

Pevensey and Westham Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109480
Inspection date	05 July 2007
Inspector	Alison Weaver
Setting Address	c/o Pevensey Memorial Hall, Church Lane, Pevensey, East Sussex, BN24 5LA
Telephone number	01323 764446
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Registered person	Pevensey and Westham 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?

Pevensey and Westham Playgroup opened in 1969. It operates from two rooms in Pevensey Memorial Hall in the centre of the village. A maximum of 40 children may attend at any one time. The group opens five days a week for 38 weeks of the year. Opening times are from 09:15 to 13.00 on Mondays to Wednesdays. Opening times on Thursdays and Fridays are from 09.15 until 15.30. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 71 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 49 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 11 staff. Of these, six of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are two staff working towards a recognised qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean and warm environment. Staff help prevent the spread of infection in the setting by, for example, providing paper towels for the children to use and ensuring the tables are clean before they are used at meal times. Staff have good hygiene procedures for nappy changing. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through everyday routines, including cleaning their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children are helped to understand how to keep themselves healthy by topic work and visits from dental and theatre nurses. They talk about keeping their teeth clean and how their bodies work.

There are plenty of first aid trained staff so this ensures that children receive appropriate care in the event of an accident. Staff obtain the necessary information about children's individual health needs from parents. All information relating to health and allergies is made readily accessible to staff. This helps the setting promote children's welfare. Sick children are cared for appropriately and parents are kept informed about any health concerns.

Children are encouraged to eat healthily at snack times. They enjoy snacks such as bread sticks, raw vegetables and a variety of fruit. Jugs of water are left in sight so that children can ask staff for a drink when they get thirsty. Staff use activities to talk to the children about what is good to eat. For example, as they make 'food plates' of their favourite foods. They also enjoy food-tasting activities where they sample different fruits.

Children make good progress in their physical development as they experience a variety of different physical activities on a daily basis both indoors and outdoors. They show good co-ordination as they run outside and play safely with a variety of equipment such as trikes and cars. They enthusiastically join in with the movement activities, using their bodies in different ways. Children's fine motor skills develop well as they use a reasonable range of tools and small equipment. They have fun using large paintbrushes to 'paint' the fence with water.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from playing in a secure and safe environment. The use of a door alarm is effective in ensuring that there is no unauthorised access into the building and children cannot leave unnoticed. Staff are deployed effectively so that children are well supervised at all times. Appropriate procedures are in place to keep children safe on outings. Children learn about road safety as they walk around the local area.

Children enjoy playing with a wide range of equipment that is appropriate to their age and stage of development. Equipment is kept clean and in a good state of repair. Staff regularly carry out safety checks and risk assessments to ensure that children play safely both indoors and outdoors. Staff are very good at ensuring children stay safe on outings as they do a safety visit beforehand to assess the risks before the trip. Appropriate safety equipment is in place, including socket covers and a fire blanket. All fire equipment is regularly checked to ensure it is in good working order. The setting regularly carries out fire drills to ensure that all staff and children are fully aware of what to do in an emergency.

Staff have a good understanding of how to protect children. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of possible child abuse. Several staff have recently attended an advanced course on

child protection to extend their knowledge and skills in this area. All the staff know the appropriate procedures to follow should they have concerns about a child. This helps promote children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children confidently enter the setting and soon settle at activities when they arrive. Staff greet them and make them feel welcome. Staff are caring and friendly, helping to settle those children who need comfort and reassurance when their parents depart. Children are happy in the setting and play well together. They enjoy a wide range of activities that are made available to them. All children have opportunities to take part in quiet and more active play. They become absorbed in activities such as play dough and painting. The children move confidently around the activities, choosing what they want to play with. They communicate easily with adults and ask for help when needed. Staff make effective use of the Birth to three matters framework to observe and assess younger children's progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Practitioners have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. The curriculum is broad and balanced, covering all six areas of learning. The written plans show clear links to the areas of learning and stepping stones. Some staff make use of helpful focus activity sheets to plan activities in advance. Others informally plan and consider ways in which to extend all children at an activity. Overall, staff interact effectively with the children and extend their learning at activities. However, the use of worksheets is less beneficial for children than learning through practical experiences.

Regular observations identify children's stage of learning and these are used to complete the records of their progress. Staff identify the next steps for children and use these when discussing future plans together as a team. This helps to ensure that children are moved on in their learning.

Children develop their independence as they see to their own needs such as going to the toilet and washing their hands. However, opportunities for them to develop their independence further are not fully promoted. The children develop good relationships with peers and adults. Children talk confidently to friends and adults. They share their experiences at circle times.

Children develop an awareness of the link between sounds and letters through a variety of activities including the 'letter of the week'. They enjoy looking at books and listen intently to stories. Children explore different forms of mark making and learn to form some letters and write their names. Not all opportunities for children to practise writing their names are fully exploited.

Children confidently count and learn to recognise numerals. Children enjoy number rhymes and songs such as 'Five little firemen'. They begin to develop an understanding of simple calculation through effective staff interaction at circle times and during free play. They explore measuring as they take part in cooking activities and play with tape measures. They learn about shapes as they make different pictures and sequences. They develop an understanding of size as they sort and match different objects.

Children enjoy celebrating different festivals and learn about other countries. They regularly use different forms of simple technology such as programmable toys and remote control vehicles.

They also have regular access to a computer. They take photos with digital cameras on visits to Hampden Park and make books about their outings. Children are given opportunities to use their senses, for example, as they play with sand, water and play dough. They explore the world around them using magnifiers, microscopes and mirrors. They grow seeds and find out about life cycles.

Children express themselves creatively through a range of mediums including painting, drawing and play dough. They like to mix the colours of paint on the paper and experiment with their hands to make different patterns. They thoroughly enjoy 'painting' on the ground with water when outside. Some adult led craft activities offer less opportunity for children to express their own ideas. Children enjoy singing and playing with musical instruments. They act out various scenarios in the variety of role-play situations that are created for them.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff value children as individuals and meet their needs well. Staff obtain information from parents about their child so they can respect their wishes and meet children's needs. Staff ensure that children have access to a reasonable range of resources that represent the wider community. These include play figures, dressing up clothes, dolls and puzzles. These resources and the planned topics help children develop a positive attitude to others and learn about the world around them.

The setting has satisfactory arrangements in place to care for children with learning needs and disabilities. Staff support these children and give them the necessary care. They work closely with parents and other professionals to help these children achieve and make progress.

Children behave well and respond positively to staff. They enjoy being helpers for the adults. They learn to play happily together and to share toys. There are appropriate strategies in place to deal with any incidents. Children benefit from the praise and encouragement given by staff. Staff are calm, caring and good role models for the children. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. The parents of funded children have access to some helpful written information about the Foundation Stage. This gives them a good overall picture of what children are learning. The curriculum plans are displayed so that parents can see what activities the children are enjoying. Parents are given information of how to continue children's learning at home. Parents have regular formal meetings with staff to discuss children's progress towards the early learning goals. They are encouraged to contribute to the profiles. They have weekly access to children's observations and assessments. These help to keep parents informed about their child's achievements in the setting.

The staff build good relationships with parents of all the children. Parents are encouraged to share any concerns and information that can help staff care for their children. The displays and newsletters keep parents informed about general issues in the setting. The policies of the setting are readily accessible to parents at all times. However, the written information relating to complaints fails to meet the current regulations so does not give parents the correct procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The overall organisation of the setting works well and space is used effectively for the children. Different play areas are created in the large hall and the use of the side room is helpful for smaller groups. Children are appropriately supervised throughout the sessions. The staff work well together as a team and are supportive to each other. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The necessary documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place although not all paperwork is correctly maintained. Some accident records do not have the countersignature of parents and the records of administration of medication lack necessary detail and clarity.

There are satisfactory recruitment and induction procedures in place to help ensure that staff are suitable to work with children. There is a formal appraisal system to help support and develop staff. The staff are encouraged to keep up to date with childcare practices through ongoing training. They are clear about their individual roles and the staff rotas help the group run smoothly. There are a range of policies and procedures that give practical information to staff and parents about how the setting operates. However, the complaints procedure is out of date and does not reflect the current regulations. This is a breach of regulations but it has minimal impact on the care of children.

Leadership and management are good. The staff work together to plan the curriculum. Evaluation of the plans and activities are carried out to identify areas of improvement and ensure that children benefit from attending the setting. The staff review the overall provision regularly to identify areas where they can develop.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last care inspection, the setting has improved safety with regard to exposed radiators and pipes. This has resulted in children playing in a safer environment. The documentation for the administration of medication was improved so that parents now countersign the record. Parents are made aware of what medication the children receive in the setting and this helps prevent the danger of overdosing. However, the record for the administration of medication still lacks clarity.

At the last nursery education inspection, the setting was asked to consider making books available throughout the free play session. The staff now ensure that children have easy access to books throughout most of the session.

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.

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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):

- improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations with regard to complaints and make available to parents an up to date written statement that provides details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint
- improve documentation with regard to the administration of medication.

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):

- provide more opportunities for children to develop their independence.

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