

Playtime Under Fives

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	130711
Inspection date	05 July 2007
Inspector	Shan Gwendoline Jones
Setting Address	Saxon Pavilion, Aldrington Recreation Ground, Saxon Road, Hove, East Sussex, BN3 4LE
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Registered person	Maureen Crookes
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?

Playtime Under Fives opened in 1996. It is privately owned and operates from one main room in a sports pavilion within Aldrington recreation ground.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09.00 to 15.00 term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 51 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 41 children receive funding for early education. They currently support a number of children with learning difficulties.

The playgroup employs seven members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification. The playgroup receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, warm and child centred environment. The risk of infection to children is minimised by the setting's policy of not caring for sick children. Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their personal hygiene and health awareness by learning to wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. Children's health and wellbeing is further protected as a number of staff hold a current first aid qualification and know how to respond effectively in an emergency situation.

Children are provided with a variety of snacks including crackers, fruit, milk and water as agreed with parents and carers. Staff plan exciting and interesting topics with regard to healthy eating, which helps children to learn about the importance of following a healthy and varied diet. For example, making home made pizzas. Snack times are used as regular and purposeful periods and time is planned for children and staff to be able to enjoy these as social occasions.

Their physical development is good and outdoor play is thoroughly enjoyed by all. Children delight as they explore the outdoor environment on a 'jungle hunt' staff encourage the children to identify the various animals they find. Children are excited as talk about the stripes on the Zebra and spots on the Leopard. Children's fine motor skills are developing well and they enjoy opportunities for mark making. They can independently access a range of tools and equipment to support their learning, such as scissors, chinks, pens and construction materials. All children are developing a good sense of spatial awareness, as they move around the setting with increasing confidence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel extremely welcome as staff greet them and their parents at the entrance to the playroom. This ensures they feel secure and content. Space is well organised and used effectively to allow children opportunities to be active, engage in table top and floor activities. They enjoy opportunities to relax and share books in a comfortable environment with a child sized settee, mats and cushions.

Children's safety is of great importance. All areas and activities are risk-assessed and any hazards are immediately reported and dealt with. Staff carry out daily checks to ensure all areas are safe and there are regular fire drills and checks of fire equipment. Outdoors vigorous risk assessments have been established as the outdoor area is open to the general public. Staff talk to the children regarding issues such as, 'stranger danger' and how to keep themselves safe when dogs approach them. Children respond positively and are able to take responsibility for their own safety, staff always give reasons as to why the rule is there.

The good staff recruitment policies are implemented well to ensure those working with the children are suitable to do so. Any visitors are asked to sign in and out and they are not allowed unsupervised access to the children. In addition, children are protected by staff's knowledge of the signs of possible child abuse. Moreover, staff understand what to do if they have concerns about a child. This good practice is underpinned by comprehensive safety and child protection policies.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happy and confident and quickly settle into the routine making their own choices about their play. Staff know children well and talk to them about their family and what they have been doing at home. This interaction, and the implementation of a successful key worker system, helps to secure relationships between children and staff, developing a sense of trust.

Staff value children's creations; displaying them attractively on wall displays and including them in the individual children's progress files, with accompanying photographs. Good opportunities exist for children to explore the role play area, such as the home corner, where they can use their imagination to act out scenes from their own lives. For example, preparing and serving food for each other and their babies, sweeping the floor afterwards with the vacuum cleaner, as they have seen adults do.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are experienced and knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage and have a sound structure for planning an effective curriculum. Staff monitor children's progress towards the early learning goals and records indicate that children are making very good progress. Staff identify children's individual needs and are able to engage and occupy them. Although the systems for fully recording children's ideas and interests into the plans are not established.

The learning environment is inviting and stimulating, and well-labelled storage ensures that children can be independent in their play. Children enjoy free play for most of the time and set their own challenges using the wide range of play equipment available. Adult led activities are sensitively managed to ensure that children's work is their own, and staff are skilled at pitching their support at the level most suited to the child. This means that children learn at their own pace and sustain their interest, developing good concentration skills.

Children show an interest in numbers and counting, three year olds willingly attempt to count some numbers in the correct order, whilst more able children are confident to count from 1-20. They have a good understanding of the value of number, and can count on from a given number. Children use songs, rhymes and fun games to reinforce number values. There are many opportunities for children to develop their problem solving skills during practical activities for example at snack time.

Children often become very engrossed in activities to the exclusion of all else. Children play alongside others engaged in the same activity and cooperatively in groups, organising themselves to act out experiences both real and imagined. Staff encourage children to explain what they are trying to achieve and to reflect on past events. Children have very good access to a wide range of books including reference and fiction. They listen avidly to stories, which are very well read by staff, who extend their vocabulary which results in children exploring the meaning and sound of words.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is particularly well promoted. For example, the interesting range of available resources enables children to discover animals in their natural habitats. Children are able to develop an understanding of technology and how things work, as they look at mini beasts through magnifying glasses and use props such as mobile phones during imaginary play. Children are proficient at using the computer; they use the mouse with increasing control and are able to navigate around the computer programmes.

Children explore texture, colour, shape, form and shape in two and three dimensions. They enjoy singing and moving to music. Children danced, swayed and sung with gusto to the beat of the musical tape 'Down in the Jungle'. They were having tremendous fun as they participated with enthusiasm. Learning is fun

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and respected as individuals, and are given appropriate praise and encouragement to enhance self-esteem and confidence. Their individual needs are met well because staff find out from parents about the children's routine and development. Children also enjoy being with familiar and trusted adults within a secure environment.

Evidence suggests that the provision has very good procedures in place to offer support to children with learning difficulties, physical disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. Staff are extremely proactive in supporting children with individual needs, which develops their sense of belonging and their self-esteem. Staff work closely with parents and carers to ensure that children's individual needs are met.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are well behaved, learn to negotiate and play co-operatively. Children enjoy learning about the world around them and celebrate a range of cultural festivals. Children behave well as the staff act as good role models offering clear and consistent guidelines. Children are supported in understanding right from wrong as staff use appropriate strategies. Children are valued for their achievements and receive praise and encouragement in their daily activities. This helps develop their confidence and self-esteem.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parent's opinions matter, suggestion boxes are available and parents are welcome to meet with management and staff at any time. Parents are very complimentary about the service they receive; "Fantastic, I would recommend it to anyone". "Staff give me suggestions of how I can support his learning at home".

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff are all vetted as suitable to do their job and all staff are qualified and experienced. Staff-child ratios are met or surpassed at all times. However, the registration system is not an accurate record of the times of arrival and departure of the children. Record keeping is managed very effectively to ensure that confidential information is stored securely.

The complaints policy and procedure has been updated in line with recent changes in legislation to the National Standards. As a result, parents are assured that complaints can be resolved appropriately to benefit their children. However, the settings complaints procedure is not on display for parents.

The leadership and management is good. The management team work alongside staff in all areas of the setting, acting as mentors and role models. Staff have a clear set of shared values and are committed to the continuous development of the playgroup, with the children and parents sharing the focus of their energies. The on going training programme contributes to the children's development, health, safety and well-being. Staff work well as a team and have a clear understanding of what is expected of them on a daily basis, which helps to promote

positive outcomes for children. Children who receive funding for nursery education are making good progress in their development. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to ensure that parents consistently sign the accident book and also to obtain details of infectious notifiable diseases to refer to.

The accident book is signed by parents ensuring they are informed of any accidents that may occur. Guidance regarding exclusion times for infectious notifiable diseases is in place and this is shared and discussed with parents.

At the last nursery education inspection they were asked to develop the book area. It has had been adapted and now has a child's sofa and soft cushions. The area is welcoming and children make good use of the this space selecting and reading books independently. Staff ensure books are rotated to sustain the children's interest and enjoyment.

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 complaint 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):

- devise an effective system to record accurately children's hours of attendance
- ensure the complaints procedure, which includes details of the regulator (Ofsted) is displayed for parents.

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):

- further develop systems to evaluate the activities and show how children's individual needs and interests feed into the planning.

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