

# Station House Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

---

**Unique Reference Number** 302864

**Inspection date** 30 May 2007

**Inspector** Angela Howard

**Setting Address** Station House, Lidget Lane, Thurnscoe, Rotherham, South Yorkshire,  
S63 0BX

**Telephone number** 01709 880682

**E-mail** stationhouse2000@yahoo.co.uk

**Registered person** Station House Playgroup

**Type of inspection** Childcare

**Type of care** Sessional 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk).

## THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Station House Playgroup was registered 1992. It is a voluntary charity organisation which is managed by a voluntary committee. The setting is located within the Station House in Thurnscoe, in the borough of Barnsley. Children access a large playroom, computer and quiet room and toilet facilities on the ground floor of the building. The outdoor play area is to the rear of the building. Children attend for a variety of sessions from the local and surrounding area.

The group is registered to care for a maximum of 15 children aged two years to five years in the playgroup and 16 children aged five to eight years at the out of school care. The playgroup open five sessions per week during school term time. Sessions are from 09.30 to 11.30 Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday morning and also Monday afternoon 13.00 to 15.00. The holiday play care operates Monday to Friday 08.00 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year and out of school care Monday to Friday 15.00 to 18.00 term time only.

There are currently 39 children on roll aged two to eight years. There are six members of staff, five of whom have appropriate childcare qualifications. There are also four regular volunteers who work in the playgroup and after school club.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because they are cared for in a clean and comfortable environment. Children's personal hygiene skills are fostered appropriately and staff set good examples of hygiene for children to follow. Children are independent in their personal care as they freely access hand washing facilities before eating and after outdoor play. Effective measures are in place to reduce cross-infection as children use liquid soap and paper towels. Arrangements for first aid meet requirements and protect children.

Children are beginning to understand the benefits of a healthy diet. Posters around the room promote healthy eating and some of the options offered at snack times are healthy options. For example, cheese and biscuits, noodles and toast. However, the range and variety is limited, for example, fruit is not routinely offered. Children are provided with drinks at snack and mealtimes but do not have access to fresh drinking water throughout the session. Appropriate records show that children's dietary requirements and parents' wishes are adhered to.

A variety of physical activities is offered whenever the weather permits. Children enjoy playing football, bat and ball, skipping and hopscotch, and they move their bodies very skilfully to keep hula hoops in motion. Younger children attending the playgroup enjoy manoeuvring ride-on toys and moving to action songs and rhymes. This results in children gaining appropriate control of their bodies and improves their physical skills.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff identify and minimise risks for children in the setting, according to the ages of the children attending, to provide a safe environment. Rigorous health and safety policies and risk assessments are used daily and appropriate action is taken to remove any hazards identified. However, the risk assessment for outdoors is not as comprehensive as indoors. It is clear there are some safety issues with regards to the outdoor play area. For example, there are gaps in the fencing, covers missing from drains, large bushes of nettles are growing in the play area and the grassed area is not routinely checked for bottles and cans. Staff ensure children's safety outdoors by positioning themselves near the hazards. Therefore, children remain relatively safe but interaction between staff and children outdoors is very limited due to their supervisory role.

Good quality resources are easily accessed, allowing children to make choices in a safe manner. Children's toys and equipment are carefully monitored to make sure they remain safe and appropriate for their age and stage of development.

Staff have a sound understanding of child protection procedures, which ensures children are protected from harm. There are appropriate procedures and documents in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel a sense of belonging at the setting and are secure and happy in their surroundings. They are eager to attend and happily part from parents and carers because they are cared for by friendly staff. Children respond well to the adults' calm, quiet approach and their clear explanations and involvement in activities. Due to the high ratio of staff, at times children have one to one with staff to play card games.

Staff plan a reasonable range of activities according to the children's ages and stages of development. However, although staff have a sound understanding of how children learn and develop, they only have limited awareness of the different frameworks to support children's learning. For example, staff can discuss the 'Birth to three matters' framework but do not implement it. A basic range of adult-led and child-initiated activities maintain children's interest throughout the session. Assessment records are very basic and are not used effectively to identify children's next steps in their development.

Children are sufficiently confident to work independently or in groups. They work independently weaving coloured paper and change the activity themselves to folding paper to make snakes. This leads to children asking for a box and they make a snake house. Children find a quiet area to play card games in pairs or select drawing materials and colour pictures they have brought from home. Therefore, children are generally engaged in purposeful play and select and carry out some activities independently.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are warmly welcomed into the setting by staff who are sensitive to their individual needs. They feel good about themselves as they are encouraged by staff to make choices about their play and to have a positive self-image and respect for others. For example, when building the snake house, children ask the staff member for help; she then guides the children to think and solve their problem skilfully and as a team. Therefore, children begin to recognise the skills of their peers and work together cooperatively.

Good strategies are in place to ensure the effective management of children's behaviour. Children are very well behaved and have a sound knowledge and understanding of the boundaries and expectations of the group. They have played an active part in setting the group's rules and understand the need to show care and concern for others. Therefore, children are encouraged to behave well, share and take turns, and they receive constant praise for their efforts and achievements.

Children have equal access to the resources, which are not gender-stereotyped. A suitable range of activities help children to understand and learn about different backgrounds and beliefs. Regular visitors to the group, such as the community police, dentist and members of the local youth club successfully introduce children to the wider community. Books, posters and role play equipment effectively promote positive images and diversity.

Ongoing verbal communication ensures that parents are kept up to date about their child's care. Staff make parents feel welcome and obtain plenty of information about children's individual needs to help them settle. This clearly contributes to the children's overall well-being and continuity of care.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the group is flexible and effective. Staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities and have accessed appropriate training to do their jobs well. Children clearly benefit from the suitable daily routine, enabling them to participate in a range of activities that interest them. They are relaxed and happy and are beginning to initiate and progress their own play as they interact successfully with peers and staff.

All required documentation is in place, retained and stored to maintain confidentiality. Written policies are appropriate to the setting and are reviewed regularly. There are rigorous procedures in place for the vetting of staff and volunteers. However, the details recorded about criminal record checks are very basic and visitors to the setting are not routinely recorded. Space and resources are used appropriately to meet the needs of all the children and high staffing ratios ensure staff are deployed effectively. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection three actions were raised. They all related to the reviewing of documentation. There are now robust procedures in place to ensure children are protected from people who are not vetted. Staff complete regular risk assessments and identify any action taken and the child protection procedure contains appropriate information should an allegation be made against a member of staff. This promotes children's safety and well-being. One recommendation was made at the last inspection to improve nappy changing facilities. There is now in place appropriate changing facilities. This promotes children's health.

## **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**

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.

## **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):

- ensure children have free access to fresh drinking water at all times and improve the range of healthy options at snack times

- ensure risks and hazards are identified outdoors and reduced effectively
- extend the range of planned activities and experiences for children, appropriate for their ages and stages of development
- consider ways of improving the recording of children's progress to plan the next steps in their development
- ensure required records contain sufficient information to show staff and volunteers' suitability.

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