

Westfield Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109538
Inspection date	13 July 2007
Inspector	Liz Margaret Caluori
Setting Address	Church Hall, Vicarage Lane, Westfield, Hastings, East Sussex, TN35 4SD
Telephone number	07790 744404
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Registered person	Westfield 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?

Westfield Playgroup operates from two rooms in Westfield church hall which is located next to the church. It is committee run and has been in operation since 1968. There are kitchen and toilet facilities and an outdoor play area. The group serves families from the local community and surrounding areas.

The group is registered to care for 30 children and there are currently 40 children on roll, including 20 who receive funding for their nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting makes provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup opens Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 09.15 until 12.00.

There are six members of staff who work with the children. Of these five either hold, or are working towards, an appropriate childcare qualification. The setting receives support from early years advisors from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean, well maintained environment. They are given good support to develop effective personal hygiene practices. They routinely wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating and understand the need to use a tissue to blow their noses. Appropriate nappy changing procedures are also in place.

Children enjoy healthy mid-morning snacks and drinks. They are learning the importance of eating a balanced, nutritious diet and confidently discuss different types of fruit and vegetables as they choose what they want to eat.

Staff with first aid qualifications are present at all times ensuring that children are appropriately cared for in case of an accident. Similarly, procedures relating to the care of sick children and the administration of medicines are appropriate. The setting maintains the required written records although there are minor inconsistencies in the quality of these.

Children enjoy very regular opportunities for physical play. In good weather they have use of a fully enclosed garden. In poor weather physical games are organised in the hall; the furniture at one end of the hall is removed to make sufficient space for a large range of physical activities such as parachute games and ball games. Children move with control and are developing very good co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are well protected by a range of effective safety precautions in place around the setting. Good attention is paid to ensuring that the front door is secure when the session is running. Covers are placed in all unused sockets and safety gates are used to restrict access to potentially hazardous areas such as the kitchen and the stairs. Toys and equipment are in good condition and are appropriate for the ages and stages of development of the children attending.

Appropriate procedures are in place to protect children from the risk of fire. Emergency exits are clearly identified and free from obstruction. Evacuation drills are practised regularly and fire fighting equipment is in place.

Children enjoy visits from agencies such as the fire and police services which help them to learn how to keep themselves safe. They are also well supported by staff to develop an understanding of issues relating to road safety. Most children move around the setting safely and sensibly. However, at times the disruptive and lively behaviour of some children results in minor collisions and bumps.

Appropriate procedures are in place to deal with child protection concerns and allegations against staff. These are generally outlined in the written policy although minor amendments are necessary to accurately reflect the practices of the setting.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children chat excitedly with their friends whilst gathered in the lobby waiting for the pre-school session to start. This enthusiasm continues as they enter the group room and eagerly approach staff to share their news.

Children confidently choose the activities they wish to take part in and most concentrate well and play very sociably with their friends. Activities for free play are attractively set out when children arrive. However, resources are not routinely re-arranged when children have played with them and moved on. As a result, their presentation becomes less inviting as the session progresses.

Whilst children are generally happy and confident in the group, there are times when the atmosphere becomes excessively lively. This does not support the younger and more sensitive children who sometimes become unsettled. Similarly, all children are offered the same range of activities and freedom to make choices. This is sometimes slightly overwhelming for some of the younger children.

Children are very well supported to understand the routines of the setting. They frequently refer to the visual timetable and are given a two minute warning to allow them to conclude their games before it is time to tidy up.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. A new system of planning has recently been introduced and this has yet to become fully effective. However, staff demonstrate a very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum and very skilled at observing and recording children's progress. However, they do not routinely identify and record the next steps of each child. Whilst most children are making good progress towards the Early Learning Goals, some do not fully engage in the activities provided. In addition to restricting their progress, this sometimes disrupts the concentration of other children.

Children are confident in their communication skills. They often instigate lively and interesting conversations using expressive and descriptive language. There are many opportunities for children to practise writing throughout the day, both in planned activities and in their free play. Many are able to form recognisable letters and examples of their writing are displayed around the setting. Many children make good use of the reading corner and enjoy looking at books. Some also like to listen to the stories read by staff although their concentration is sometimes tested by the disruptive behaviour of others.

Children are generally progressing well in their mathematical development. They count confidently and are well supported to recognise written numbers. Many are also beginning to understand many concepts such as sequencing, matching and sorting. They frequently use mathematical language and employ their learning in everyday situations.

The children are well supported to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They have regular access to a computer and confidently use simple programmes with the support and encouragement of staff. They are also learning about the wider world through a range of interesting topics such as vets, mini-beasts and floating and sinking. They also enthusiastically take part in practical activities such as cooking.

Creatively children are generally making good progress. They make very good use of the freedom they have to paint and produce very expressive and individual pieces of art.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The setting has a positive attitude towards integrating children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and meeting their needs. There is a clear written policy outlining the organisation's commitment to assessing each child as an individual.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are developing a good awareness of the area in which they live and the different people that live there. They also learn about the wider world, looking at different customs and celebrations. They are supported in their play by toys and resources aimed at promoting positive images of people from throughout the community.

The behaviour of the majority of the children is extremely good and they are well supported by staff who offer praise and encouragement. However, there are a number of children who frequently display inappropriate and challenging behaviour. This is evident during free play sessions but is particularly disruptive during singing and story sessions. Whilst the staff team have identified this as an issue to be addressed, this behaviour largely goes unchallenged. Staff generally speak to the children involved asking them to stop what they are doing but do not take any action when children fail to pay attention to them. This does not support children to develop an understanding of right and wrong and hinders their all round development as they do not focus on the activities provided. The setting is in breach of the National Standards by failing to manage children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Those whose children receive funding for their nursery education are shown their child's Stepping Forward Profile and are provided with posters explaining the Early Learning Goals of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum. All parents are given a good range of written information about the group and have access to all policies and procedures. They are all greeted warmly by staff and children benefit from these positive relationships.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the setting is generally effective. There is a comprehensive range of written policies and procedures in place although one or two need updating. Similarly, whilst all required records are maintained, there are a few minor inconsistencies in their quality.

The routine of the day and the organisation of space within the group are generally effective and offer all children access to a wide a range of activities. Children are usually cared for in one large group. This often results in the boisterous and disruptive behaviour of some children impacting on the concentration of others. In addition, this does not allow staff to ensure that activities are adapted to be appropriate for children with a wide range of abilities.

The leadership and management of the setting are satisfactory. The newly recruited chairperson, the manager and the staff team work effectively together and are all committed to offering the best possible service. Development plans indicate a range of areas highlighted for improvement. In addition, the manager has actively sought support from the local authority to

address the behaviour management issues and this is scheduled to begin at the start of the next term.

The setting has well thought out and appropriate arrangements in place to recruit and induct staff.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Following the last inspection two recommendations were made, both aimed at improving partnership with parents and carers. The group have successfully addressed these issues and now provide parents with information, in the form of a poster, to help them to understand the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum. The impact of this is enhanced by the use of photographs of children at the setting engaged in a variety of activities that illustrate each area of learning. In addition, a written complaints procedure has been devised. By maintaining effective communication and exchanging information with their parents, staff are better placed to identify and address children's individual needs.

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

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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 and improve the arrangements for grouping children to ensure that they are able to concentrate on activities which are appropriate for their age and stage of development
- improve the arrangements for managing children's behaviour to ensure that strategies are positive, effective and consistently employed by all staff in order to ensure that children's welfare and development is promoted

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):

- review the arrangements for identifying and recording the next step for each child

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