

Winchcombe Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY257161
Inspection date	21 November 2007
Inspector	Shirley Ann Jackson
Setting Address	Back Lane, Winchcombe, Gloucester, GL54 5QJ
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Registered person	The Trustees of Winchcombe 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 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?

Winchcome Playgroup registered to provide full day care at its current premises in 2003. It operates from a converted school building in the Cotswold town of Winchcombe. The playgroup serves the local community. It is run by a voluntary committee of parents.

There are currently 63 children from two to four years on the roll. This includes 29 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties, disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school terms. Sessions are between 09.00 and 15.00, daily except Tuesday when it is open from 09.00 until 12.30.

A staff team of nine work directly with the children. Of these, seven have a recognised childcare qualification to at least level 3 and above and two are currently working towards achieving a level 3. The group receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted as staff appropriately deal with accidents within the setting. Most staff hold current first aid certificates and a first aid box is readily available if needed. All accidents are appropriately recorded and shared with parents. Children begin to learn about why they need to wash their hands as staff sometimes discuss this with them. However, children cannot access the toilet area independently to attend to their own self care needs.

Children are offered snack at the group. These are healthy, varied and offered in plentiful amounts for the children to enjoy. Staff consider children's dietary requirements when planning which snacks to offer. However, snack time is offered to all of the children attending at the same time. Children wait for everyone to be ready before they can eat, so children are waiting for some time. Staff do not routinely sit with children so manners and social interaction is not always promoted. Children who stay for lunch bring their own lunchboxes with them. This means that they are able to enjoy familiar food.

Children move spontaneously within the available space. Children have the opportunity to enjoy large physical play at each session both indoors and outdoors. They can choose if they want to play indoors or outdoors for part of the session. Children move freely with pleasure and confidence, for example, running on the grassed outdoor area. They adjust speed, change direction and stop when playing on wheeled toys. Children show respect for other children's personal space when playing among them. They engage in activities requiring hand-eye co-ordination, such as, tap a shape. Children use one-handed tools and equipment and understand that these have to be used safely. On one day each week children take part in a forest school activity when they go out to explore an area close to the group.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in premises which are bright, clean and well maintained. The rooms used are made welcoming to the children as there are lots of displays of children's work and photographs. However, a number of these are not at children's height, so their view is limited. The building is secured when the majority of the children are present. This ensures that there is no unauthorised entry and that children cannot leave the building un-noticed. Staff supervise the children effectively both indoors and outdoors. However, cleaning fluid is sometimes left within reach of children and areas which are not used for children are accessible. This poses a risk to children's safety.

Children are offered a suitable range of toys and resources. These are good quality, are well maintained and conform to safety standards. Staff set out a range of resources before the children arrive and they choose from this selection. Children have opportunities to select resources as a number of them are stored in low level storage units.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as most staff hold current child protection certificates. They are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect. They are aware of the correct procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. A child protection policy is in place and is shared with parents via the policy folder.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Younger children come happily in to the group and settle well with effective support from staff. They have obvious friendships within the group and are comfortable in the company of the staff. Children choose what they would like to play with from the range on offer and are soon busy. Staff are on hand to become involved in their play if children want them to become involved. However, at large group times the younger children sometimes become restless and are not fully engaged.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff understand children's needs and provide a sufficient range of activities and experiences. They have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and an suitable understanding of how young children learn and progress. The level of challenge is sufficient to interest most children in activities and enables them to make sound progress. Assessments and the use of information gained from it are satisfactory, but they are not carried out in a systematic way. Consequently, some children are not helped to move on to the next stage in their learning or sufficiently challenged. Children are happy, settled and enjoy coming to the group. They are sufficiently confident and self-assured to work either in groups or independently. They respond appropriately to realistic adult expectations of behaviour so that learning can take place. Children show interest in a range of purposeful activities and first-hand experiences. Overall, they are making sound progress in their learning.

Children talk confidently to their friends and to familiar adults. They respond to simple instructions, such as, stopping their play to go to registration time. Children use vocabulary focused on people or objects of particular importance to them. They listen to stories and join in with repeated refrains. Children enjoy joining in with rhyming activities. They begin to distinguish one sound from another, such as, the sound at the start of their name. Some children recognise rhythm in spoken words. Children have favourite books. They handle books carefully, turn the pages and hold them the correct way up. Children engage in activities requiring hand-eye co-ordination. They draw lines and circles using gross motor movement. However, children are not routinely asked to name their work and the opportunities for them to mark make outdoors and in the role play area are limited.

Children show an interest in numbers and counting. They enjoy joining in with number songs and rhymes. Children willingly attempt to count with some numbers in the correct order, such as, counting the number of children present. However, staff miss opportunities to extend the more able children's knowledge during everyday routines to include simple problem solving. Some children recognise numerals of personal significance, such as, those hanging on the overhead display. Children show an interest in shape, for example, they draw a circle in the air at large group time. They observe and use positional language as they hold their white boards high and then low.

Children explore and manipulate objects when they take part in forest school sessions. They show an interest in why things happen and how things work, such as, the soft toy bird that 'sings'. Children show an awareness of change both outdoors and when taking part in the weekly cooking session. They have opportunities to join construction pieces together to build and balance. Children have the opportunities to try out a range of tools and techniques safely. They have the opportunity to construct with a purpose in mind, such as, building a nest for the

toy bird. Children show an interest in ICT and they know how to operate simple equipment competently.

Children begin to differentiate colours, for example, when talking about the colours of the rainbow. Some begin to explore what happens when they mix colours at the painting table. Children join in with favourite songs. They sing a few simple, familiar songs and some children sing to themselves as they play. Children show an interest in the way musical instruments sounds. They explore and learn how sounds can be changed, such as, when using a wooden spoon on different surfaces. Children use available resources to create props to support role play, such as, dressing up clothes. They engage in imaginative play based on their own first-hand experiences, for example, pushing the doll in the buggy. Children show an interest in what they see, hear, smell and touch as they play with a range of different materials.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children begin to learn about the cultures and faith of others through celebration of festivals. The group has a suitable range of resources which reflect positive images of the wider community. The group have links with a child in Africa with whom they regularly make contact. This helps children to develop a positive attitude to others. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are well supported by knowledgeable staff who have a clear understanding of their requirements. This enables all children to take part in activities in their own way and at their own level.

Staff are positive role models for the children. They have a calm and re-assuring manner which children seek out when they are unsure. Children follow the example set by the staff and behaviour is generally good. Staff use praise and encouragement which raises self-esteem and promotes positive behaviour. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children separate from their main carer with confidence and are keen to start playing. A child coming in said 'I'm in first this morning'. They show increasing independence in selecting and carrying out activities, for example, during free play time. Children seek out others to share experiences, for example, a child said to another 'come with me'. They feel safe and secure and demonstrate a sense of trust, such as, sitting on the laps of staff. Children show care and concern for the environment as they put food on to the bird table. They show a strong sense of self as a member of different communities as they talk freely about their family.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are given a prospectus when they first approach the group. This contains details of what the group offers and a brief overview of the curriculum followed. A copy of the group's full policies is available in the setting for parents to look through. Ongoing information is shared with parents using a communication board which is regularly updated, regular newsletters and informal chats with staff. Parents are involved in their child's learning as they help on rota duty and help children to find items to share at 'big news' time. However, they are not actively involved in their child's developmental records. Parents spoken to are happy with the care offered to their children and feel that staff are approachable.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The staff team work well together as a team and have clear role and responsibilities within the group. The play leader is suitably qualified to lead the group. She is well supported by an enthusiastic staff team and a supportive committee. Staff are well qualified and are keen to develop professionally to benefit the children attending. They are available during the session to support the children's learning or to extend what they are doing.

Staff make mostly effective use of the space, time and resources to give children effective support in their play and learning. Organisation of resources gives children the opportunity to independently select resources, giving them some choice in their play. However, organisation of large group times does not always effectively engage all of the children.

All legally required documentation is in place and is available for inspection. Parents complete the daily register when they drop their children off at the start of the session. This provides an accurate record of children's times of attendance. The groups registration certificate is clearly displayed for parents to see to keep them informed of the conditions of registration. A copy of the full policy documents are available in the setting.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. The group has had major changes in the last few months with a large increase in the numbers of children attending, new staff and a change of committee. Staff are still trying to identify how to effectively support all of the children's individual needs now that the group has grown. The group regularly reviews its practice following support visits from the local authority. Areas for improvement identified at the last inspection have been tackled in a positive manner involving all of the staff. The development plan to address areas for improvement at the group are carried out verbally. The group has positive links with the local schools, easing the children's transition to school. Overall the setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group agreed to; review the action plan to ensure that minimum qualifications are met; review the organisation of whole group activities and the presentation of role play equipment so that children's play and learning is more effectively supported and obtain written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

Staff within the group have changed and a number of them hold a childcare qualification to level 3 and two more are on training to achieve this. Staff have altered the role play area to change it around depending on which topics they are covering and the book area has been made more attractive to encourage the children to use it. Parental consent is obtained from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

At the last education inspection the group agreed to; improve the organisation of whole group activities so that children's interest is sustained; the presentation of some resources so that children are encouraged to use them; improve the maths and communication programmes for more able children so that they can continue to build on what they already know and improve the assessment of children's progress to take account of what parents know about their child.

Whole group activities were reviewed following the last inspection to include the introduction of a key worker system, space was allocated for specific activities and the group was sometimes

split. However, the numbers of children has since increased and there is scope to improve this further.

Staff reviewed the way that resources were offered to children. They have introduced a 'choosing book' so that children can choose resources they want to play with. The role play area now changes according to whichever topic staff are covering and children contribute work for the role play area.

Staff have made name plates for children to trace over their names, have purchased ICT programmes to build on this area and they give children the opportunities to count during everyday routines.

Parents are asked to complete profiles and a simple assessment before their child starts. However, opportunities for parents to look through their child's assessment records and add to these are limited.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 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 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 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 cleaning materials and areas which are not used for care are inaccessible to the children
- improve the way large group times are organised to ensure that all children are fully engaged (also applies to nursery education)
- encourage independence skills further by considering the layout of the playroom

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 observations and assessments to link to the stepping stones and to ensure that children are sufficiently challenged

- extend mark making opportunities in the role play and outdoor play areas
- provide more information to parents about the Foundation Stage and encourage them to play an active part in their child's developmental records

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