

# St Peter and St Paul Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109514
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Liz Margaret Caluori
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Peter & St Paul Church, Parkstone Road, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 2NT
<b>Telephone number</b>	01424 752 935
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	St Peter and St Paul Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

St Peter and St Paul Playgroup opened in 1971 and operates from a room within the church building. It is situated in a residential area of Hastings close to local shops and schools.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday morning from 09:30 to 11:45, except for Wednesday when it opens at 09:15, with afternoons on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 12:30 to 14:45 for 38 weeks of the year. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 47 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 25 children receive funding for their nursery education. The playgroup is able to support children who speak English as an additional language as well as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs eight staff, of whom four either hold or are working towards a recognised qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are protected by the very effective hygiene procedures in place throughout the setting. The premises are clean before the children arrive and staff ensure that tables are wiped thoroughly with anti-bacterial spray before snacks are served. Children are not routinely offered plates with their snacks. Whilst this does not compromise the standards of hygiene, it does not support them to develop their social skills.

Children are developing good self-care skills. They routinely wash their hands before eating and after using the toilets. They are also provided with tissues for coughs and sneezes.

Children are well supported to eat healthily. They are provided with fruit snacks during the session with a choice of milk or water to drink. Drinks are not generally set out for children at other times unless they specifically ask. However, additional drinks are offered on particularly hot days.

Staff with first aid qualifications are present at all times. This ensures that children can be cared for in case of an accident. Appropriate procedures are also in place regarding the care of sick children and the administration of medicines. The setting maintains the required written records.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are protected by a range of precautions in place throughout the setting. These include the use of covers in all used sockets and safety gates to restrict access to the kitchen. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of children, particularly in the outdoor play area. Good security arrangements are also in place as visitors cannot gain entry without being let in by a member of staff.

Toys and equipment are well maintained and appropriate for the ages and stages of development of the children attending.

Clear procedures are in place to protect children from the risk of fire. Emergency exits are clearly identified, evacuation drills are practised regularly and fire fighting equipment is in place.

The staff team have a good knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and of their responsibility to report any concerns. The chair of the committee and the managers are aware of the process to be followed.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are very warmly welcomed into the nursery; they come in happily and most settle easily. Those who experience difficulty separating from their parents and carers respond very well to the sensitive support they receive. Staff are skilful at diverting children towards appropriate activities and maintaining very positive, friendly relationships.

The children all have access to the same range of activities for the majority of the sessions. Activities are adapted to offer an appropriate level of challenge to each child. Additional

pre-school sessions are provided for the older children and these have increased focus on working through the National Curriculum.

Children enthusiastically take part in activities and enjoy the opportunities they receive to explore and investigate for themselves.

Children's individual personalities are very well understood within the setting. Staff listen to them with genuine interest. On a typical day they will choose from free play activities including arts and craft, small world play, books, role play, puzzles and a range of physical games. In addition, they take part in planned activities such as investigating science, joining in singing sessions and looking at nature.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum. There are effective systems in place to assess children's individual levels of development. The staff team communicate constantly which supports them to plan for the next steps for each child. This system relies heavily on information being shared verbally as written recording systems do not routinely show differentiation for individual children. All staff are involved in making observations of each child as the setting does not operate a key worker system.

Children are developing extremely broad vocabularies and use very expressive language. They are keen to ask questions and share experiences from home with the staff. Staff are very skilful at extending conversations and engage children in lively, interesting conversations. Children are provided with a good selection of books which are attractively displayed in the book corner. Children make good use of the extensive range of resources provided to practise writing in their free play as well as supervised activities.

Children regularly take part in freely expressive arts and crafts activities. They thoroughly enjoy exploring colours and mixing paints. They respond very well to the praise and encouragement that they receive from staff. Children are also provided with opportunities to engage in role play and small world play on a regular basis.

A range of resources are provided to support children's mathematical development. In addition, staff are competent at incorporating mathematical concepts into a variety of different activities. Children count confidently and are beginning to understand the basics of addition and subtraction.

Children are making satisfactory progress in their knowledge and understanding of the world. They do not have access to a computer but the setting has ordered a number of programmable toys. Children are also learning about the wider world through topics work such as studying nature and looking at different celebrations and special days. They also go on outings to learn about their local environment.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's behaviour is very good. They are polite, well-mannered and caring. They are engaged and interested as they select activities and socialise with their peers. They have good self-esteem and are able to express themselves confidently.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They learn about different people from throughout the community by taking part in activities to mark different celebrations and special days. They are supported in their play by a range of toys that are aimed at promoting positive images of people from throughout the community. Whilst the setting has a clear commitment to providing equal opportunities and promoting anti-discriminatory practice, this is not outlined in a written policy.

There are good arrangements in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The staff team has a very positive attitude towards meeting the needs of all children. Similarly, there are effective procedures in place to care for children with English and an additional language.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. All parents are able to view the written planning which indicates the intending learning outcome for each activity. However, parents whose children receive funding for their nursery education are not routinely given advice and support to understand the Foundation Stage of the National Curriculum. Parents are greeted very warmly by staff. Many also take turns in helping out in the group which enables them to become familiar with the procedures and routines of the setting. Children benefit from these very positive relationships as they provide a strong link between the nursery and their home. The setting has a written policy outlining the procedure to be followed should a parent wish to make a complaint. However, this does not fully comply with the requirements of the National Standards.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the setting is generally effective. Staff ratios are high which results in each child receiving a good amount of adult attention. Four of the eight members of staff either hold or are working towards childcare qualifications. Staff are generally organised into two teams with each team working different sessions during the week. There is, however, some cross over of staff to ensure consistent practice.

The group operates from a bright, well maintained hall at the rear of a church and all children are cared for in the same large room. This open plan arrangement creates a lively, sociable atmosphere and also allows good visibility for staff to supervise children. The space is well used to allow a wide range of activities to take place at the same time.

The leadership and management of the setting are satisfactory. The manager and staff team work very effectively together and communicate effectively. They are committed to continually improving the service provided.

The setting has a range of written policies and procedures in place. However, these tend to be brief and do not include sufficiently detailed information. In addition, the equal opportunities policy, required under the National Standards, has been omitted.

All required records and information on children is maintained and is generally well ordered and easily accessible.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Following the last inspection, a number of recommendations were made. The group were asked to improve the practices in place regarding hand washing. Children now routinely wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. This results in improved hygiene and supports the children to develop good self-care skills.

It was also recommended that the group make improvements to written policies. Whilst the group has been partially successful in addressing the issues raised, weaknesses remain in this area.

At the time of the last inspection the ratio of qualified staff was low. The group has been pro-active in ensuring that this be improved and now meets the required ratio of having 50% of staff who are either qualified or working towards a recognised qualification.

These improvements contribute to the effective management of the setting.

### **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.

## **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):

- review and improve the arrangements relating to food and drink by providing children with plates at snack times and having drinks set out at all times
- ensure that all required written policies and procedures are in place and that these are shared with all staff and made available to parents and carers

#### **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):

- consider revising the system for planning to include differentiation for individual children.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)