staff meetings ensure that staff contribute towards the curriculum planning and have individual areas of responsibility. Reflective staff review each session to ensure that plans are evaluated and children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff deployment is well thought out and documented to ensure that all staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities. An effective appraisal process ensures that staff training needs are highlighted and pursued. Staff work closely with an early years advisory teacher to ensure that teaching methods are

effective and inclusive. Good links with the primary school reception teacher enable children to settle well into school. Staff tailor transitional plans to ensure children's transition is monitored and evaluated. All required documentation and consents are in place and overall the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to ensure that children can independently access the writing area. This has now been done and children are making good progress in their mark making and early writing.

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.

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 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 soft and comfortable area for children to rest and sleep according to their needs

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):

- continue to develop new staffs knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage.

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