

Playaway Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	509572
Inspection date	28 November 2007
Inspector	Alison Large / Jacqueline Munden
Setting Address	Nos 1,3 and 5 Chapel Road, West End, Southampton, Hampshire, SO30 3FE
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Registered person	MRS VANESSA LYNNE KELLOW
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 good. 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?

Playaway Day Nursery is one of three privately owned nurseries. It opened in 1997 and operates from a large site in the West End area of Southampton. It serves the local and wider area.

A maximum of 90 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:30 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 129 children from three months to five years on roll. Of these, 38 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area and are able to attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 23 members of staff, the majority of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications or are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is assured in the clean and well maintained environment. They are well protected by staff who follow effective procedures and practices, such as when nappy changing, staff wear disposable gloves and apron and spray the changing mats with antibacterial cleaner. Babies' emotional well-being is nurtured by staff who manage their individual feeding and sleeping routines well. Older children play an active part in keeping themselves healthy by independently taking themselves to the toilet and washing their hands. Good use of documentation ensures that staff are recording accidents or the administration of medicines and permission is obtained from parents to enable staff to seek emergency treatment.

Children develop a good understanding of healthy eating, as snacks always include fruit. All babies and children are offered nutritious meals each day, including a two course cooked meal at lunchtime, which increases their understanding of the importance of eating a healthy balanced diet. Main meals are freshly cooked on the premises each day and are provided in a pureed or mashed form for the babies and toddlers. Staff are effective in supporting younger children to develop their independence, for example, by helping them learn to feed themselves.

Children develop a good range of skills during their physical play. They enjoy their outdoor time in the garden, when they can access a range of equipment which enables them to practise skills, such as climbing, peddling and crawling. Babies are regularly taken outside where they enjoy the fresh air and change of scenery. They have the use of play equipment to crawl and climb on indoors. Children confidently use a good range of small equipment to increase their manipulative skills, such as scissors and pencils and are gaining in control and coordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery offers a warm and inviting environment for both parents and children. Effective use of the available space both inside and out enables children to move freely, but safely, accessing well maintained toys and play materials. Children's work and photographs are displayed, providing an attractive and stimulating environment for both children and parents. Babies and toddlers are carefully monitored while they sleep and records of their routines in their daily journals, are shared with parents. Older children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own safety when using the stairs and the garden and are spoken to about keeping safe before they go out to play. The emergency evacuation procedure, is practised regularly, which means all children are familiar with what to do should an emergency situation arise.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection procedures and their roles and responsibilities. A policy is shared with all new staff during their induction process and parents can access information about the child protection policy on request. Staff also regularly share information about accidents and incidents with parents, which means the welfare of the children is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children in all rooms are offered a wide variety of stimulating age and stage related resources and activities. Babies and toddlers benefit from the provision of a good range of resources and activities, they build strong relationships with the staff and enjoy the wide range of activities and experiences offered to them. They love to explore the different activities provided. Babies and younger children are able to sleep or be active according to their needs and routines. A range of activities is planned using the Birth to three framework for younger children. Staff are attentive and responsive to the younger children, talking to them and encouraging them to use their voices. They provide an exciting and stimulating learning environment, in which babies and young children initiate much of their own learning, helping them develop good levels of independence and competence in these early stages of their learning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

Children have access to a wide range of resources. These are laid out in different areas over the two floors of the house and children make choices of where to play. For example, a role play room, a science room, a book corner and a computer area are available. Children relish using the very well equipped outdoor areas. Practitioners ensure this is an extension of the learning environment as resources are provided to cover all areas of learning. For example, as well as equipment to promote physical development, children use chalk to make marks on the ground and grow plants. Most practitioners have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use effective strategies for teaching children and make learning interesting. Practitioners are deployed well through the session and most encourage learning by asking challenging questions and offer good explanations when required. For example, when making gloop a practitioner asks, 'we have already used two boxes of cornflower, when we add this one how many will we have used?' Practitioners give high regard to ensuring children become confident and grow in independence. Children are listened to and respected. They learn to put on their outdoor shoes and coats before going out to play; they pour their own drinks and select fruit at snack time. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are generally well supported. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator, (SENCO), seeks support from the Area Inclusion Officer and works with parents and other professionals as needed to support children appropriately. However, documents are not maintained to record or monitor this process.

The setting uses a planning system that revolves around children's interests and ideas. This ensures most children are interested and involved in their learning as they say what they want to do and explore. The skill of key practitioners ensures this happens but this does not always ensure all areas of the early learning goals are covered. Practitioners make observations and complete children's assessment records. However, their progress is not easy to track therefore these records are not used effectively to plan for the next stage in children's development.

Children enjoy using books at the book corner and listening to stories in large and small groups. Children are introduced to the shapes and sounds of letters as opportunities arise through play, for example, when using puzzles and stencils. Children can practise early writing skills at the drawing/writing area and resources are readily available. However, there are few planned opportunities for children to learn to recognise their names for example at arrival or snack time, and to challenge more able children in their writing skills. They use language well to organise their role play or talk about what they have been doing.

Many children count well, some up to 10 and beyond. They enjoy puzzles, games and number rhymes which help them to recognise numbers and to count. They take part in activities to explore shape and size including filling and emptying measuring jugs with water. They are beginning to use mathematical language during these activities as practitioners use language such as, 'put it on the middle table please'. Children learn to solve simple problems as they work out how many plates and cups are needed as they lay the tables for lunch.

Children have regular use of the computer and tackle simple programmes with confidence. They explore the natural world using the outdoor area for planting and growing. They talk about the weather and the changes in the trees in the garden. Children learn about the world we live in as they use resources and observe posters which reflect a range of beliefs and cultures and taste foods from different countries.

Children enjoy the many creative experiences offered. They have free access to paint and to create collages. Some planned creative activities allow for appropriate adult direction which helps children explore when mixing colours and using different tools for applying paint.

Children use their imaginations well during role play and enjoy creating their own rules for games when playing outside. They learn to cooperate well with each other as they take turns on the computer and to share toys. The reflective journal shows photographs and records of children using musical instruments for fun as well as in experiments; a chart they made shows which instruments sound most like the rain and those most like thunder.

Children's small muscles are developing well as they use a wide range of equipment such as pencils, puzzles and tools. Large muscles are developed through taking part in robust and physical activities such as climbing on the challenging outdoor apparatus and music and movement activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Babies and toddlers are cared for by attentive staff who are responsive and meet their needs well. They settle in quickly and are developing their self-assurance. Staff complete daily journals with information about each child's particular sleeping and feeding routine, which they then share with the parents. All children are very involved in the routines of the nursery, they talk about the rules and help to tidy away. Children's individual personalities are valued by staff, who praise good behaviour and achievements such as crawling or lining-up well. As a consequence, children respond well and behaviour is good. Staff are able to support children with learning difficulties and work alongside the parents. However, the nursery SENCO is new to her role and still attending training, which means not all procedures for additional needs are being implemented fully.

Children are gaining in self-confidence and form good relationships with staff and each other. They concentrate well and are learning to share and take turns and staff provide support for those children who find this difficult. Children are keen to learn and to develop new skills. Parents of the younger children feel that staff are very approachable and that they gain a good insight into their child's day during verbal feedback when they collect their children.

Partnerships with parents and carers is satisfactory.

Parents in the pre-school find practitioners approachable and feel able to discuss any issues which may arise. They are welcomed into the setting and form relaxed relationships with practitioners. Parents are provided with suitable information about the setting including that regarding the Foundation Stage and how children progress through the stepping stones. Parents are invited to comment on and contribute to the reflective journal which allows them to be involved in their child's learning. However, not all parents are aware of this or that it is the planning for the education curriculum. Parents are kept informed of their child's progress as this is shared regularly through general chats at collection time with the opportunity to meet with a practitioner each term; at which parents are invited to contribute to the child's portfolio.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are included and happy in the well organised nursery environment. They are cared for in bright and welcoming premises where staff are appropriately checked and qualified. Staff work directly with the children, providing good support where required. They work effectively as a team, have clear roles and responsibilities, and ensure that children's individual needs are met. Aims and objectives have been set for the day nursery and there is a clear management structure in place.

Essential records are kept for each child and shared with the parents, ensuring that children's welfare and care are of a good standard. Staff get to know the children well through the use of information obtained on the children's registration forms and through daily communication with parents. Staff complete daily registers for children and staff, however, these are not always maintained as required in every building. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures, are shared with both staff and parents.

Leadership and management is satisfactory.

Practitioners working with children in the pre-school are suitably qualified and trained. They know each other well which ensures that they work well as a team. They have appraisals and their training needs are generally identified. They are committed to providing an interesting and stimulating environment for children to learn. However, an effective system for the management team to monitor what happens is not in place. The recently implemented planning system is not being suitably evaluated. Therefore, some children are not always correctly challenged in their learning. Practitioners new to their position are not always monitored or supported to ensure they fulfil the role. For example, the work of the settings SENCO is not reviewed by the manager to ensure the nursery procedure is followed.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the nursery were asked to ensure that staff in the 3-12 month baby unit manage children effectively so that the quality of their interactions significantly enhances all aspects of children's learning and environment. Since the last inspection the nursery have ensured the staff working in the baby room plan to the Birth to three matters framework and have attended various training courses, which means babies are receiving a high level of care and interaction from staff. A new extension which has been built on the baby unit has ensured the environment the babies use has been significantly enhanced.

At the last nursery education inspection the nursery were asked to ensure parents are given a clear view of their child's progress and that information is linked to the six areas of learning;

to improve planning to enable the activities to be focused correctly enabling each child to progress; and to increase the staff's understanding so they are clear of the learning outcomes of the focused activity.

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):

- ensure the registration system records children and adults present in each building at all times
- ensure progress of children with additional needs is monitored and suitable records kept and that staff are aware of and follow the settings procedure

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):

- continue to develop the planning system to ensure all aspects of the six areas of learning are covered and based on children's assessments so as to offer appropriate challenge to move children on to the next stage in their learning
- improve the system to monitor and evaluate the planning and delivery of the curriculum

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