



## Chislet And District Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127103
<b>Inspection date</b>	21 October 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Tracy Larnach
<b>Setting Address</b>	Village Hall, Hoath, Canterbury, Kent, CT3 4LA
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<b>Registered person</b>	Chislet & District Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Chislet and District Playgroup opened in 1975. It operates from Hoath Village Hall, near Canterbury, Kent. The playgroup has access to a main hall, kitchen and toilets. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. It is open

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 09.15 to 11.45 term time only. There are currently 23 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports children with special educational needs and staff have experience working with children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs 5 staff. Of these, 4 of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The playgroup receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to a clean environment where they are beginning to learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care. Children automatically wash their hands after visiting the toilet and know this helps to prevent the spread of germs. However, they do not learn the importance of washing hands at other times. The spread of infection is reduced by having a 'sick child policy' and following good cleaning procedures. In addition, children use liquid soap and hand dryers. They independently use and dispose of tissues.

Children regularly enjoy activities that contribute to their health and develop their physical skills. They move around the classroom with confidence, showing good spatial awareness. Children participate in exercise sessions where they move their bodies in different ways. The staff talk to the children about their hearts beating faster and resting after exercise but do not ask if they are thirsty. Children eagerly access the outside area and clearly enjoy physical play. They become involved in hide and seek and chasing games and use the equipment available. However, physical challenges are not monitored to ensure the more able children are sufficiently challenged.

The children's record forms detail any food allergies so that staff are aware of dietary requirements. In addition, all staff are trained to administer an epi-pen. As a result, they are able to act in the children's best interest should an allergic reaction occur. Staff have made changes to the snacks served to promote healthy eating. Children enjoy fruit and biscuits or cheese and savoury biscuits. However, staff do not consistently sit with the children at snack time. This means there are few opportunities to socialise or talk to them about what they are eating and foods that are good for them. Children have a choice of milk or water at snack time to keep them hydrated. They are offered water during outside play in warm weather, at other times they must ask, subsequently they may remain thirsty.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is inadequate.

The toys and equipment are clean and well maintained. Staff members check and

clean them regularly so that children are able to play freely, and safely, with them. The premises are safe and secure, with systems in place to prevent access to the building when the group is operating. For example, a chain is kept on the door while the group is in session. The staff have a checklist to reduce risks; however, there is no documentation to show checks have been done or the time frame for correcting identified hazards. For example, the locks in the toilets can not be opened from the outside which poses a potential risk to the children of becoming locked in. A 'lost and uncollected policy' contributes to keeping the children safe. Procedures for outings are carefully thought out, but are not in writing. Staff take first aid equipment, a mobile phone and contact numbers along with them. Therefore they are able to act in the best interest of a child if necessary.

A fire evacuation plan is displayed and appropriate fire equipment is in place. Fire drills are practised so that the children know the evacuation procedure. However, this is not done enough to ensure all children are familiar with the procedure to ensure their safety. There is not enough staff with an appropriate first aid qualification to ensure there is always someone on duty suitably qualified. As a result children's safety is potentially compromised should they have an accident or become ill. In addition, appropriate parents' permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is not kept on file.

Staff members are familiar with signs of abuse and neglect. They know what to do if they are concerned about a child's welfare and can act in the child's best interest.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is inadequate.

Children arrive happily and quickly become involved in the activities on offer. Staff encourage and praise the children while they play. Two staff have attended an initial training day for the Birth to three matters framework and await further training. There is no separate planning for children under three years. Planned activities are the same for all children and often too directed by staff. As a result, some of the activities do not capture the children's interest and enthusiasm and are not developmentally appropriate for the younger children. For example, the children were asked to stick sycamore seeds on pre-cut hedgehog shapes. In addition, all children are encouraged to participate in group activities. If they 'break away' there is nothing for them to do but run. This is disruptive for the older children.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and the children's learning is inadequate. The children are happy and enjoy coming to the playgroup. However, the planning is not adequately meeting their needs. There is a lack of assessment and planning based on observations of what children can do. This does not ensure adequate progress towards the early learning goals. Assessment is poor. Staff do not assess what children know and can do when they start playgroup. In addition, there is no clear strategy for checking their progress as they take part in activities. Children's records are poor, many are undated or not up-to-date, they do not present a clear picture of whether children make enough progress in relation to their starting points.

Children speak confidently to their peers and adults. They enjoy books. When staff are deployed in the book area children delight in listening to stories in small groups. As a result children are developing a love of books. There is little print around the setting so children do not gain an understanding that print carries meaning. Opportunities for mark making are available; for example, wipe off boards, paper and pens. However, these do not always capture the children's attention and opportunities to encourage writing for a purpose in the context of children's role play are not consistently in place. For example, writing opportunities were only in the role play area on the first day of inspection. Children enjoy singing and join in enthusiastically. They particularly enjoy singing the nursery rhymes they learnt during the recent 'nursery rhyme' theme. Children count at register time and when they come in from outside. The staff talk to them about size and space. For example, as a child tried to fit a large doll into a small pram and how many children could comfortably fit around the table to make witches hats. However, overall insufficient attention to numbers and counting, and to shape, space and measures is provided to extend children's understanding through practical activities. Children have opportunities to find out about the wider world through walks, trips to the park and annual events such as the Harvest Festival. In addition, staff provide children with opportunities in the outdoor area to dig and grow plants to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. The staff provide a range of activities for the children outside. They enjoy using magnets, watering plants and using magnifying glasses as well as role play and ride on toys. However, outside is not included on the planning to ensure that the children get the most out of this area. The role play area is changed daily. Children enjoy pretend play particularly when staff are deployed in this area to support them. For example, they dress up pretending to be community helpers, listening to their hearts with stethoscopes, or using radios to communicate with. Opportunities for children to explore a range of media and materials to develop their creativity and skills in using tools and materials are presented daily. For example, the children enjoy play dough, easel painting, glue, sand and water. However, although the children enjoy these experiences they are occupied rather than challenged in their play and experimentation. Staff provide activities without a clear understanding about what children can gain from them or how they can be adapted to suit children of different ages and abilities. Staff interact with children kindly and sensitively, but often fail to challenge them to think and to learn new skills and ideas. This means children do not achieve as much as they could.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is inadequate.

Children are generally happy and settle well within the group. Staff praise children and are mostly kind and caring in their interactions towards them. However, because of the structure of the day children are expected to sit in group time for too long and as a result a few of them become bored and restless. There are times, for example during group times, when strategies for dealing with inappropriate behaviour are not positive. For example, when children are held on laps or not given clear explanations. This is confusing for the children.

Children are given opportunities to help them take care of the environment; for

example, helping to tidy away the toys both inside and outside. They are becoming independent as they help themselves to drinks from the dispensers at snack time, select activities and visit the toilet. Toys reflective of other cultures and that depict positive images are limited to dolls and books. However, holidays and festivals from other cultures are celebrated. This helps the children gain an understanding of others. Staff are proactive about providing care for all children. The special educational needs coordinator works with the parents and outside agencies to assist in developing education plans so that the children's needs are met. Overall children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff greet parents warmly and welcome them into the setting. Notice boards and a prospectus inform parents about the nursery. A parent rota and events such as the a 'Halloween coffee morning' enable parents to become involved. Parents are aware they may view their children's records. However, the records consist of few observations and do not link them to them stepping stones, consequently they do not inform parents of progression towards the early learning goals.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. There is an induction system in place to ensure that staff are familiar with procedures. However, it is missing health and safety and child protection. Although staff prepare the environment with a range of activities for the children to select from, the organisation of the session is not meeting all of the children's needs. Systems are not adequate to ensure children are not alone with staff waiting for their police check, this means there is a potential risk to the children. Staff interact with the children, but the learning is incidental as staff use opportunities as they arise. For example, three children enjoyed looking at a letter book, they were making sounds linking them to their names. The staff member interacted with them but nothing was recorded in their records. The group is run by a committee. However, there is no information in the setting about the committee or evidence that Ofsted has been notified of changes to this committee. The certificate of registration is displayed with the groups insurance. However, in order to make a complaint the parents would have to seek out the policy book. The complaints record and robust procedures for recruiting are still to be developed.

Leadership and management is inadequate. The manager works with the staff, who are happy as a team and work well together. Overall, the planning is not adequately documented to enable staff to be clear about the objectives. The educational programme is based on themes and then activities are listed in each of the six areas of learning. There is no reference to the stepping stones. Consequently, the planned activities are not based on children's interests, what they already know and what they need to learn next. The manager has begun a system to review and document activities that the children enjoyed and what went well in the session. However, they have not developed a rigorous system to review, monitor or evaluate the education programme.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the playgroup received five actions, four recommendations and four key issues for the education programme.

The actions were to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection; ensure a daily attendance record is kept; ensure that all records are available for inspection at all times; obtain written permission from parents before administering medication to children and ensure that the registered person and all adults who have access to children are vetted. The staff have a satisfactory knowledge of child protection, daily attendance records are kept up to date and appropriate procedures are in place regarding the administration of medication. With the exception of committee details, all records are readily accessible. These all help to safeguard the welfare of the children. However, adequate procedures to ensure unvetted adults are not alone with children are not established, which leaves both children and staff vulnerable.

The recommendations were to develop and implement recruiting and induction procedures; develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the National Standards; devise a system for planning for children under three years and request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment. Recruiting procedures are in line with the Pre-school Learning Alliance procedures; however, there is still some missing elements from the induction checklist. In addition, staff continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of the National Standards. As a result staff are not adequately informed to ensure that children's needs are met. Written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment has not been acquired, as a result there may be a delay in getting a child appropriate medical care should this be necessary. Planning is not completed for children under three, resulting in some inappropriate activities being presented to this age group.

The key issues from the last education inspection were to increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping-stones towards the early learning goals; continue to develop effective use of observations; ensure the routine and pace of the session effectively retains children's interest and motivation, particularly during whole group times and to ensure challenges set for more able children are sufficient. There has been no progress in addressing these key issues.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

A concern was raised in Sept 2004 relating to National Standard 12, Partnership with parents. Ofsted investigated these concerns by conducting a telephone interview with the provider. They were satisfied that the provider had taken appropriate steps to address the issue. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 care are inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

### WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

#### The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure that unvetted adults are not left alone with the children
- ensure there are enough staff trained in first aid to ensure children's safety in the event of an emergency
- develop risk assessments to ensure children are safe
- ensure appropriate planning for the under threes with the use of Birth to three matters
- develop positive strategies to manage behaviour.

These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

#### The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping-stones towards the early learning goals in all six curriculum areas
- ensure the routine and pace of the sessions, effectively retains children's interest and motivation particularly during whole group times
- ensure challenges set for more able children are sufficient
- develop rigorous systems for monitoring reviewing and evaluating the educational programme
- develop effective use of assessment in order to identify children's next steps in learning and develop the planning to include what the children are expected to learn and how staff will differentiate to develop individual children's progress.



These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)