

Fairfield Playbox

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	131796
Inspection date	02 October 2007
Inspector	Christine Stimson
Setting Address	Methodist Church Hall, Fairfield South, Kingston Upon Thames, Surrey, KT1 2UJ
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Registered person	Mrs Julie Carroll & Ms Sheila Moore
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Fairfield Playbox has been open for approximately 40 years. It comprises of a playgroup which offers sessional day-care for children aged two years to under five years. The provision is open Tuesday to Friday between 09:30 and 12:00, term time only. There are currently 44 children on roll. At present the group supports two children who have English as an additional language and are able to support children with learning and physical difficulties.

The provision is situated in the heart of Kingston town centre, within the Methodist church hall at Fairfield South. It is opposite the open spaces of Fairfield Park. The premises consists of one large playroom, a kitchen, toilets and a vestry which is used for small group work with the children. There is no outside play area, but the provision has access to a second large hall on the first floor of the premises, which they use for physical activities and games. The main emphasis for the provision is on free play where children are able to choose what activities they wish to participate in.

Nine staff including the two joint managers, work in the playgroup on a rota system, seven staff hold recognised childcare qualifications. There are five volunteers who work in the provision on a regular basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from healthy and nutritious snacks whilst they are at playgroup. They have fruit, a plain biscuit and milk or water each day and staff pass around wet wipes so children can cleanse their hands prior to eating. Staff are vigilant about good hygiene practice and wear gloves and aprons when changing nappies. They make sure they and the children wash their hands after visiting the toilets, giving explanations about germs as they do this. This helps children to develop good habits of personal hygiene.

Several staff hold first aid qualifications and a qualified nurse is part of the staff team. This together with well stocked first aid boxes and written permission to take children to hospital in an emergency, ensures children's health is supported and accidents are dealt with effectively. The playgroup share a sick child policy with parents and compliance with this ensures children are not exposed to infectious diseases.

Although the playgroup do not have a garden they can access, the children get daily opportunities for physical play. The upper hall is set out each day with tunnels, bikes and scooters, balls, low level stilts, large floor puzzles and obstacles courses. Downstairs children have climbing frames set out where they can practise their skills. The physical play activities are organised so that only small groups of children play on them at any one time and this ensures staff can support young inexperienced children and keep them safe at the same time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The playgroup offers children a warm and friendly environment where they feel safe and secure whilst experiencing parting from their parents, possibly for the first time. The areas used by children are well maintained, spacious and suitable for the ages of the children attending. There are enough toys to meet children's needs and these are maintained in good condition. Staff ensure resources and activities are placed either on tables, on the floor or at child height; this enables children to make a choice of what they want to play with and helps them to become independent.

Children are kept safe as staff have effective procedures they follow each day where they check all areas used by the children and make notes of any hazards found. These are dealt with quickly either by the staff or by the caretaker for the building. The setting has an evacuation procedure they practise periodically and this enables children to learn how to leave the premises quickly and safely. Fire fighting equipment and fire detection appliances are in place throughout the building to alert staff to any dangers.

Children's well being is supported as the staff have all been on child protection training and know how to proceed if they have concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the playgroup as activities are planned that offer them stimulation and challenge. Each day children experience imaginary play whilst using the home corner, or

dressing up in clothes that are hung in a manner that makes them attractive to children. They have free access to sand, construction toys, art and craft activities and painting is set out for the children each day. Once a child has completed their picture staff name it and put it to one side to dry. Parents are then handed their child's painting, showing children that adults value their work.

Staff undertake observations on children's progress using individual observation and planning sheets. The form indicates what the child has achieved and plans for their next step of development. Staff bring these notes to planning meetings and activities are organised accordingly. This helps children to make continual progress.

Children are encouraged to develop independence and confidence as they learn the routine of a group setting and are praised for their accomplishments by staff. For example, a group of children are sitting at the table waiting for their snack; they are making a lot of noise. A member of staff comes along and starts singing 'The Mummies on the bus say Ssh Ssh Ssh'. Children are fascinated at her gestures and soon quieten down; they are then told how good they are being waiting quietly for their drinks.

Children concentrate on stories or rhymes read and sung by staff and join in with familiar phrases. They are becoming confident to speak out in group situations and are learning the social skill of listening to one another.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enter the hall of the playgroup and are warmly welcomed by staff which helps them to feel a sense of belonging. Staff have experience of caring for children who have learning or physical disabilities and work closely with parents and inclusion officers from the borough to help children in their development.

Children celebrate Christian festivals as well as learning about the festival of others. For example, children do simple art and cooking activities for Chinese New Year and Diwali. They play with resources that enable them to develop a positive awareness of other races, cultures and abilities. There are a variety of ethnic dolls, foreign food items and implements, a wide range of books depicting disability and culture and a good range of ethnic dressing up clothes. All these are used as an integral part of every day play.

The playgroup has developed professional and friendly relationship with the children's parents and carers. Policies and procedures are shared with parents in a browsing file and contain all the policies required under the National Standards. However, the complaints procedure does not contain the correct details of the regulator.

Regular newsletters are sent out keeping parents informed about what is happening at the playgroup. Parents and carers are invited to become volunteers and coffee mornings are arranged so that parents can meet committee members, each other and contribute to fundraising by buying cards and books. Staff find out from parents what their children can already do when they come to the playgroup, and time is given to allow children to settle in their own way. This supports children's well being.

Children are made aware of the expectations of the setting as staff lead by example. They do this in their mannerism, tone of voice, calmness and with the patience they show. Staff never

just say 'No' to children without an explanation of why what they are doing is unacceptable. This results in children becoming aware of right and wrong and learning boundaries within the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for by a team of staff who are experienced, caring and who plan stimulating activities for children that help them to enjoy and achieve. Staff work well as a team and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. There is a commitment to the professional development of staff, who are valued for their contribution.

Policies and procedures, shared with parents and carers, guide staff in their care of children. An effective recruitment procedure and criminal bureau checks ensure that only suitable people are employed to work with the children. Regulatory documentation and day to day operational records required for the welfare and care of the children, are in place. However, the attendance register for staff does not always give their accurate time of arrival and departure.

The group operates from one big hall, with all staff deployed to work directly with the children. Half way through the session small groups of children are taken upstairs to a large hall to take part in physical exercise. During this time all staff are able to offer children the right level of support to meet their needs. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection three recommendations were made to improve the care for children. Since then good progress has been made and staff have improved their knowledge of children's linguistic differences. Many of the play areas are now identified in a number of different languages and a welcome sign in the foyer greets people in a vast number of languages. Staff have a list they can refer to that gives 13 languages for how to say 'Hello' and 'Good morning', helping to make children and parents who have English as an additional language feel welcome. The playgroup were asked to review their nappy changing arrangements and they have now done this. Children's health is supported as young children are laid on a mat that is wiped down after each use. They bring their own nappies and wipes to the playgroup in their bags, but staff have spare ones in case they are forgotten. Staff wear gloves and aprons for this procedure and dispose of the nappies in sacks within the swing bin; this is emptied after each session. The playgroup have also updated their child protection policy to include procedures to follow in the event of an allegation being made against staff. This policy is shared with parents and all the staff have signed to say they understand and will abide by the policy. This supports the well-being of children.

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

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.

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):

- ensure the complaints procedure has the correct regulators details included
- revise the staff registration system so that accurate times of arrival and departure are indicated.

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