

Monkton Under 5's Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127388
Inspection date	04 April 2008
Inspector	Tracy Larnach
Setting Address	Monkton Men's Institute, 122 Monkton Street, Monkton, Ramsgate, Kent, CT12 4JQ
Telephone number	01843 823053
E-mail	
Registered person	Monkton Under 5's 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Monkton Under 5's Playgroup opened in 1977. It operates from the Working Men's Institute in Monkton, near Ramsgate, Kent. The playgroup has access to a hall, toilet and an outside area.

A maximum of 10 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. It is open each weekday from 09.00 to 12.00, term time only.

There are currently 15 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 14 children receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties/disabilities and will also support children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs five staff. Of these, two 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 learn about health and hygiene through the daily routine; for example, they wash their hands regularly and staff remind them of the importance of drying their hands so they don't become sore. They know why they wash their hands and discuss washing the germs away. Children are provided with liquid soap and paper towels to help prevent the spread of infection. Staff use appropriate practices to promote hygiene; for example, they have a nappy changing procedure, clean the playgroup on a daily basis and toys and equipment are washed regularly so they are clean and hygienic for the children's play. There is a sick child policy, staff on duty trained in first aid and parental permission for emergency medical advice and treatment. As a result, staff are able to act in the children's best interest should they have an accident or become ill. Accident and medication records are kept for the health and welfare of the children; however, not all accidents are acknowledged by the parents.

Children do not become hungry as snacks are provided by the playgroup. Toast and cereal is regularly provided in the winter and children use their small muscle skills as they spread their toast with butter, marmite and jam. Staff have recently reviewed snacks and beginning next week fruit and yoghurt are being served so the children have healthier choices to ensure they are well nourished. Staff sit and eat with the children and are good role models sharing toast and chatting about the day. Information about children's dietary requirements and any allergies are sought from the parents and shared with the staff. This means they are alerted to signs and symptoms should a child have a reaction so they can act quickly. Water is available throughout the session so the children remain hydrated; however, they have to ask in order to reach it. Children enjoy regular play for their large muscle development and the daily routine includes physical play. Children practise their skills as they ride bikes, climb on equipment and play with the parachute, using all their strength as they make the parachute 'float' in the air. Overall, there are enough opportunities for children to participate in physical play for their well-being.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are safe in the playgroup as the door is locked and a close circuit television camera shows anyone approaching the playgroup. This means unwanted visitors are monitored and contributes to the children's safety. In addition, the building is risk assessed and a daily checklist completed to ensure the building is ready prior to the children's arrival. There is an arrival and collection procedure to keep children safe. The staff have parental permissions on file; for example, for emergency medical advice and treatment and for recording evidence in the children's files. A sun screen policy is provided to the parents to ensure children are safe in the sun and an outings procedure is in place. Staff work in partnership with parents when organising outings for the children to ensure they are safe.

Children are safeguarded as staff have a satisfactory knowledge of child protection; however, existing injuries are kept informally and the child protection policy does not contain required detail to help staff feel confident and secure in their knowledge. A fire drill log is kept detailing fire evacuations and staff note who has had a turn to ensure all children become familiar with the procedure. Children learn about safety through the daily routine and discuss safe practices as they play; for example, a chair was moved from behind a child as she stood up and staff

explained that she could have sat down and got hurt as she fell. They also discuss safety outside and talk about why the door is locked to keep them safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy in the playgroup. There is a range of toys and equipment that are stored in tubs and containers; however, staff tend to select the toys and put them out on the table before the children arrive and during the session, which limits their independent self-selection. Staff support the children in their play, asking lots of open questions, listening to what the children say and explaining things to them; for example; they discussed bones and veins and the children became very interested as they discussed bleeding and getting hurt. They have the opportunity to use their senses as they experiment, explore and create with different mediums; for example, corn starch, flour and water. The Birth to three matters framework is used to plan for the under threes and observations show they are using the components to reflect on the younger children's progress and meet their needs.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and cross reference the observations to where the children are on the stepping stones. Hands on experiences are considered when planning to meet the children needs. 'I can do books' for each child are regularly reviewed and added to. Observations are documented to show progress and a 'play plan is developed,' although it is not clear where the activities on the plan come from in relation to the observations. However, the small group means that the staff know the children very well and extend their play and learning. The challenges set for children are generally good and the children show interest in the toys and activities provided. Children enjoy stories and join in with them with enthusiasm. They re-read stories familiar to them snuggled in the cosy book area as they learn how a book works. Puppets are used to encourage language development; for example, when 'Peter' sat in the mark making area the children decided to read him the story they had just listened to and 'read' themselves. He though it was scary so they explained that he must not be frightened as it was only pretend. Children begin to linking sounds and letters as they look at their names and the corresponding picture which begins with the same sound. Children write in the mark making area, on chalk boards in the role play and outside, they delight in clutching clip boards as they play in 'the vets'.

Children count during the session and can count confidently to ten or more. They learn about simple addition as they work out how many ride-on toys they need when they play outside and how many cushions they need for story. In addition, they enjoy number games with the staff where they count and match amounts. Children learn about shapes as they cut their toast into squares, rectangles or triangles. They use mathematical language to describe, position, size and quantity; for example, they discuss height as they build with bricks and whether the structure is taller or smaller than them. Then cooperated well together as they stood on their 'tippy toes' to build their tower as tall as the staff. Children are curious, they ask questions; for example, how do spiders make a web on their own? Children learn about science as they observe caterpillars and snails, measure the rain and measure their heights against a sunflower. They build with a range of objects tools and techniques; for example, bricks and large crates. They learn about how things work as they play with toys, 'how did you make that work?' said staff,

'it has a button' the child said. Children learn about information and communication technology as they have computer keyboards to play with, phones to pretend with and a 'talk to me' computer to support their learning.

Children have opportunities to use their senses as they explore a range of media; however, pre-cut templates are provided for some of their art work which does not allow them to represent their unique perception of the world unrestricted by adults. Children enjoy music and explore sounds; for example, a child pushed a car on a Lego base and then the carpet, discussing how the noise changed from quiet to loud; however, instruments are not readily available for them to be creative with. Children sing simple songs from memory and the staff and children make up songs to sing; for example, the hedgehog song. Children use their imagination as they play in the role play area. They pretend as they wash the doll clothes or make cars with chairs, driving very fast and evolving into police cars. Children move confidently and safely with control, showing a sense of space; for example, as they ride bikes outside, stopping for petrol. Children learn about the importance of being healthy through discussion. They use equipment that promotes their small muscle development with control; for example, knives to spread and small manipulative equipment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are very settled in the playgroup as there is a settling in policy which encourage parents to visit with their children and be active participants. They have warm and secure relationships with the staff, laughing and joking together, indicating they are happy. Children are interested in the activities, motivated to learn and can concentrate on their chosen task. They are confident and will speak in a group. They generally cooperate well together and show care and concern for each other. Staff use positive methods of behaviour management with the children and they behave well; for example, staff use a timer when it is difficult for children to share so they learn to take turns. Staff praise the children for their achievements, this develops their self-esteem. Children are encouraged to take care of their needs; for example, toileting, hand washing and pouring their own drinks at snack time, this develops their independence; however, self-selection has not been fully developed to promote this further.

Children learn about the local environment as they go on outings in the community; for example, they visited lambs at a local farm. The children became excited and animated as they discussed the visit. Children learn to be accepting of differences as positive images are reflected in the environment and staff are good role models. They discuss their families, traditions and holidays and learn about the wider world as they discuss holidays and celebrations in other cultures. Staff talk to parents about any health visitor input as part of their induction so they can fully support the children in their care. A special educational needs coordinator works with outside agencies to develop individual educational plans as appropriate. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good.

Parents are greeted warmly and staff are friendly towards them. They are happy with the care and feel that they can readily approach the staff and manager in the playgroup. The prospectus contains information about the Foundation Stage. Newsletters are provided to keep parents up to date about what is going on in the playgroup; for example, the changes to snack. Parents are involved in their children's education they have free access to their children's records which are readily available and they can review at any time and make comments. There are systems

in place to seek parents' views on their children's learning. However, they do not formally involve the parents in assessing children's starting points when they enter the playgroup. Parents are encouraged to attend committee meetings and go on all outings. As a result, parents are informed of their children's progress. The complaints procedure has been updated to meet legislation.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The routine is organised to include a range of activities; for example, children choose what they wish to do and 'good morning' is conducted during this time. Outdoor play, snack time, story time and music and dance are also incorporated into the session. Children receive lots of support as the playgroup operates with a high staff to child ratio and staff deploy well to meet the children's needs. The pace and routine of the session allows children a full range of opportunities. Systems are in place to ensure safety so children can move both freely and safely in the playgroup. There is some evidence of recruiting procedures to ensure staff are suitable to work with the children; for example, staff have appropriate checks. However, these have not been formalised, as a result, the recruiting procedures are not rigorous enough to ensure the only the most suitable staff are recruited. In addition, the induction is informal. The registered person has failed to submit his paperwork to ensure he has the approval of Ofsted as a suitable person, which is a breach of regulation. All the required documentation for the safe and effective management of the setting and for the welfare and care of children are maintained and stored securely; however, the accident records are not all signed by the parents and the statement of arrangements for the protection of children does not contain all of the required information. The staff do not meet the qualification criteria at this time but are committed to training and self development to improve outcomes for children.

Leadership and management is good.

Staff meet together regularly and work well as a team. Everyone's input is valued so staff all take ownership for the playgroup. Each day they discuss the successes of that day and based on their observations decide what they are going to do the following day to meet the children needs. There are systems in place to review and monitor the nursery education programme, although not all systems are formal. All staff are involved in planning and children's starting points are assessed first half term and shared with parents; however, parents are not included in this process. The planning is flexible and based on the children interests, this is evaluated by the staff when they evaluate how well the children are progressing towards the early learning goals.

Improvements since the last inspection

After the last nursery education inspection there were no significant weaknesses to report, but the inspector asked the playgroup to give consideration to improving the opportunities for children to independently select from the broad range of resources.

Since the last nursery education inspection the staff have stored some of the toys on low shelving and in tubs for the children to select from; however, staff put toys on the tables and children tend to select from them, as a result, this becomes a recommendation of this inspection.

After the last care inspection there were three recommendations made, these were to develop and implement a key worker system; develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and to request written permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment.

Since the last care inspection the staff have developed a key worker system that ensures both children and their parents have a 'special person' assigned to them who knows them well. Staff have developed their knowledge and understanding of child protection issues to ensure children are safeguarded; however, some detail is missing from the policy that supports this. Written parental permission is now in place for the seeking for emergency medical advice or treatment for the welfare of the children.

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 good.

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 all accidents are signed by the parents
- ensure the child protection policy contains the required information and is shared with staff and parents and a system is in place to record children's existing injuries
- ensure Ofsted is informed of changes to the committee
- review recruiting procedures to ensure they are rigorous and robust so only the most suitable staff are recruited and develop a formal induction procedure
- update action plan to ensure at least half of the staff have suitable qualifications.

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 a system in partnership with parents to assess the children's starting points

- continue to increase opportunities for independent self-selection.

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