

Christ Church Play Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109909
Inspection date	08 October 2007
Inspector	Catherine Hill / Hazel Stuart-Buddery
Setting Address	Christ Church Playgroup, Gally Hill Road, Church Crookham, Fleet, Hampshire, GU52 6LH
Telephone number	01252 617130
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Registered person	Crookham Parochial Church Council
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 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?

Christ Church pre-school playgroup is run by Crookham Parochial church council. It opened in 1977 and operates from the church hall adjacent to Christ Church in Church Crookham, Fleet, Hampshire. Children have access to a semi-secure outdoor play area within the church grounds. Children come from the surrounding areas of Fleet, Aldershot, Farnborough and Cove.

A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. The playgroup is open from 09.00 to 11.45 Monday to Friday and from 12.15 to 14.45 on Wednesdays and Fridays term time only. Tuesday afternoon sessions are for four year olds who, in their last half-term, are able to bring lunch at 12.00 and stay until 14.45. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently 43 children, aged from two to three years, on roll and, of these, 28 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs eleven staff. Eight of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Professional development is ongoing for all staff. Seven members of

staff hold a current first aid certificate. The setting receives support from the Early Years and Childcare Unit and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop a good understanding of hygiene practice through daily routines. They use soap to wash their hands after using the toilets and before sitting to eat their snack. Most areas of the playgroup are kept clean. Children play with clean resources and staff ensure tables are cleaned with antibacterial spray before children sit to eat. Children are protected from illness and infection as staff work in accordance with the setting's written sickness and health and safety policies. Over half the staff have current first aid qualifications and children receive appropriate care if they have an accident. Confidential accident records are maintained containing all necessary detail although, the first aid kit has not been checked to ensure all contents are within their use by date. Detailed records are maintained of medication given to children but parents do not countersign these as an acknowledgement that it has been administered.

Children have regular opportunities to maintain and develop a healthy body through exercise and a healthy diet. They have fun outside in the fresh air as they play with balls and a skipping rope. They practise their balance skills as they use stepping stone mats and enjoy playing cricket together. Indoors they use a range of equipment to develop their fine motor control. They enjoy their daily snack of a plain biscuit with the healthy option of orange, kiwi, plum, raisins and apple. Staff encourage children to try fruit that is new to them to develop their knowledge of different foods. Children are willing to be adventurous in discovering whether they like the different tastes on offer and drink according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a warm, welcoming setting. Staff work hard to set the room out daily before children arrive with a good variety of activities and resources which promote learning in all skill areas. A range of educational posters are displayed alongside children's artwork to provide a stimulating environment for play and learning. Children show an interest in their environment and freely and independently access activities of their choice. For example, they enthusiastically engage in play with the small world farm and figures, sit and happily thread cord through reels and challenge themselves to achieve by completing a range of puzzles.

Staff are vigilant to safety within the main play room and place themselves strategically by the door during the start of the session to welcome children and parents and to ensure children do not leave unsupervised. Doors are secure during sessions and a good staff to children ratio ensures children are well supported to play and learn safely. Children learn how to keep themselves safe as they take part in regular recorded fire drills. Their welfare is very well safeguarded as staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow with any child protection concerns. Staff have attended specific training in this area and the playgroup have written policies and supporting literature to support their practice in keeping children safe.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and enjoy their time at the playgroup where they have fun playing and learning together. They joyfully sing to each other as they play and actively occupy themselves moving eagerly from one activity to another. Staff support children well and use a range of teaching strategies to develop children's knowledge and skills. They are kind and caring and take a genuine interest in what children say and do, planning a good range of topics and related activities for children to learn about. For example, children are currently learning about land, sea and air creatures.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals. They learn in a stimulating environment. Pictures, posters and children's art work decorate the walls. They access a range of well chosen resources that support their learning. Staff who deliver the Foundation Stage curriculum have completed training in this area and have a good understanding of it. Curriculum planning is effective and covers all areas of learning and each aspect over a two year period. All staff who deliver the Foundation Stage take an active role in the preparation of the planning and take responsibility on a rota basis to organise a weekly activity. Short term planning takes into account the observations and assessments on the children to ensure individual needs are met.

Children are happy and confident. They are becoming independent as they start to take responsibility for their personal hygiene with growing confidence. Children learn about sharing and taking turns. For example, children enjoy playing catch the fish with magnetic rods. Children stand and watch others try to catch the fish as they wait patiently for their turn. They happily hand over the rod after they have caught a fish. On arrival children are encouraged to recognise their full name and then the first letter and file appropriately in the alphabet board. They talk confidently to adults and peers. They listen attentively to a story and participate when asked, excitedly anticipating what the end of the story is. Children are becoming confident in numbers. They count up to 19 in circle time and enjoy singing number rhymes. However, there are limited opportunities within the environment for children to recognise numbers in print.

Children learn about the wider world as part of topic work. They learn about the passage of time as they talk about recent events such as birthdays. Children have access to a good range of technology toys. They particularly like to play with mobile phones, which they use a lot throughout the session. Children enthusiastically get ready to paint fishes, which are the theme for this week. They choose different shaped and textured sponges to create patterns and use their imagination well. Staff extend this activity for older children by talking to them about mixing and blending the colours. Children add lentils to the fish for further decoration and proudly show off their work when they have finished. They have daily opportunities to develop their physical skills. They use scissors, glue sticks and pencils with increasing skill. There are opportunities for some children to play outside and further develop their physical skills, where they enjoy using skipping ropes, bats and balls. However, outside activities are not always available for all children during every session.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have good self-esteem as a result of the praise and encouragement they receive from staff during sessions. They play amicably together, invite others to join in their games and show kindness as they independently share out play dough so all children at the table have a chance to model with it. Staff foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children develop a positive understanding of diversity and differences through planned topic work. Those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by staff pro-active in furthering their knowledge of children's differing needs. Children have very good relationships with staff and one another and their behaviour is very good. They sit quietly at registration time and listen attentively, for example, when staff explain, with the aid of good visual aids, new information about their current topic. Staff are aware of children's individual needs and quickly, and appropriately, intervene when they can see a child becoming frustrated during play. Staff act as positive role models with regard to good manners and children demonstrate an understanding of appropriate behaviour as they politely ask for more orange to drink at snack time.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. A range of information about the playgroup is shared with parents both verbally and in writing. They receive regular newsletters and can access information displayed within the setting. Parents are informed of the weekly themes, numbers and letters. Information about the Foundation Stage is given to parents before their child starts. Parents are aware who their child's key worker is. They can talk to them and look at their child's progress files at any time. Termly reports are sent out to keep parents informed of their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The playgroup's policies and procedures work to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Staff organise their time and space efficiently to meet children's learning needs. Children arrive at the playgroup and happily leave their parents and carers to spend their time productively, learning through well supported play. A generally very good range of documentation is in place to support all areas of practice although the playgroup has yet to formalise its procedure for ensuring the continuing suitability of staff to work with children. The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and work well as a team. The group is lead well by supportive staff who are committed to the on-going development of all staff and of the group. The observations, assessments and teaching methods are continually monitored and evaluated by the management to ensure good standards are maintained. Training needs are identified at annual staff appraisals. Overall, the playgroup meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection the group have improved both their safety and hygiene practice. Staff ensure all children wash their hands before eating snack. They ensure radiators do not get too hot by monitoring the thermostat control and have increased outside play security with the use of expandable trellis to prohibit children's access to some areas of the churchyard. At the last nursery education inspection the group were asked to make greater use of opportunities which arise during the course of the session to extend children's independence and self-help

skills; make greater use of opportunities which arise to encourage children to develop calculating skills and encourage those children who show interest in writing to do so. The group have addressed all issues raised. Children are gaining in confidence with their independence as they wash their hands, pour their own drinks and put on aprons ready to paint. They count how many cups they need for snack. They count three and know that adding themselves makes four. All children are given the opportunity to write their own names on their art work and have daily opportunities to spontaneously mark make.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 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.

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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):

- ensure medication records are countersigned by parents as acknowledgement of medication administered and regularly check the contents of the first aid box to ensure all contents are within date of use
- devise and implement a formal procedure for ensuring the ongoing suitability of staff to work with children

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):

- improve the mathematical programme by providing children with opportunities to recognise numbers in print within the environment
- ensure all children get an equal opportunity to develop their physical skills in outdoor play during every session.

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