

Oakfield Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	128476
Inspection date	27 June 2007
Inspector	S Campbell
Setting Address	Vine Church Hall, Holdstock Road, Ilford, Essex, IG1 1LG
Telephone number	07960141369 or 020 8553 3555
E-mail	
Registered person	The Committee of Oakfield 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Oakfield Pre-school is run by a management committee. It opened in 1992 and operates from a large hall in Vine Church Hall Ilford, Essex. The church is located within close proximity to Ilford Shopping Centre. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:00 and 13:30 to 14:45 term time only. The children do not have access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 64 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 57 children receive funding for early education. Children attend a variety of sessions. The pre-school currently support children with additional needs and a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The group employs eight members of staff. Over half the staff have an early years qualification and two staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment. Appropriate systems such as wiping tables before and after snack time help to maintain standards and limit cross infection. Children's health is further promoted because practitioners ensure their hands are washed before preparing children's snacks. Children are familiar with the routine and without assistance they wash their hands before snack time and after participating in messy play activities.

There are two members of staff who hold current first aid certificates and at least one member of staff is on site at all times. Therefore they can effectively care for children in the event of an accident. However, not all accidents in the accident record book are acknowledged by parents to ensure continuity of care and practitioners have not consistently obtained written parental consent for all children to seek emergency medical advice and/ or treatment.

Children's physical development is generally well supported. Children are given daily opportunities to engage in a range of physical activities. Children's physical activities are incorporated in the planning to ensure they benefit from a variety of physical exercise, for example using large apparatus, stilts, balancing beams and hoops.

The setting has implemented a rolling snack system. This enables practitioners to support younger children at snack time and children who do not wish to have snack can continue to play with the activities on offer. Children are provided with a range of fresh fruits to promote their good health, such as oranges, bananas and baby tomatoes. Fruits are attractively prepared and practitioners talk to children at their level showing them the choice of fruits on offer. This allows children to make independent choices about what they would like to eat.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are warmly greeted by practitioners on their arrival. Children eagerly arrive initiating discussions with practitioners straight away. Children are happy and well settled in their environment. They have ample space to move around freely and safety. Practitioners supervise children's arrival and collections at the beginning and end of the session to ensure a safe handover.

Children have access to a satisfactory range of resources. Resources are in good repair and practitioners carry out visual daily risk assessments to ensure toys provided for children are safe. Children's safety is further promoted because practitioners have a sound understanding of child protection issues and procedures. This ensures children's welfare is safeguarded. Practitioners ensure accidents that occur elsewhere are recorded. However, parents do not countersign entries.

Children are cared for in a generally safe environment. Detailed daily risk assessments of areas used by children are carried out by practitioners. Practitioners act upon potential dangers immediately and appropriate safety measures are put in place to maximise children's safety while at the setting, such as securing a broken window in the main play area. Practitioners are well deployed to ensure children are adequately supervised when playing on large apparatus. Appropriate safety measures are in place and the entrance to premises is managed by an entry bell system. This ensures practitioners are able to monitor all persons entering the building and

maximise children's safety. However, fire drills are not always systematically carried to ensure children know how to leave the premises quickly and safely.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy and learn from a sufficient range of activities. They move freely from one activity to next provided by staff. However, there are few opportunities for children to access resources independently, which limits children's opportunities to choose what they would like to do. The group operates by a key worker system allowing them to support children's individual needs and assist in their play when required. Practitioners know children well and they are able to explain in great detail how they move key children on in their next stage of development. However, children's progress reports do not clearly identify children's next steps. Some practitioners have attended Birth to three matters training and the group have recently begun to carry out children's progress reports to reflect this. However, the planning of weekly activities has yet to be implemented to take into account the Birth to three matters framework to ensure younger children's needs are fully met.

Children are developing firm relationships with practitioners. Children enjoy group time sessions at the beginning and end of the day. Practitioners capture most children's interest when interpreting the story 'The Three Little Pigs' without the aid of a book. Practitioners skilfully use props and engage children by changing the tone of voice encouraging children to interact with the story.

Children benefit from a range of worthwhile outdoor activities to extend their learning, such as going to Paradise Wildlife Park to coincide with the theme Animals and Feeding. Practitioners provide sufficient opportunities for children to participate in a range of real life situations, such as the vet surgery. Children are able to explore their senses through a range of mediums, for example crazy foam. Practitioners ask good open ended questions to encourage children to think and promote language development, for example when playing with the crazy foam children describe the foam as being sticky and white.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are confident speakers and they confidently initiate discussions with their peers and others. Children enjoy looking at books and are developing an understanding that print carries meaning as they look at books in the correct form and practitioners provide sufficient opportunities for children to put meaning to marks, for example writing a prescription in the vet surgery.

Through practical activities children spontaneously use mathematical language as they compare big and small snacks. Most able children can count up to 10 and beyond without guidance. They count how many Octons they have used to build a tower. The current topic is 'Counting and Reading'. Practitioners use picture cards to illustrate the number three and four to enable children to make connections. However, there are few opportunities for children to explore weights and measures to solve practical problems.

Children are able to build and construct using a range of resources. Through planned topics and trips children learn about the natural world. However, there are few opportunities for children to use information technology and programmable toys to support their learning. Children are developing their skills in turn taking and sharing, as they work as a team when

playing with the parachute. Through planned visits from professionals, for example a general practitioner, dentist and the local road safety officer, children are developing an awareness of their own personal care needs and keeping themselves safe.

Children take pleasure in engaging in role play activities. Children's creative and imaginative skills are generally developing well. They benefit from a range of craft and messy play activities, such as free painting, play dough and sticking. However, there are a few opportunities for children to access craft resources independently to extend their imaginative skills.

Practitioners have a satisfactory understanding of the Foundation Stage and early learning goals. They carry out observations taking into account the six areas of learning. However, observations are not systematically carried out and they are not used to inform planning. Practitioners ensure daily focus activities are evaluated. However, not all aspects of the early learning goals are fully covered to extend children's learning experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children attending the pre-school group are from a broad range of backgrounds. Practitioners are able to effectively communicate with children who speak English as an additional language because they also speak various languages, for example Arabic, Italian, Hindi and Tamil. This allows children to have a sense of belonging and builds upon their self-esteem and confidence. Practitioners have a positive attitude towards diversity. Children benefit from practitioners singing songs in both English and Hindi. Overall, this positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The setting supports children with additional needs. The group offers an inclusive setting and one member of staff is Special Education Needs Co-ordinator trained. This enables practitioners to support children within the setting. Children are well behaved. Practitioners are consistent in their approach in managing children's behaviour and children's achievements and positive behaviour is rewarded with stickers.

Relationships with parents are satisfactory. Practitioners encourage parents to contribute to their children's learning. Parents contribute their first hand knowledge of providing various languages for displays; contributing cultural foods for topics and accompanying their children on planned trips. Practitioners gather useful information about children's individual needs and background. However, parents do not contribute to an initial and ongoing assessment of their children's progress in order that practitioners can build on what children already know.

Staff are friendly and warm. The setting offers a flexible approach to children settling in because staff work well with parents, which allows children to become familiar with their surroundings, peers and others. Practitioners share both verbal and written information about the organisation of the group and children's progress on a regular basis. At point of enrolment parents are given an information pack that includes information about the Foundation Stage curriculum, general information and condensed versions of relevant policies and procedures. However, the contact details of the regulator require updating to ensure parents are fully informed of the procedures to follow should they wish to make a complaint and written parental consent has not been obtained to take photos of children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are appropriate recruitment procedures in place. However, Ofsted has not been informed of relevant staff changes, namely committee members. Practitioners knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework is continually developing through attending training. Staff work well as a team and are working as a group to ensure observations and planning are implemented to reflect the framework.

Most required documentation is in place and well maintained with the expectation of all relevant staff information; accident records; the complaint procedure and all relevant written parental consent. Staff have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities. This ensures children are well supported during the session and safeguards children's well-being. Practitioners are able to attend ongoing training. This supports children's care and development while at the group. As a result the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The supervisor has recently been appointed and as a result she has implemented many changes to ensure the sufficient and safe management of the setting. However, there are informal procedures in place to monitor the strengths and weaknesses in teaching and learning, and consequently not all aspects of the early learning goals are fully covered to ensure children's learning experiences are fully met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection a number of recommendations were made. The provider was required to ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding cleanliness of the toilets; ensure staff have induction training which includes health and safety and child protection policies and procedures in their first week of employment; ensure there is a named deputy who is able to take charge in the absence of the manager and make available to parents a written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint to the regulating body.

There are now systems in place to deputise in the absence of the manager to ensure the safe and sufficient management of the group. Daily risk assessments are carried out, of all areas used by children to ensure they are safe and clean. The supervisor undertakes the new staff induction programme which includes health and safety and all relevant policies and procedures. The complaints procedure requires updating to include the correct contact details of the regulator to ensure parents are fully informed of the procedures to follow should they wish to make a complaint.

At the last Nursery Education inspection the provider was required to organise story times to challenge more able children and support younger children and include opportunities for writing in real contexts throughout the provision; provide first hand experiences for children to investigate the environment and to develop their creativity through open ended art activities and develop greater knowledge and understanding of how the Foundation Stage guidance can be implemented and use this to monitor and evaluate what is provided.

All children now receive adequate support at story times and there are sufficient opportunities available for children to write for a range of different purposes. Children participate in planned topics to allow them to investigate. However, there are a few opportunities for children to access craft materials independently to extend their imaginative skills. Practitioners have a sound

understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum to support children's learning. However, the procedures for monitoring the effectiveness of the nursery education still require development to ensure all aspects of the early learning goals are fully covered to extend children's learning experiences.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- improve procedures to ensure the accident records that occur elsewhere and on site are countersigned by parents
- develop procedures to ensure fire drills are systematically carried out
- continue to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and ensure weekly activities reflect this
- consistently obtain written parental consent to seek emergency medical advice and/or treatment and obtain written parental consent to take photos
- update the complaints procedure to include the correct contact details of the regulator and inform Ofsted of changes to the committee members and ensure vetting procedures are carried out

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 systems for monitoring the effectiveness of planning to ensure that the learning outcomes are consistently covered (also applies to care)
- further develop systems for ensuring children's progress reports clearly identify their next steps and used to inform planning (also applies to care)
- improve arrangements to ensure children can access toys and craft materials independently (also applies to care)

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