



Furzedown Family Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY286830
Inspection date	16 January 2006
Inspector	Tracy Maria Clarke / Judith Mary Scott
Setting Address	Upper Graveney School Site, Welham Road, London, SW17 9BU
Telephone number	0208 672 6924
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Registered person	Furzedown Family Centre Management Committee
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?

Furzedown Family Centre were registered in 2004 and are run by a management committee.

The playgroup takes place in a self-contained premises in Tooting, South West London, and is situated within the grounds of Graveney Secondary School. The area is well served by transport facilities and local amenities are within close walking distance.

Children have access to 2 main play areas, which they can freely access throughout the session. Although there is no self-contained outside play space, children use the school playground every day for outside play.

The playgroup are registered to care for 24 children aged from 2 to under 5 years during the term time, and may also care for children up to the age of 8 years during school holidays, although this service is currently not being provided. There are 2 playgroup sessions which are run each day; one from 09.30 to 12.00 and one from 12.45 to 15.15. There are currently 24 children on roll for the morning session, and 13 children on roll for the afternoon session, of whom 14 in total are in receipt of nursery funding. There are no children who have special educational needs, although the group are supporting children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 6 staff who are employed to work at the centre, of whom 2 hold a relevant childcare qualification. All other staff are in the process of undertaking National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ3) in childcare and education.

The centre are members of the Wandsworth Primary Play Association (WPPA) and they receive ongoing support from them. In addition they access training run by the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about healthy eating as they are provided with foods during snack time which are healthy, such as raw vegetables, fresh fruit, crackers and cheese. Their health is well maintained as staff keep effective records. They work closely with parents to ensure they know children's individual needs and are familiar with children's allergies, medical conditions and dietary needs. There are 2 members of staff who hold first aid certificates and two other staff are shortly due to undertake this training. As a result, they are able to ensure that children receive appropriate medical care when necessary.

Children have a positive awareness of good hygiene, which is gained through familiar routines and practices. For example, children independently access the bathroom, washing their hands after the sponge painting activity and before snack time. Staff and volunteers maintain children's health and reduce the risk of cross infection by maintaining a clean, warm and welcoming play environment, and undertaking good hygiene practices. For example, before snack time the tables are wiped with anti-bacterial spray, whilst kitchen surfaces and chopping boards are kept clean.

Children's physical development is encouraged well. Children learn to negotiate the indoor climbing frame and slide, with younger children receiving good support from staff. Daily indoor activities also encourage children's skills as they crawl through tunnels, balance on beams and throw and catch bean bags. Once a week, children take part in music and movement sessions where they move and stretch their bodies in a range of ways, developing their control and co-ordination. Children enjoy moving

their bodies with imagination and expression during action rhymes, clapping their hands, shaking their bodies and hopping up and down as they sing 'sleeping bunnies'. Children are encouraged to develop a positive attitude towards daily exercise as they play outside every day; weather permitting. They learn to manoeuvre bikes and buggies around pathways and up and down slopes. For example, children know they must turn the bike quickly as they approach the bottom of the slope to avoid obstacles.

Children use a range of equipment to encourage their hand and eye co-ordination and fine motor skills. They mould, pat and pour wet and dry sand, and transfer water from one container to another. They use construction resources to build and design, and use their hands to mix the ingredients to make play dough. Children persevere well when moving the pieces around to complete the puzzles and are developing good pencil control when accessing pencils, chalk and crayons to draw and mark make. Staff organise the space well so that children can move freely around both rooms, and have space to play with resources on the floor. They use tools such as rolling pins, plastic knives and stencils, during creative play. However, more advanced tools are not freely available for older children, to enable them to acquire and develop their skills further.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised through effective risk assessment procedures. The manager has undergone health and safety training, and she ensures that staff are able to keep children safe. Regular written risk assessments have ensured that hazards are identified and that action has been taken to minimise them, or ensure that they are made inaccessible to children. For example, the manager highlighted the accidents occurring on the slide and so an additional mat was purchased and staff increased their supervision of this area. Security arrangements also ensure that children are kept safe. For example, parents and visitors must ring the bell to gain access to the premises, and at the beginning and end of each session a member of staff stands at the door and will only let children leave with a known adult. The premises provide a safe and secure environment for children, although some areas have not been well maintained.

Children have access to a range of toys and equipment which are safe, of good quality and developmentally appropriate. These are organised so that children are able to make independent choices and staff encourage children to use them safely. For example, when a child goes on the climbing frame just before snack time they are reminded that they must not climb on it without adult supervision. Children are encouraged to develop an awareness of keeping themselves and others safe through effective discussion and role modelling, with staff demonstrating to children how to use toys and equipment safely. For example, when children begin to play an impromptu action song, the staff help them to clear toys away from the floor so that children won't hurt themselves when they lie down.

Children's wellbeing is safeguarded due to staff's knowledge of child protection. All

staff are aware of the signs of neglect or abuse, and know the necessary procedures to be followed if they have concerns about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The manager has undertaken training in the 'Birth to Three Matters' framework and as a result, the staff team are aware of the experiences and activities that younger children need. They ensure that everyday planned activities enable younger children to explore and communicate through their senses. For example, children place paint all over their hands and the paper, relishing the feel of the paint as they smooth it across the paper. There are also a lot of opportunities for children to communicate through pretend play, singing, shared stories and music and movement, and to represent their feelings and ideas in a variety of ways.

Children are provided with good support to encourage them to separate from their main carer. For example, several children bring in toy comforters from home, and staff gradually encourage them to leave the comforter on a shelf and develop confidence to join in the activities. Children play happily together selecting resources independently and linking up with other children to enjoy and share games and toys. For example, small groups of children play with the cars, taking turns to move them up and down the garage, whilst two children put on hats from the dressing up area and pretend to be policemen. Children communicate well using language to share their thoughts, feelings and ideas and enjoy singing a range of songs, joining in with action rhymes. They are confident in their relationships with staff and are given good levels of support and praise, which encourages their sense of wellbeing and makes them feel secure. Children enjoy being creative, playing with water and sand and using construction resources to represent everyday objects.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound awareness of the foundation curriculum and plan activities which encourage children to make progress in all areas. They work well with parents to find out about children's skills, interests, needs and abilities and use this information to help children develop confidence, acquire skills, and settle well into the playgroup. Staff plan activities based on themes which are meaningful to children, and have a flexible approach adjusting activities according to children's interests. They also organise daily opportunities for children to extend their mathematical thinking and language skills. Staff undertake observations of children's attainment and use this information to record children's progress under all areas. However, although staff are aware of the progress each child is making they do not clearly link the next steps for children's individual learning to the planning, to ensure that more able children are fully challenged. Staff are perceptive to children's interests during self-initiated play, and use questions successfully to encourage children's thinking and language skills. They manage children's behaviour very well and have created a welcoming and stimulating play environment in which children make good progress.

Children are keen to play with the resources provided and eager to learn, initiating

their own play, making choices, and demonstrating good self-care skills. They use language well to express themselves and to link up with others to play. Children are developing good concentration skills, with some older children displaying a high level of involvement at chosen activities. For example, one child spends a lot of time creating an igloo for the winter theme. They access books throughout the session, looking at them independently and enjoying being read to in small groups. However, the large group story time at the end of the day has too many disruptions, which affects children's ability to concentrate and listen well. Children enjoy playing together, sharing ideas and discussing what they are doing. For example, two children spend time discussing what they are making with the paint and showing their designs to one another. Older children are beginning to form recognisable letters, as they attempt to write their names on their art work, and are able to find their name cards as they enter the playgroup. During the craft activity the children name the different letters, thinking of words which begin with the same sound.

There are regular opportunities for children to explore living things as they observe and talk about the snails, squirrels and birds they see in the outside play area. During the autumn they collected leaves that had fallen off the trees, comparing the differences between those that were green and those that were brown, and using the leaves to make a collage. Children observe change as they mix ingredients to make play dough and add water and colour to corn flour. However, there are no programmable toys and few opportunities for children to question how things work. Children are developing an awareness of diversity and equality through festival celebrations and when playing with resources which depict positive images within every day play. However, there are no current opportunities for them to undertake visits in the local community. Children match and sort by colour, shape size and object and use numbers confidently in singing and everyday play. For example, they count the objects on the number lotto cards and then attempt to match these to the correct numeral. Children count using their fingers, taking one away at a time as they sing songs such as '5 sausages in a pan'. They use size language such as 'big and little' and 'full and empty' when playing with the water tray, and measure out ingredients using a spoon when making play dough.

Children's creative development is encouraged well, with children linking up with one another to undertake play based on their own first hand experiences. Children work creatively on a small and large scale, experimenting with different textures, and express themselves through action rhymes and singing. They show good imagination as they play with a wide range of small world resources, dressing up clothes and the home corner. They undertake craft activities daily, such as collage, printing, junk modelling, and enjoy playing with play dough, sand and water.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and inclusive environment. Staff encourage children to develop self-esteem and confidence due to effective settling-in procedures and a strong parent partnership. Children develop an awareness of others as they celebrate a range of festivals and play with resources which promote

equality and diversity. Recent themes have also involved children learning about different countries, such as Canada and Sri Lanka and taking part in the local 'Furzedown Festival'. The multi-lingual staff team are able to offer additional support to children who have English as an additional language. Although the group do not currently care for any children with special needs, the manager has undergone appropriate training and there is a policy in place.

Children play nicely together and are fully aware of the expectations of the setting. Staff use positive language with children, which makes them feel valued and encourages them to behave well. For example, when one child throws water over another child, staff use clear explanation so that the child understands why this is not acceptable. Children take turns with popular resources, such as the bikes in the outside play area, and they also take turns to choose a song to sing at snack time. Children respond well to changes in routine, helping to tidy away the toys, sitting nicely whilst they wait for snack time and lining up to go into the garden. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. The playgroup is managed by a committee, mainly made up of parents, and they work closely with staff and one another to ensure the effective running of the playgroup. The committee encourages parents and children to become involved in regular fund-raising events. For example, the parents recently baked cakes for the cake stall, in order to raise funds for equipment. Every day, two parents stay at the playgroup as volunteers, and parents are welcome to stay when they settle their child in. Children benefit from the effective parent partnership as this ensures that their needs are well known. Staff ask parents to provide information regarding their children's development, which is then used to plan a welcoming play environment for children. Newsletters, a parent notice board, and effective daily discussions ensure that parents are kept informed of the current events and the activities their children have enjoyed. At the end of the year parents receive a written report regarding their children's progress. Whilst parents are kept well informed, they are not fully encouraged to continue their child's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery is well-organised, with toys, resources and play areas used well to promote a child-friendly and welcoming environment. Record keeping is maintained to a good standard and the small staff team work well together on a daily basis, ensuring that they share information and are familiar with the policies and procedures. The staff make effective use of the rooms provided to ensure that children have space to move freely and play with toys on a small and large scale. Although staff have made every effort to create a welcoming environment, by covering walls with posters and examples of children's work, there are parts of the premises, both internally and externally, which have not been well maintained.

The staff provide a good consistency of care for children, whilst the additional help provided by parent volunteers ensures that children are given good support throughout the morning. Those staff who do not hold a relevant childcare qualification

have been placed on training courses to gain an appropriate qualification. The manager recently undertook training in relation to the 'Birth to Three' matters framework, and is in the process of including this into the planning. The recruitment procedure ensures that staff undergo appropriate vetting to determine their suitability to work with children. In addition, parents who act as regular volunteers complete forms in relation to convictions and health issues, which enables staff to protect children from unsuitable persons. The staff team work well together to establish and model good practice across the playgroup. This then ensures that volunteers are aware of how they should manage children's behaviour and are familiar with the routines and practices of the playgroup.

Leadership and management for nursery education is good. The manager has a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and she works closely with the staff team to ensure that the activities planned and the resources provided enable children to make good progress in their learning. The additional resources which have been organised to extend children's learning in maths and communication, language and literacy are particularly good, as they enable children to develop their thinking in a play based manner. The staff team meet together regularly to share ideas for activity planning and discuss children's individual needs. Although the appraisal system has not yet been implemented, the manager is due to undertake training in this area shortly, and she undertakes regular daily observations of the staff team to evaluate their performance and the activities provided. Overall therefore, they meet the needs of the range of the children for whom the playgroup provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not Applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

A complaint was received on 24 October 2005 in relation to National Standard 1 (Suitable Person), Standard 11 (Behaviour Management) and Standard 13 (Child Protection). Ofsted asked the provider to let us have full details of their disciplinary investigation and the outcome of this investigation. Ofsted received the provider's report on 18 November 2005 and were judged to have taken appropriate action to deal with the issues raised. The provider remains registered to provide childcare.

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):

- ensure that there are systems in place to maintain the premises more effectively, both internally and externally

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):

- develop observations of children's progress to enable staff to highlight the next stage for each child's individual learning, and provide more planned opportunities to extend and offer greater challenge to older and more able children
- develop further opportunities for children to use more advanced tools and programmable toys, question how things work and undertake visits into the local community

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