

Patchway Centre Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	136049
Inspection date	28 September 2007
Inspector	Karen Elizabeth Screen
Setting Address	Patchway Community Centre, Rodway Road, Patchway, Bristol, South Gloucestershire, BS34 5PN
Telephone number	0117 9751850
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Registered person	Patchway Centre 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Patchway Centre Playgroup opened in 1986 and operates from Patchway Community Centre, in Patchway, on the outskirts of Bristol. The group use the main hall, toilets and shared enclosed outside area. The playgroup is managed by committee and serves the local community.

There are currently 28 children on roll aged between three and four years old. Of these 25 receive funding for early years education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup currently support children with learning difficulties.

The group is open daily between 09.15 and 12.00. On Monday, Wednesday and Friday they also offer a lunch club between 12.00 and 13.00 and an afternoon session from 13.00 to 15.45. The setting employs seven members of staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Overall, children's health is safeguarded because parents are provided with a note of medicines administered to their children. However, the group do not keep a written record. This is a breach of regulations. Discussion with staff revealed a willingness and resolve to keep appropriate records in the future. Staff have a 'can-do' approach to organising and undertaking additional training to ensure that children with any specific medical needs are fully supported to enable them to attend.

Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the treatment of minor accidents and follow good practice asking parents to sign accident records. Children are aware of the importance of personal hygiene and remember to wash their hands after using the toilet. Young children who require assistance in completing personal tasks, such as visiting the toilet, receive a high level of support. Children rest or relax after lunch on communal floor cushions.

Children enjoy the range and variety of snacks provided and understand which foods are good for them. Staff monitor the children's lunch boxes to ensure that they receive a balanced meal, and encourage children to eat the healthy options first. Children enjoy lunch times as a social event where they chat to their friends and staff whilst enjoying the foods provided by their parents, or the choice of hot meal ordered from a local school by the playgroup.

Children's physical development is fostered through play materials and activities such as balancing on one leg playing hop-scotch, and manoeuvring trikes around a chalk road complete with roundabouts made from clean tyres and chalk traffic lights.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are interested and want to play with the toys and resources, which are safe and in good condition. Children make selections for themselves from the easily available craft resources, which means they are able to add to adult-led activities, or work to their own designs. Children are able to choose to play inside or outside. Staff are committed to providing choice and to making the most of the available space. The environment is welcoming to parents, with helpful information posted on the notice board. For example, planning to support delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum, and annotated photographs of the staff.

Children are able to move safely around the well-maintained premises because they are supervised by vigilant staff. For example, a child is gently reminded about the reasons behind the rules for not running inside. Communication between staff and management for reporting and acting upon potential risks is robust. Children's safety and welfare is promoted through strong promotion of playgroup procedures for delivering and collecting children. In addition, visitors are challenged and asked to sign the visitors book. Children learn what to do if they have to leave the building in an emergency, as they are involved in regular fire drills. Staff demonstrate a knowledge of Child protection procedures but this is not fully supported with up to date information, such as the 'what to do I if you are worried about a child' booklet.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, keen to attend and quickly settle. They make friends with their peers and develop very good relationships with the warm and friendly staff team. Children are kind and helpful, for example an older child helps a younger child to put her apron on. Children benefit from staff who are interested in what they say and do. Their confidence and self-esteem are raised by staff who are sensitive to their needs and know them well, for example, which children prefer to play outside. Staff offer effective support through well timed interventions, such as knowing when to assist and when to leave the children to explore on their own. For example, an older child trying to pop a balloon with his feet realises that the balloon is too flexible and asks how he can pop it. The staff member suggests a pencil, and when he is successful, prompts him to consider why. Children are curious and have a positive approach to new experiences. They are becoming skilled in the use of signing as a further means of communicating.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the curriculum used to support children's learning, and are all fully involved in planning. Previous plans show which areas of learning have been covered, and are used to help ensure that each area is given sufficient emphasis over time. Staff know the children well. However, they do not make the best use of the information gained from observations and assessments to inform future planning, in order to build on what individual children already know, and plan the next steps in their learning. Good support is given to children with learning difficulties and their families; and appropriate professional advice and support is sought with the parents' consent.

Staff provide good opportunities for children to practise and develop in all areas of learning over time. Children learn to predict what will happen next and to extend their skills in a secure environment. This is because the plans, patterns within the day and the weekly routines, are well established. For example, three children independently tell a visiting adult that is 'time to tidy up', when she continues to write while the children and staff help to put the toys and resources away. Group sizes for planned activities are appropriate, but grouping of children at other times, such as for registration, does not allow all children to participate fully and results in some children losing interest.

Children respond well in a caring environment where they learn to consider other people's needs as well as their own. They learn to be cooperative, for example, helping each other to load the foam end of a rocket, prior to firing it. Children confidently interact with unfamiliar adults, such as asking for help to do up their coats before going outside to play. They happily separate from their parents and carers. For example, the youngest children appear very comfortable saying goodbye. Children show increasing independence in selecting and carrying out activities, such as mixing paint to the colour of their choice.

Staff use a variety of effective methods to support children's developing language and ability to communicate. Such as encouraging them to listen to the sound and verbal clues given to help them guess the identity of an item hidden from view. For example, the snipping sound of scissors paired with the clue that they are used for cutting. Children demonstrate very good speaking skills, for example an older child describes to his friend how to insert a compact disc into the top of the compact disc player. Children are supported by staff who take time to stop and listen. For example, a member of staff provides an audience to three children enthusiastically rehearsing the story of the Three Bears, using the finger puppets from a table-top display.

Children's understanding of number is reinforced as they take part in group memory games, concentrating on remembering which item or items have been removed. Children are beginning to use language to compare size and shape, as they construct and combine a range of different materials. Older and more able children use number names spontaneously. For example, an older child asks his friend to 'hold these two, I'll take this one'.

Children benefit from good opportunities to learn about their place in their own residential community, and about the natural environment. Children thoroughly enjoy examining objects and living things to find out more about them. For example, they learn about the requirements of plants for healthy growth, digging in the earth in the playgroup garden, planting and harvesting fruit and vegetables, and growing sun flowers. They are also encouraged to learn about the natural world through direct involvement, for example handling newly hatched chicks, and finding out that they need to be kept warm in order to survive. Children learn about the properties of water through experiments freezing water and noticing how it changes as it melts. Children learn to use technology for their own enjoyment, selecting and playing their choice of music on the compact disc player.

Children receive good support to learn new techniques, such as how to use scissors successfully. They also develop their competencies in climbing and jumping, as they negotiate their way up and down an indoor climbing frame. They improve their dexterity as they knead playdough and dance to music. Children show a well developed awareness of space as they balance on beams, and play team games, such as passing balls over their heads to their team mates.

Children learn to link sound and movement as they independently and joyfully explore the different sounds of a wide range of musical instruments. Children respond positively to what they see, hear, taste, touch and feel. They are encouraged and supported to use all of their senses to test different materials, such as earth, wood, soft fabrics, water and playdough. They are afforded the opportunity and time to explore and research their ideas to their satisfaction.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to learn about the different activities and the people involved in their residential community, through organised visits from community workers, such as fire fighters. They also take part in outings into the local community, for example to the library. Staff promote self-confidence and a positive attitude in all children. Children are valued as individuals and the staff work hard to ensure that all children can be involved in any activities on offer. Children learn to value and appreciate each other's similarities and differences. Staff use books and resources chosen to reflect diversity and acknowledge cultural differences. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children are well behaved. Staff provide good role models through their calm and polite manner and have reasonable and realistic expectations of children's behaviour. They set and maintain clear and consistent limits, using positive behaviour strategies.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents speak positively about the settling in procedures and the good relationships enjoyed between staff, parents and children. They value the friendly approachable staff, stimulating activities and good use of outdoor play facilities all year round. Warm relationships between the staff and parents, contribute to the children's confidence in the staff. Parents receive general information about the provision when they register their

children. They also receive regular newsletters, termly reports, prior information about planned activities, and suggestions for items to bring from home in order to support their children's learning. Parents are also receive personal invitations to visit the playgroup 'to see what we do'.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Good organisation of staff rotas and emergency cover, helps to ensure that familiar trusted adults care for the children in the event of staff sickness or holidays. Personal information and specific permissions are obtained before the children attend. However, the safe and efficient management of the provision is compromised because some policies and procedures have not been up-dated in line with current legislation and guidance. In addition, the arrangements for rest and relaxation do not promote the health and welfare of the children.

Leadership and management is good. The group review their practice and provision, and on the whole, successfully address areas identified for improvement through inspection. Staff work very well together and have developed a strong team spirit. Clear induction procedures enable new members of staff to quickly integrate and to become valued members of the team. Staff act upon their own training needs, encouraged and supported by the committee. For example, recent training in the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff are well qualified and have a secure understanding of the curriculum used to support children's learning. They know the children well, however, links between observation, assessment and planning are not securely tied to the next steps in children's learning. Group times do not always effectively support children's individual needs.

Improvements since the last inspection

In response to the last care inspection, the playgroup were asked to: improve children's safety by developing their knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures, and to include the procedure they will adopt if an allegation is raised against a member of staff; to ensure that the daily register accurately records the times of arrival and departure of staff and visitors; and to meet recommendations made by the Fire Safety Officer.

The child protection policy includes the action they will take if an allegation is raised against a member of staff. Staff are aware of the possible signs of children at risk of abuse or neglect, and of their responsibility to report their concerns without delay. However, they are not aware of the booklet 'What to do if you are worried a child is being abused' or that they should be following the guidance and procedures devised by their Local Safeguarding Children Board. As a result, children's welfare is not fully safeguarded. Children's safety is promoted: through regular fire drills which are recorded according to the fire Safety Officer's recommendations; and through the maintenance of accurate records of staff and visitors attendance.

As a result of the previous nursery education inspection, the playgroup engage in an ongoing self-assessment process, as a means of monitoring and evaluating their provision, in order to improve continuity and consistency across teaching methods, and to improve outcomes for children. The playgroup has also developed their planning to indicate the proposed activities and to provide good opportunities for children to handle books, use resources to support information communication technology, combine media, and to enable children to express themselves freely and imaginatively in dance and music.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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):

- keep a written record of medicines given to children
- ensure that the group have copies of up to date relevant information including any relating to the Local Safeguarding Children Board

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):

- ensure that documentation clearly reflects the children's stage of development and the next steps clearly identified and used in future planning
- ensure that children are grouped appropriately to support their individual needs

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