

# Duke of Gloucester Barracks Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101655
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Karen Louise Prager
<b>Setting Address</b>	Duke of Gloucester Barracks, South Cerney, Cirencester, Gloucester, GL7 5RD
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<b>Registered person</b>	Duke of Gloucester Barracks Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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 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?

Duke of Gloucester Barracks Playgroup is situated on the army base within the village of South Cerney approximately four miles to the east of Cirencester. They are open to army families and the general public, and children attend from surrounding villages. The playgroup has its own self-contained building which is maintained by the military. There are two playrooms, a cloakroom and a kitchen area within the premises and they have access to their own enclosed outdoor area, with hard surface and grass for outdoor play.

The group is registered to provide full day care for 24 children from two to five years. There are currently 16 children on roll. The group is open on Monday, Tuesdays and Fridays from 09.00 to 13.00, and on Wednesdays and Thursdays from 09.00 to 15.00 during school terms.

There are four staff employed to work with the children, three staff have completed appropriate childcare qualification and one is currently undertaking NVQ2. The group accepts funding for nursery education and currently has seven children for whom they receive funding. They support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an

additional language. The group is a member of Gloucestershire Playgroup and Toddler Association, and receives support through them.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children play and rest in surroundings where there are generally appropriate standards of hygiene and cleanliness. They are protected from the risk of infection by the established practices, for example, staff wipe the tables before the children have a snack or eat their lunch. However, recommended hand washing practices at these times are not fully embedded in the setting's practice.

The setting asks parents for information about their children's health, and the policy in relation to sick children is shared with them. All the necessary consent forms in place, and this range of documents helps to provide effective care for children.

Children are able to access a drink when needed as a jug and clean cups are available for them on a low table and children are encouraged to help themselves. At snack times, they sit together, and enjoy the sociable atmosphere. They have a range of healthy and nutritious snacks such as fruit, bread sticks or toast. Parents share information about their children's dietary needs which are effectively recorded, so that children have only those foods that are suitable for them.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that support their good health, including frequent opportunities for outdoor play. They benefit from their regular indoor activities in a large designated space, where they develop skills in managing their own body to create intended movements. Children respond to rhythm and music with pleasure when recorded music is played.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment that is both safe and secure. They enjoy the bright and child friendly room that has clearly labelled displays which support their learning. Children move around confidently, in a setting made welcoming with carefully set out furniture and equipment.

Children exercise their independence skills as they make selections from the wide range of quality toys, play materials and equipment. The staff present the toys so that children have easy access, and so that even very young children are encouraged to choose for themselves.

Children play safely because of the effective procedures and because of the vigilance of the staff, who supervise them closely. There are appropriate safety regimes in place, both indoors, and when taking children out. For example, the door to the room has a buzzer so that children are unable to leave the room un-noticed. Emergency evacuations are regularly practiced, so that all present are familiar with the procedures.

The setting makes children's welfare their first concern. Staff have received suitable training and have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of child protection issues, and of the

lines of communication should there be concerns about a child. Parents are made aware of the role of the setting, so that they can work together to get the best outcomes for children.

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

The provision is good.

Children enter the setting willingly, separate from their carer with increasing ease easily and settle quickly to the many activities on offer. Children are well occupied. For example, children assemble the train and road track and select vehicles and small world people to manoeuvre. When participating in active play outside the children climb the slide with care or keenly jump on the small trampoline.

Children form positive relationships with their peers and the welcoming staff. They develop social skills as they learn to share resources; such as when using the glue sticks. They learn to take turns, for example, when waiting for their snack.

Younger children who have not yet started on the Foundation Stage curriculum take part in child-centred, age appropriate activities linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. For example, playing with vehicles on the pre-assembled road track.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The stable staff team have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and are aware of the areas of development covered by activities. They know the children well and are aware of their differing stages of development. Staff plan a wide range of age appropriate activities, which include all areas of the curriculum. Regular observations and assessments are undertaken of each child. From these observations and assessments staff are able to plan the next steps in the children's learning.

Children concentrate well on a wide range of generally interesting activities. For example, one child carefully dribbles glue onto paper and watches the pattern it makes.

Children start to learn the days of the week and begin to gain an awareness of changing seasons and weather patterns through planned daily discussion. Children are learning to use information technology to support their play, for example when using the computer to play games. They benefit from regular visits from a road safety officer and fire officers when the children start to learn about the wider world. Children regularly take part in planned creative activities where they can experiment with a range of materials, such as making. Free choice creative activities are also available daily and children are able to select from a varying range of items to stick, cut and explore.

Children speak confidently to their friends, adults and in a group situation. They enjoy reading books and handle them with care, turning the pages and studying the pictures. They become familiar with print through the many examples around the room and learn to recognise their name when they find their seat at snack time. Children are gaining confidence in using one handed tools, such as paint brushes, and spreaders in their play. There are opportunities for children to free write or write their name on their work. Children have the opportunity to count the number of children present at group time and also start to use number spontaneously in their play. However, opportunities for children to develop their thinking, for example when calculating numbers, or working out what will happen next are less developed.

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

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The setting meets the differing needs of the children in their care who are all treated with equal concern. They have equal access to toys and activities, and to the practitioners' time and attention. Children benefit from visits into their local community where they begin to develop a sense of identity and a sense of belonging. Visitors into the setting begin to give children a greater understanding of the wider world. Within the setting children become familiar with the layout of the room and the structure of the day and this enables them to become secure and feel part of the group. The staff understand that some children need additional support to achieve their potential, and are proactive in identifying children who have additional needs.

Children are generally very well behaved. They respond positively to the setting's sensitive approach and gentle guidance. Younger children are distracted and diverted towards activity that is more positive so that their behaviour remains acceptable. As children grow, they are helped to learn about the consequences of their actions, and begin to exercise self-control.

The partnership with parents and carers is good and this has a positive impact on children's wellbeing. Parents regularly assist in the setting and this is highly valued by the staff. There is a keyworker system in place and records are kept on the children's progress. A record of the activities carried out and progress children make is maintained. These records are available for parents to read. Staff regularly talk to parents about the time their children spend in the setting. In this way parents and staff are kept fully informed about the children's progress. Parents are also able to meet with their child's key worker on request.

An informative and regularly updated notice board is at the entrance to the building which provides parents with current information about the setting. Parents also receive an excellent welcome booklet which contains information about the setting's policies and procedures, and the service that is offered. The staff work closely with parents to achieve best outcomes for children, and so that they receive a consistent standard of care. Staff welcome parental insight into their child's education. A full set of policies and procedures are available for parents to see.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides. Leadership and management are good. Effective procedures for monitoring and evaluating the care of children are in place and demonstrate clear purpose and a commitment to continual improvement. The manager and committee have clearly defined roles and responsibilities and work together to encourage staff to continually strive for improvements and the highest standards in their work. Staff are motivated by means of regular staff meetings and having their views and ideas acted upon. They receive regular training and are monitored by senior staff. Staff are line-managed effectively with on-going supervision.

A good range of policies and procedures is in place. Documentation such as children's personal details, attendance registers and accident books are kept suitably up to date. Confidentiality is appropriately maintained through the secure storage of documentation. This documentation is easily accessible for inspection and daily use, such as when completing the accident or visitors books.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous care inspection three recommendations were agreed. These were; to develop ways of improving children's access to resources to allow them to choose and select for themselves; ensure all staff explain to children why an action is unacceptable and consistently apply the group's behaviour management procedure; to ensure written records of any medication administered are signed by parents.

The organisation of the setting has improved as medication procedures have been updated, behaviour management strategies are clear and positive and resources are more freely available.

There were also four key issues arising from the Nursery Education inspection. These were to further develop planning, evaluation and assessment cycle to ensure that activities are planned to support individual children's learning and build on their prior learning; to review the organisation of time and resources to allow children to choose and select activities and equipment freely for themselves; to plan a wider range of activities for children to count, recognise numbers and relate number to objects as they play; to develop regular opportunities for children to use different writing equipment and practise mark making as they play.

Planning, evaluation and assessment of activities is now more robust enabling activities to be provided which further develop children's learning. The organisation of the session and resources has changed enabling children more time to self select activities with more time to free play. Opportunities for children to count, recognise numbers and relate number to objects as they play are now available daily as are resources to enable children to mark make as they play.

### **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:

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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):

- strengthen hand washing procedures to ensure all children follow recommended hand washing guidelines before eating

- develop the use of the outdoor area to offer a wider range of planned activities (also applies to Nursery Education)

### **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):

- extend opportunities for children to use language as a tool for thinking

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