

King William Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109074
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Inspector	Nikki Whinton
Setting Address	Savernake Street Community Centre, Savernake Street, Swindon, Wilts, SN1 3LZ
Telephone number	07811 649355
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Registered person	King William 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 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?

King William Playgroup opened in 1990 and is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the playgroup. It operates from a room within Savernake Street Community Centre. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.15 until 11.45. In addition, the group offers a lunch club on Wednesdays and Fridays until 12.40. All children share access to a secure enclosed outside play area.

There are currently 39 children aged from three to under five years on roll. Of these, 30 children receive funding for early education. The group supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The setting employs five members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a further qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children move freely, safely and with pleasure both within the playroom and the small enclosed outside play area. They take part in planned weekly activities to support their large muscle development. At these sessions, children have the chance to change into their sports kit and thus gain experience of dressing themselves in preparation for school. During fine weather, children are able to choose activities, such as, a table covered in shaving foam or a bubble filled water tray, that have been positioned outside. They safely use a variety of tools including scissors and crayons during craft and plastic knives when buttering their snack time toast. These practical opportunities help children to increase their fine motor control and coordination.

There is a wide range of measures to promote children's good health. For example, sufficient staff have a current first aid qualification, written parental permission has been obtained for seeking emergency treatment and children use separate paper towels when hand-drying, to reduce the risk of cross contamination. Correct administrative procedures are in place should accidents occur or children require medication. Staff act as positive role models, helping children to learn why they need to wash their hands before eating, 'to get the germs off'.

Children enjoy a variety of nutritious snacks that help them to increase their understanding of healthy eating. For example, a child spontaneously informs an adult, 'carrots help you glow in the dark'. They are encouraged to try new foods, such as sugar snap peas or houmus and thus develop their appreciation of food tastes. Children are given the time they need to eat at their own pace and are able to consume snacks in sufficient quantities to meet their differing requirements. Allergies or dietary issues are discussed with parents as part of the registration process, recorded and accommodated. Snack menus are displayed for parents. Children are able to help themselves to water throughout the sessions, which helps to ensure they consume fluids in sufficient quantities to meet their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are secure, of an appropriate temperature, clean and suitably maintained. It is a bright welcoming environment with the walls covered in displays and examples of children's artwork. Measures are in place to promote children's safety and help prevent accidents. For example, staff are appropriately deployed, socket covers are positioned over exposed electric points and a gate prevents children entering the kitchen area. In addition, children are starting to gain an understanding of ways to help keep themselves safe. They know they must stand still and listen when a bell is rung, they help to tidy away toys, thus reducing trip hazards and take part in regularly planned emergency evacuation drills.

Children play with a suitable variety of clean, appropriately maintained, age appropriate toys. They benefit from the staff's understanding of safety issues concerning the purchase and ongoing maintenance of resources. As a result, children can play with toys that are safe and suitable.

Children's welfare is supported by staff that have attended training entitled Safeguarding Children. They are aware of the possible signs of neglect or abuse, the correct procedures to

follow if concerned about a child and the need for confidentiality. There are suitable arrangements for making parents aware of the provider's child protection responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the provision willingly and separate easily from their main carer. They show great confidence in the environment and make independent decisions concerning the resources they would like to explore. They have some ownership of the group. For example, following a suggestion by a child, a proposed singing activity is changed to a whole group game of 'what's the time Mr. Wolf?'. Children are consistently well occupied in self-chosen, child led activities including craft, construction or role-play. They help themselves to additional toys or materials, such as, scissors or magnets that are stored on wheeled trolleys within the playroom. Children have a good relationship with the well-established staffing team and are forming positive friendships with their peers.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a good understanding of the different areas of learning covered by planned and free choice activities. They offer a suitable range of opportunities to support children's learning within the Foundation Stage and to help them progress towards the early learning goals. They ask children indirect questions to make them think, reinforce and extend their learning. However, the planning does not clearly indicate what children are intended to learn from activities. Staff undertake written observations of children, which they use to complete assessments following the Swindon Record Keeping System.

Children have a wide range of vocabulary. They use language confidently when talking to peers and adults. For example, the children think carefully about size and shape, before eagerly sharing their thoughts when asked, 'what is not in the box?' by a member of staff during a whole group activity. They enjoy investigating books either alone or with an adult and take part in planned story times. Children have practical opportunities to practise their early writing skills, including when making marks in shaving foam or whilst using a range of materials at a free writing table. However, staff have a tendency to label children's artwork, which prevents them from having a meaningful chance to develop and extend their own skills. Children count confidently by rote and through practical activities, such as, playing number snap or identifying numbers on a calculator, are learning to recognise numbers as labels. Children have regular opportunities to gain an awareness of shape, space and measure, such as, when threading shaped wooden beads, moving between shaped carpet pieces or playing with sand. Children develop their calculation skills through activities including 'Prickly Hedgehogs', which involves them adding together the numbers on two dice or by taking part in action songs involving subtraction.

Children are involved in local outings, such as, to the shops, nearby park, the Town Gardens or Space Adventure. They welcome meaningful visitors to the group, including a road safety officer, a father who is a firefighter and a parent to talk about their allotment. Such opportunities enable children to gain an awareness of their local community and the wider world. Children are invited to take 'Hannah Bear' on their holidays and weekend family excursions. They are encouraged to put a postcard, photograph or drawing of their adventure in Hannah's scrapbook and thus share their experiences with the setting. Children confidently use a range of information and communication technology resources as part of their play and enjoy designing and building

with construction materials. They develop their awareness of the natural world through activities including bark rubbing, planting mung beans or growing cress to put in their snack time sandwiches. Children enjoy singing a variety of action songs and rhymes. They enthusiastically engage in role-play whilst using props to enhance their experiences. Children regularly enjoy a wide range of opportunities to initiate, develop and extend their own imaginative ideas whilst engaged in child centred creative activities involving art and craft.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the staff knowing them well, appreciating their individual needs and understanding their differing home circumstances. Children with additional needs receive appropriate targeted support to promote their learning and development. Children have access to a suitable range of resources including posters, books and small world figures to enable them to gain an awareness of diversity.

Children behave well, as appropriate for their age and stage of development. They benefit from the positive manner in which staff engage with them. They are gaining good social skills as they successfully learn to share resources. For example, they cooperate when building with Duplo and take turns to select their snack time choices.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are confident, independent and demonstrate good self-esteem. They are encouraged to consider and express their thoughts by placing their name card on a 'Feelings Chart' when they first enter the provision. Through practical activities, such as eating noodles with chopsticks as part of a topic on the Chinese New Year or making clay tea light holders during Diwali, children are gaining an awareness of a range of cultures and festivals.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. As part of the registration process, parents are made aware of how to access the group's policies and procedures. They are asked to complete questionnaires that are used to evaluate the effectiveness of the provision. There are informal daily opportunities to liaise with the staff and to discuss any childcare issues. The parents are invited to become involved in their child's learning, for example, by joining the parents' rota or sharing their skills. The group has just introduced planned meetings with parents in order that they can review children's Foundation Stage assessments. However, parents are not regularly invited to share with staff what they know about their child's academic achievements, to aid either initial or ongoing staff assessments.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Overall, most outcomes for children are good. The playleader and an additional member of staff are just completing appropriate, supervisory National Vocational Qualifications. All staff are required to undertake regular, targeted early years training as part of their contracts. The staff have suitable experience in caring for young children and are well deployed to support their learning and development. Personal records are securely stored and available to support children's care. Although there is a register in place which records children's attendance and other relevant information this does not always clearly indicate any variations. In addition, although staff are secure in the knowledge and understanding of procedures, there is not actually a current written procedure in place in the event of a child being lost.

The leadership and management are good. The staff work well as a team. They meet every half term to evaluate the provision and to plan for children's future learning. The staff attend committee meetings and liaise informally with members of the voluntary committee on a regular basis. The playleader is aware of the group's strengths and areas for development and is starting to put strategies in place to aid improvement. The group welcomes early years advisors from the Swindon partnership to assist in developing the quality of the provision.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of the last combined inspection, the group was given actions, recommendations and key issues to help improve the quality of the provision. The care report required the group to develop and implement an action plan that sets out how the supervisor will achieve a level three qualification, ensure Ofsted is informed of significant changes and make sure that staff are suitably vetted. In addition, the setting was requested to develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will obtain a level two qualification in childcare, ensure there is effective staff deployment during snack time and large group activities and improve arrangements to keep parents informed of the setting's policies and procedures, their child's progress and to make sure the complaints procedure includes Ofsted's details. The nursery education report asked the setting to provide regularly planned opportunities for children to develop their information and communication technology and calculation skills. In addition, the group was recommended to extend opportunities for children to use different forms of writing to communicate.

The supervisor has completed the training course required to achieve a level three qualification. Ofsted is kept advised of significant changes of circumstances. Sufficient staff have a level two qualification and all staff have been vetted. They are appropriately deployed during snack time and large group activities. Parents are made aware of their access to the group's policies and procedures. The complaints procedure includes Ofsted's contact details. Children have chances to communicate through their writing and are able to develop their information and communication technology or calculation skills as part of their play. These improvements have had a positive impact on the quality of the care and education offered to the children. However, parents are not kept well informed about their child's academic progress.

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.

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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):

- make sure there is a policy in place that shows the procedure to be followed if a child is lost and that the daily registers clearly indicate when children, staff and all visitors are present in the setting

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 the partnership with parents to ensure parents have regularly planned opportunities to discuss children's academic progress with staff. Make sure parents are encouraged to regularly share with staff what they know about their child's educational progress, to aid initial and ongoing Foundation Stage assessments.

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