

Fittleworth And District Community Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113489
Inspection date	01 October 2007
Inspector	Maureen Croxford
Setting Address	School Lane, Fittleworth, Nr Pulborough, West Sussex, RH20 1JB
Telephone number	01798 865752
E-mail	
Registered person	Fittleworth & District Community Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Fittleworth and District Community Playgroup is managed by a voluntary committee of parents and opened in 1972. There are currently 20 children from two years to five years on roll. There are nine educationally funded children attending the provision. It operates from the community building next to the village school. It serves the local and surrounding area.

The playgroup has procedures in place to support children with physical disabilities and/or learning difficulties and children who have English as an additional language. Children attend for a variety of morning or afternoon sessions.

The group opens five days a week during school term times from 08:15 until 15:30. Morning or afternoon sessions are offered as well as a breakfast and lunch club.

Five members of staff work with the children. There are two with early years qualifications and one is currently working towards a recognised qualification. The playgroup receives support from a mentor from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted well as staff encourage them to wash their hands after using the toilet and before meals and snacks. They are beginning to understand the importance of good hygiene routines and appropriately positioned posters help to remind them. Staff follow the provision's health and hygiene procedures, for example they wear gloves when changing nappies and pull-ups.

Children are protected as most members of staff hold a first aid certificate. All staff are aware of the procedures to be followed if an accident occurs. Suitable arrangements are in place for the administration of medication, including written permission from parents.

Staff have a good understanding of how young children develop, which contributes to their good health and physical development. Children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise and benefit from the very well planned play in the fully enclosed playground. They are beginning to understand the importance of regular exercise. Staff create many opportunities for children to enjoy a wide range of large equipment with ease. Children are developing good spatial awareness, both inside and outside, as they move around the provision with increasing confidence.

Children enjoy healthy snacks provided by the setting, including fresh fruit, milk and water. They are learning about healthy eating through well-planned topics. Staff plan snack times and link them to the current topic. For example, the children enjoy tasting the different foods mentioned in the story 'Hanra's Surprise' and making fruit smoothies. Children with allergies are protected as staff are fully aware of their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The provision is set within the grounds of the local primary school and good use is made of the school facilities to enhance the children's development. Children feel welcome as staff greet them and their parents at the entrance to the provision. Staff ensure that children feel valued as their artwork is displayed attractively around the provision. The premises have good safety features such as a locked front door and a secure, fully enclosed play area. This ensures that children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. Children proudly show their artwork and discuss their achievements.

The premises provide adequate space to offer a range of activities, which promote the children's development. The playground and grassed area offers children a very safe area for outdoor play. The staff take children on walks in the adjacent playing field and around the village. The appropriate deployment of staff and the well laid out room ensure that children can be seen and are kept safe at all times.

Children are able to access their own resources and toys with ease and in safety, as most are stored in low-level units. Hazards to children are reduced as staff carry out regular risk assessments of the premises to minimise identified risks. All equipment is checked and cleaned regularly and staff ensure it conforms to safety standards to protect the children.

Children learn to keep themselves safe as staff discuss the provisions rules with them. They are discovering that the provision has boundaries and limits, for example, they understand that they should put away equipment before getting new resources. Clearly defined procedures for emergency the evacuation of the building are displayed and understood by staff, who carry out regular fire drills.

Children are protected because staff understand their role and responsibilities with regard to safe guarding children. The manager is the designated person and staff understand the importance of confidentiality. Appropriate procedures, which staff put into practice when necessary, are readily available to parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff have a clear system is in place for planning and use the Birth to three matters framework well, to enhance the quality of experiences offered to young children. All age groups benefit from the planned activities that are organised to promote their learning and development. Staff work closely with parents and outside agencies, including a mentor from the local authority.

Children under three years make good progress. They are developing high levels of confidence and independence as they make free choices about their play. They are happy and confident. Children enjoy free access to a wide range of resources, where they are supported through a good balance of self-initiated and adult-led activities. Staff build warm relationships with children and offer them praise and encouragement when appropriate. They interact well with the children, including conversation, good eye contact, reassurance and cuddles. All children are offered many opportunities to use their senses to explore a wide range of textures, media, such as compost, sand, water, mashed potato and dough.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals and engage in a wide range of experiences and activities covering all areas of development. The staff are well qualified and experienced, and use their sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage to plan a stimulating curriculum. As a result, children are well motivated and enjoy many exciting experiences to aid their learning. Parents are given very good information about the Foundation Stage of learning in the prospectus. The learning goals are clearly laid out and supported by good display material around the provision.

Staff monitor children's progress and planning takes into account of what most children can do and how they will be sufficiently challenged. Children's written records of assessment identify the progress children are making through the six areas of learning. Their individual learning needs are supported through an effective key worker system and good communication amongst staff. However, planning does not show how activities are to be extended for children that are more able.

Children play well together and develop very good relationships with staff and their peers. They co-operate during play taking turns and negotiate which equipment they wish to use, for example, the computer. They are encouraged by staff to be polite and they behave very well. Children are interested in their activities and show good levels of perseverance and concentration, for example, when dressing the dolls in the home corner. Most activities and

resources are easily accessible to children, which enables them to make choices about their play and develop their independence.

Children practice early reading and writing skills, for example, through the provision of writing materials in role-play situations and self-registration. They have good access to an extensive range of books and listen avidly to stories. Staff extend their vocabulary, which results in children exploring new words, for example, talking about the size of ostrich eggs and where tomatoes grow. Children use their language with increasing confidence to express their thoughts, needs and ideas. Staff encourage children to mark-make such as labelling their work. Older children are beginning to understand that print carries meaning and is read from left to right.

Most children count confidently, solve problems and compare during daily routines and everyday activities. They use appropriate language to describe and compare size and quantity. Staff encourage children to count in many of their everyday activities. Children show an interest in numbers and counting and enjoy singing simple number rhymes and songs.

Evidence shows how children investigate and find out about living things through activities such as growing plants and caring for tadpoles. Staff take children for walks to explore the local environment and identify features in the place in which they live and the natural world. Photographs and planning show opportunities, such as visits from the local veterinary surgeon, for children to develop their understanding of the local community and people who help us. Children are developing their skills as they use the computer and other simple electronic toys.

Children move confidently and safely as they travel under, over and around climbing equipment. Most children are able to adjust speed and change direction to avoid obstacles. They show increasing control when using equipment for balancing and peddling. Children's manipulative skills are progressing well and most successfully use a wide range of tools and materials in the many creative activities offered. They are developing good hand-eye co-ordination and fine manipulative skills through regular use of tools, such as scissors during craft activities and suitable knives to cut fruit at snack time.

Children receive many opportunities to explore texture, colour and shape through a good range of creative activities, such as painting, collage, sand and water play and baking activities. Many opportunities are offered for children to use their imagination in role-play, art and music. Children are familiar with simple songs and rhymes. They enjoy singing, and play musical instruments enthusiastically to accompany the music of a visiting specialist teacher.

Children make good progress in all areas of learning. This is clearly recorded in photographs, children's work and written observations, which link well into the stepping-stones.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop a positive attitude towards themselves and others because staff provide activities that reflect diversity of different cultures, for example, foods from around the world. Children benefit from the well-planned activities. Staff use resources such as books and role-play, which reflect diversity to help children appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences. They make children feel valued and respect them as individuals.

Evidence suggests that procedures are in place to support children with individual needs. This is supported through an effective key worker system, ongoing discussions with parents and

clear documentation. Parents receive well-written and reassuring information. Staff ensure that all children are included in the activities which develops their self-esteem and sense of belonging.

Children benefit, as staff are consistent in applying the provisions behaviour management procedures, which are shared with parents. Staff help children to understand why some behaviour is not appropriate and talk to them about right and wrong. As a result, children know what is expected of them and show high levels of confidence and self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. There are strong levels of communication that enable staff and parents to work well together to promote children's individual learning needs and care. Parents receive information about the provision and children's activities, through clear written information in the prospectus, newsletters and items displayed on the notice board. Staff and parents also share information informally on a daily basis as staff make time to talk to parents at any time.

Parents are encouraged to contribute to their child's learning, for example, through a book lending scheme and a skills bank. Parents and staff regularly discuss the progress of the children who receive nursery education at informal meetings. Systems are in place to ensure that all parents' comments and concerns are noted and investigated. Strong links with parents provides children with continuity of care, whilst respecting the parents wishes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff deployment and knowledge of child development is good and staff have a clear understanding of what is expected of them on a daily basis, helping to promote positive outcomes for children. Half of the staff hold appropriate childcare qualifications, and all have experience of caring for children.

The on-going training, for example, first aid, child protection and NVQ training, contribute to the children's health, safety and well-being. A recruitment policy is in place. However, this requires development to ensure that documents are retained as required. Children benefit and make good progress in their learning due to the knowledge of the staff who extend activities naturally. Children are well occupied and engaged with many worthwhile play opportunities. Staff organise the daily routines and layout of the room appropriately.

All legally required documentation is in place and shared with parents, where appropriate, including records, register, accident and medication records. The manager has a sound knowledge of the requirements of the registration and inspection process and understands the staff's strengths and weaknesses. However, the manager is not fully involved in the staff appraisal system, which is generally carried out by the committee.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff receive support and encouragement from the manager and the committee. The staff work well together as a team and all contribute ideas for activities. Children are provided with positive experiences to promote their learning. This is achieved through the staff's ongoing commitment to improvement. The manager has ensured that all those working with children in receipt of funding for nursery education have a good knowledge of the curriculum guidance. The quality of teaching is

monitored to ensure consistency in all areas. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, three recommendations were made. An action plan was put in place and staff now carry out a risk assessment before the children arrive at the provision and have developed a thorough risk assessment which is carried out and recorded each half term. This helps to ensure that children are kept safe and secure.

Staff now review the provision's policies regularly to ensure that they accurately reflect current practice. This ensures that children are protected as staff are aware of the procedures to be followed.

A member of staff has attended some Special Educational Needs training and shared this information with other staff. Policies and procedures have been updated and staff are proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when required so that all children are able to make a positive contribution.

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 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 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 develop further the recruitment procedure and the staff appraisal system.

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 planning to show how activities are to be extended for children who are more able.

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