

Mary Godwin Under Fives

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101496
Inspection date	19 June 2007
Inspector	Zahida Hatia
Setting Address	The Pavilion, Wymans Lane, Swindon Village,, Cheltenham, GL51 9QF
Telephone number	01242 263746
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Registered person	Mary GodwinUnder Fives
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Mary Godwin Under Fives operates from The Pavilion which is situated at the edge of the playing fields in the Wymans Brook area of Cheltenham.

The building comprises of a main room that is used as a play room. Outside the children have the use of a fenced, paved area and have access to the field.

The group serves the local residential community and is open during term time. They open on Monday to Friday from 9.00 to 11.30 and offer afternoon sessions on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday from 12.30 to 3.30

There are currently 33 children on the roll. This includes 25 funded 3-4year-olds. The group supports children with special needs and currently supports children who have English as an additional language.

The committee employs three members of staff who are employed to look after the children. The play leader is working towards a level 4 and the deputy holds a level 3 qualification in

childcare. Rota parents provide extra support. The group receives support from a Foundation Stage consultant through the Early Years Childcare Services.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment conducive to learning about good hygiene. They are familiar with hand washing routines and they know to do this after toileting. However children use hand washing gel between snack and lunch times because the setting does not have a suitable area where large groups of children can wash their hands. Staff use effective procedures to prevent the possible spread of infection, for example staff regularly wipe tables with antibacterial spray. Snack and lunch times are treated as social occasions. The children enjoy a good variety of chopped fresh fruit at snack time. Children compare the contents of their lunch boxes and develop skills in opening packaging such as yoghurt lids and crisps. They are offered a choice of milk or water and they pour their own drinks at lunch and snack times. Children have free independent access to water at all times.

The children enjoy lively play in the paved area outside which can be accessed directly from the playroom. Children use a broad range of equipment to develop their physical skills and staff vary the resources to provide fresh interest. In addition the park is used for activities such as picnics, team games, and going for walks to enjoy the fresh air. Children have good opportunities to extend their outdoor play experiences. They are able to use the park in the surrounding area to learn about nature, do physical exercise and engage in role play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Named coat pegs, child-height displays and low-level tables and chairs contribute to the warm and welcoming environment provided for children when they arrive. Good hygiene and cleaning routines ensure the children's safety and comfort. The play room is sufficiently equipped to provide children with a choice of activities to engage in free play. Resources are stored well and the quality of the equipment is good. Staff frequently check toys and equipment for wear and tear and for damage whilst in storage. The playroom area is warm and well ventilated. Equipment is clean and attractively presented to children. This helps to keep their interest and engage children in meaningful play. Children move confidently around the garden area and select activities to play. Children have a good understanding of rules and why rules are important. For example, one child had noted that another child had entered the kitchen area without supervision. The child informed a member of staff telling her that children could not enter the kitchen area without an adult present because it was dangerous.

The setting carries out thorough risk assessments on a regular basis. Staff identify hazards and take positive steps to minimise them. Staff take good precautions to ensure children's safety. Staff ratios are adequately maintained and extra support is provided by parents on a rota basis. However, some group activities such as outings can be difficult to plan in advance because the group are dependent on extra support from parents. Fire drills are held regularly so staff and children know what to do in an emergency situation. Parents nominate authorised collectors and at present the staff are reviewing their practice and may incorporate a pass word system in case of emergency.

Staff are trained to recognise the possible indicators of abuse. Current information is readily available to staff so they know what steps to take to safeguard a child who may be in danger.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happily to the group and confidently leave their parents. They know the routine well and make their own choices about what they want to play with from the selection made available. The children's play area is bright and welcoming and children's work is displayed around the setting and children take pride in what they have made. The children are secure in the setting and form good relationships with the small number of staff and with assisting parents. Staff are calm, gentle and encourage children to play together and share. The children enjoy a range of opportunities that help develop their social skills. They sit together at snack and lunch times and learn to listen to staff and each other. Staff show an awareness of children's needs and take time to comfort and reassure them when appropriate.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have sound knowledge of the stepping stones and use this to provide a balanced range of activities and experiences within all areas of the framework. Plans include and cover all six areas of learning and activities and toys are set out for the appropriate age and stage of the children's development. Staff have begun to take into account the need to have effective planning and recording of individual children's progress. Although activities are pre planned, they tend to be somewhat adult led, for example a group of children were engaged in making crowns for a themed display of traditional stories. The adult stationed at the table had pre-cut the crowns for the children to decorate. The children were asked to make eyes for the display about Kings and Queens. Some of the four year old children drew and cut out these items but these were not used in the display. Staff are focused and enthusiastic about what children are engaged in. They ask appropriate questions such as, 'how many people will need a plate today?' when a child asked if they could help with snack time.

Children are happy and confident. They develop independence as they see to their personal needs. Occasionally staff appoint a helper who carries out a variety of tasks such as leading the group when going outside and placing name labels on the table before snack times so children know where to sit. This encourages children to enjoy responsibility and makes them feel important. However this is not always consistent in practice. Some children concentrate well on self-chosen activities. They seat themselves by finding their name card and they have named pegs which give them a sense of belonging. Although the children recognise their own names, they are not consistently encouraged to 'name' their own work.

Staff offer a balance of activities for children to choose from. They encourage children to select the activity they would like to do. They are aware of what the needs of the group are as a whole. However there is a lack of clarity about what individual children need to progress and how to meet their full potential. Children are confident speakers and happily talk to the group about what they did the evening before. Children have some opportunities for mark making including drawing, chalking and writing but receive insufficient guidance on how to form letters correctly and have little access to writing in different forms. Children have opportunities to take mark making into the outside play area, such as chunky chalks and they also paint with water. However, there are few opportunities for children to consolidate their learning or apply their

knowledge in a meaningful way. The children know the words to nursery rhymes, they enjoy listening to story time and are able to engage in conversations about the story they have heard.

Daily routines include activities that increase children's understanding of number and simple calculation. Children count before story time and snack time to see how many children and adults are present. They count the number of plates and cups and then add them together. They learn about time by getting a ten minute warning by staff to clear up and a sand timer is used to help them to start preparing for tidying up. Older children crowd round and watch the sand disappear below and then they call out when time is up and tidying up begins.

Although most children are happy and occupied, the physical environment can restrict the routine, as the limited space and inaccessibility of some resources limited the promotion of children's independence. However, staff are aware of this and work diligently to overcome the difficulties. For example staff frequently extend role play outdoors as well as take activities such as water and sand outside as these activities are not often used.

Staff interact well with children and know them well. They make regular observations of children's progress and record what children say and do. Procedures to monitor children's individual progress towards the early learning goals are not fully developed. Information gained from assessment is not used to plan the next steps in children's individual learning. This limits the challenges provided for the more able children and the individual progress they make. Staff are supportive towards all children, although they are unsure as to how they can fully support children with English as an additional language.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff ensure all children can take part in the range of activities available. Children are valued as individuals and they feel secure with staff and other adults in the setting. Children are confident about approaching visitors and initiate interactions with visitors with ease. For example a child approached a visitor to the nursery and asked; 'What are you doing?' and 'Do you like my dress?'. At other times visitors from the wider community help children to understand about different cultures. A parent was invited to the playgroup to talk about India and to show the children how a traditional sari is worn. Children celebrate festivals and learn about different countries. They learnt about the Chinese new year by creating a display. Children have good opportunities to extend their outdoor play experiences.

Children behave well because staff explain and make clear their expectations for behaviour. This helps children understand right from wrong and avoids misunderstandings between children and staff. Children develop a positive self image and respond effectively to praise and encouragement. Staff demonstrate care and compassion for those who have been hurt and question the behaviour of children who have hurt others physically or verbally. A sense of fair play is recognised by the children. This makes them feel secure and protected. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive information about the setting through weekly newsletters which keep parents informed about future activities and events. Parents are aware of general curriculum planning and how the group is working towards foundation stage goals. They find staff friendly and approachable and are happy with the service provided. Policies and procedures are available to parents. The play leader ensures that all parents and carers have fully read and understood the documents and parents sign to

acknowledge this. General daily discussions inform parents of any concerns regarding their children. Children's work is regularly on display for parents and visitors to see. However, there is no formal system put into place to discuss individual children's progress. As a result, there is little opportunity for parents to support children's learning effectively at home or to contribute towards the assessment process.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. The Play leader communicates well with staff to ensure the smooth day-to-day running of the group. Staff organise space well to ensure children gain fully from the activities available. However, the setting has limited space for children to use and most activities have to be stored away. Staff are well deployed ensuring that children are appropriately supervised and supported. Mandatory records are well maintained. The children's register is taken daily at the beginning of each session and staff are also registered on the same document.

Children do not belong to a key group to support their development and learning. However the team are aware of this and plans are underway to improve services by creating a key group system. Parents provide additional support to the group, Parental volunteers are required by the committee to have a clear criminal disclosure record. This enables parents on the rota to carry out toileting duties with the children.

Children make use of the facilities of the park in the surrounding area to the setting. Staff carry out risk assessments when using the park. Staff have a sound knowledge of the stepping stones and they use their knowledge to plan weekly activities that take into account all the six areas of learning. However they are not effectively carrying out regular assessments and observations for individual children in a meaningful way, but they recognise need for effective planning and recording of individual children's progress.

The present committee has made progress since being elected and meets frequently to support the setting. Parents and staff attend these meetings regularly. The committee members have successfully appointed new staff and have begun to review how the playgroup's policies and procedures can more effectively support the welfare of the children. The new playgroup leader has a clear understanding of the systems that need to be put into place. These include written risk assessment records, children's individual progress records and formal staff appraisals to support their training. The playgroup leader puts time and effort into the group and has begun to form the staff into a working team.

The leadership delegates responsibilities as these become appropriate, allowing staff to begin to increase their understanding and professional involvement, for example to assess and plan for children's progress. The setting in the main meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the group were asked to setup and develop procedures to ensure that parents acknowledge all entries in the medication records. The information was reviewed and it is now clearly put into place. Parents have acknowledged entries and signed and dated documentations.

At the last education inspection, the group was asked to extend resources so that children have more opportunities to join and build. The children have opportunity to extend their play outdoors frequently, they extend role play, mark making, building with large bricks and sand and water play to outside play area. This helps the children to learn and develop according to their needs.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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

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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 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):

- review procedures for hand washing before and after meal times

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):

- ensure that individual children's records are accurately and regularly maintained
- ensure that parents have access to their children's individual learning plans and that they are regularly informed of their children's progress.

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