

Todmorden Community Playgroup and National Out of School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector	Rachel Ayo
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Registered person	Todmorden Community Playgroup Committee
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional care, Out of School 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?

Todmorden Community Playgroup and National After School Club is run by a committee and has been operating from the current premises since 2002, although the setting has been running since 1995. The playgroup and out of school club operate from a pre-fabricated building within the grounds of Todmorden C of E Infant and Junior School in Todmorden, Lancashire. Children who attend the playgroup and out of school club have access to two rooms within the pre-fabricated building. The ICT suite within the school is additionally used by the playgroup and the ICT suite, hall and classrooms five and one are used by the out of school club. A maximum of 51 children may attend the out of school care sessions and a maximum of 49 children may attend the playgroup sessions at any one time.

The playgroup offers a range of sessions during term time only. This includes full day care where sessions run from 09.15 to 15.15 and morning and afternoon sessions which run from 09.15 to 11.45 and 12.45 to 15.15. A lunch club is additionally offered to children who attend on a sessional basis. The out of school care sessions run from 07.30 to 08.55 and from 15.00 to 18.00 during term time only. Wraparound care is provided for the playgroup children between 08.45 to 09.15. During holidays the out of school care sessions run from 07.30 to 18.00. Children

have access to an enclosed outdoor area adjoining the premises and areas of the school playground.

There are currently 51 children on roll within the playgroup. Of these, 22 receive funding for nursery education. There are currently 197 children on roll in the out of school club from 3 years to 12 years.

Within the playgroup, nine staff are employed including the manager; all hold an appropriate qualification. Within the out of school club, 13 staff are employed including the manager. Of these, nine staff hold an appropriate qualification and two are working towards a qualification. A number of additional support staff and volunteers, including parents helpers, are used at the setting. The setting receives support from Calderdale Early Years and the Pre-school Learning Alliance and have gained quality assurance accreditation through the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The setting is part of the healthy schools award and the breakfast club award for a healthy service.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Overall, children are well protected from infection because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, they wear aprons and gloves when serving or preparing food or changing nappies and clean tables with an antibacterial solution before children eat. When children are given a snack such as fruit they each have an individual serviette. Staff implement good hand washing routines, for example after changing nappies, which minimise cross-infection, as do the separate hand drying arrangements. Children sufficiently learn to understand simple good health practices, for example, through role play, such as a dentist area.

Children are effectively taken care of if they have an accident or become ill because procedures are well implemented. For example, staff act in the children's best interest if they become unwell, such as by contacting parents, and all staff hold a current first aid certificate and have received training in the use of an EpiPen. This means that they are able to respond promptly and competently to an accident or medical emergency.

Children are helped to be well nourished. Lunchtime meals in the playgroup are provided by the school, which follow Jamie Oliver's school dinner theme, effectively promoting healthy eating. Meals are well balanced and offer children a good variety. Children have healthy drinks at snack time, such as milk, and parents are given the option of providing an individually labelled bottle of water for their children to access at all times. Parents of the children who attend the holiday club provide packed lunches and staff offer advice on healthy lunch boxes and what can be stored safely. Children in the breakfast club readily choose from a large bowl of fruit, cereal or toast on their arrival.

Staff plan a wide range of topics to help children learn about healthy eating and living. For example, children make a fruit salad from fruit that they have helped to buy, make sandwiches with cress that they have grown and make milkshakes with fresh fruit. Staff use discussion within the daily routines to additionally support this aspect of children's learning. For example, they explain that milk is good for bones and teeth and helps our bodies to become big and strong.

Children have excellent opportunities to benefit from fresh air and exercise as they take part in daily physical activity. They have open access to the garden and clearly enjoy playing in the extremely well resourced area. For example, older children skilfully manoeuvre a wheeled plastic container as two of their peers sit inside; they competently stop in time to avoid any obstacles. All children clearly enjoy balancing on the wooden planks and giggle as they attempt to twirl the hula hoops by wriggling their hips. An ample range of activities and resources enables children to develop competence in the use of their fine motor skills. For example, older children skilfully roll out dough and use cutters to create a range of shapes and younger children use the spreader to put glue onto their picture before sticking a range of collage materials on.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming environment. Resources are set up invitingly for when children arrive. This means that they are readily accessible, enabling children to make choices about their play and learning. Bright artwork and posters adorn the walls creating a pleasant visual impact for parents and children. Overall, space is used well to meet children's needs and enable them to engage in a varied range of activities. However, insufficient provision is made for those children who stay full days in the playgroup who may wish to sleep, including a lack of furniture. Children use suitable and safe equipment, which is checked regularly and maintained in good repair to promote children's welfare.

Children are cared for in a suitably safe environment. For example, electrical sockets are covered, heaters are guarded and hazardous materials are inaccessible. Staff making toast during the breakfast club ensure that children are kept away from electrical equipment. Playgroup staff demonstrate safe practice to minimise accidental injury, such as ensuring that any water spillages are cleared away. Staff are regularly reminded about policies and procedures as they are required to take home the health and safety file every six months. There are good systems in place for monitoring access via the main entrance to promote children's safety and welfare. However, a second entrance to the premises and outdoor areas are not effectively secured and risk assessments are not completed for some areas used by the children.

Children effectively learn to keep themselves safe. Staff plan a range of activities through topics, which include visits from people within the community such as a police, fire or road safety officer. Photographs show children using role play props, for example, a zebra crossing, lollypop person costume and lollypop stick as they practise how to cross the road safely. Staff additionally use discussion within the daily routine. For example, when talking to the children about magnets they say that these are not sweets and remind children not to put the magnets in their mouths; they say that this is dangerous because the children could choke.

Overall, children are safeguarded as staff understand their role in child protection. They all receive in house training as part of their induction and are aware of a range of possible signs of abuse or neglect. They are fully aware that all concerns must be passed on to a senior staff member, who will then pass this information on to the designated person who has had up to date training on safeguarding procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very well settled, presenting as happy because of effective settling-in arrangements. Staff are attentive and caring, for example, as they offer a cuddle and reassuring words to new

children who are a little upset. They are fully aware of their needs, such as a special comforter, which helps children to develop warm and trusting relationships and feel secure. Staff promote children's self-esteem. They show an interest in what they say and do and talk to them about what they are doing, for example, as they play in the sand with toy diggers or ask them about a special event, such as the birth of a new sibling.

Younger children are making good progress because staff are very aware and understanding of their needs. Through training, they have developed a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. They clearly link this to planning and children's record of achievements, which contain a range of information to show progress, such as annotated photographs. Younger children clearly enjoy their time at the setting and show good levels of interest in the broad and interesting range of activities and resources available. For example, they enthusiastically engage in free painting, squash the dough or roll it between their hands to create shapes and delight in water play as they splash, pour and fill using different utensils. They acquire new skills as they explore and examine the collage materials and learn that they first need to spread the glue before putting the materials onto their paper. Children eagerly participate in circle time as a wide range of simple songs are introduced. They clearly enjoy jumping into the 'pool' as they sing Five Little Speckled Frogs and pretend to pay the baker as they sing Five Spotty Biscuits.

Staff in the out of school care provision ensure that children spend their time purposefully through a wide range of exceptionally well planned activities, such as decorating wooden spoons, creating felt puppets or making autumn masks. They arrive happily for the breakfast or out of school club and chat excitedly to their friends, for example, as they eat breakfast together. The children cooperate as they build complex models with construction toys or play a game and relate well to adults including the inspector. For example, they happily talk to the inspector as they eat their breakfast. They say that they enjoy attending the setting because they have fun and particularly enjoy playing outside and taking part in creative activities. Children are fully involved in sharing their ideas and taking ownership for what happens during the out of school sessions, which helps them develop a sense of belonging and responsibility. Staff balance their interaction carefully to ensure that children are supported as necessary, for example, when they are attempting to complete a more complex puzzle.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage, which means that they plan a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences which motivate children to learn and enable them to make good progress in most areas, as shown in detailed progress records. Weekly plans reflect how all the supporting activities encompass the planned learning objective, however, focused activity sheets do not show how activities are adapted to suit children of different ages who learn at different rates. Teaching stimulates children's interest and encourages them to stay focused and persist at activities for some time, for example, through the good use of props at story time. The staff's spontaneous enthusiasm, motivation and use of effective questioning challenge and support children to achieve as much as they can. An interesting environment is created by staff and they make good use of their time and resources to support children's learning.

Children persist for extended periods of time at an activity of their choosing, such as painting or building a wall with construction bricks. They initiate interactions with others showing cooperation and turn taking. For example, they put up their hand and patiently wait when they want to tell staff something during circle time, greet each other politely through a song and

negotiate to share out a large piece of dough fairly. Children use language confidently in a range of ways. For example, they approach the inspector to ask for help in fixing the toy parrot cage or to invite them to sit on the carpet, eager to talk about a significant event. Younger children describe their painting of 'mummy' and older children excitedly recall what happens next during the 'Room on the Broom' story. Although children are developing some health and bodily awareness, for example healthy eating, they are not sufficiently learning about good practice with regards to hand washing.

Children confidently choose their name to self-register and are encouraged to label their own creations, such as a collage. Some children are able to write their names whilst others write individual letters or make their own marks. They confidently identify letters and the sounds of letters during circle time when talking about baby animals, for example, 'c' for 'calf'. Children confidently count to 10 or above as they establish how many children are present and engage in simple calculation as they correctly estimate how many spotty biscuits remain when one is bought. Children learn about shape, space and measure, such as when filling and pouring in the water tray, or as they find items, such as the sticky tape from positional or directional clues.

Children respond, express and communicate their ideas through a range of media. Photographs show children feeling the vibrations of the cello and creating movement in response to the music. Children learn that media can be combined as they use a range of materials to work creatively on a small scale to make a collage. Children engage in imaginative play and introduce amusing narrative as they designate a specific role to each other, such as 'auntie'. Children construct with a purpose in mind using a variety of resources and learn that tools need to be used safely, for example, when taking part in woodwork.

Children engage in a wide range of activities and go on an extensive range of trips within the local and wider community to help them observe and find out about the place they live and the natural world. For example, photographs show them visiting an aquarium, caring for snails, stroking new born chicks, digging for worms, catching rain in buckets and visiting the local garage, fire station and town hall. Children excitedly talk about what is seen and what is happening, for example, as the texture and appearance of the paper towels change when they are used to soak up the spilt water.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All families are welcomed positively into the setting. Children have their individual needs met because staff work effectively with parents to ensure that children are valued and included fully in the life of the setting. This includes those who have a particular health or dietary requirement and need more vigilant care. Positive relationships are established before placement through as many visits as is necessary for children to feel secure. Parents receive generally good information about the setting including some policies, and an information sheet provides parents with a daily record about their children. A wide range of notices informs parents about a variety of aspects of the setting and parents are encouraged to share their views via the comments box. This helps staff to take into account parents' ideas or wishes when evaluating the setting and its effectiveness. Discussion with parents reflects extremely positive comments about the setting and care of their children.

Children benefit from a wide range of resources and activities which help them value diversity and gain an awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others. For example, they learn about, and

taste, different types of bread from around the world, play a range of interesting musical instruments, observe posters reflecting positive images and celebrate a variety of festivals.

All children are extremely well behaved. Even those new to the setting are learning to respond to appropriate expectations for their behaviour because staff act as good role models, set clear boundaries and use a wide range of effective strategies. For example, staff in the playgroup remind children five minutes before tidy up time to minimise conflict or incidents of frustration and remind children about the ground rules, such as listening; they ask children to find their ears. Children relate well to others, for example, as they play cooperatively in the home corner, take turns to push each other in the wheeled container or share the utensils in the water tray. Staff develop children's self-esteem through the use of frequent praise and encouragement. For example, staff say 'super' when children have helped to tidy the dough away and achievements are acknowledged with a smiley stamp, which children proudly show off. Children who attend the out of school sessions are fully involved in setting the ground rules and when asked they demonstrate a good understanding of the boundaries set and methods used for unwanted behaviour. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers in relation to the nursery education is good. They receive good quality, detailed, but user-friendly, information about the Foundation Stage and activities and how these help children learn. Parents are well informed about their child's achievements through initial explanations about how progress is monitored and the records used. Following this, termly reports are shared at parents evenings and parents are invited to contribute to their child's profile at any time. Parents are actively encouraged to be involved with their child's learning. For example, regular newsletters inform them about particular topics or themes and include ideas on how children's learning can be extended and supported at home. Parents express delight and positive comments about the provision including staff.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Adults have a clear sense of purpose and commitment to continual improvement. Self-evaluation forms are regularly completed and reflect the strengths of the setting and any areas to enhance outcomes for children. The participation in an accreditation scheme also reflects this. Clear aims and values, which staff implement, are reflected in the operational plan and staff are highly supported in their personal development, which benefits the children in the setting.

Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust in ensuring that children are protected and cared for by staff with a good knowledge and understanding of child development. A high level of staff are qualified and regular appraisals ensure the continual development of staff as training plans are devised and monitored. Overall, the effective use of time, space and staff deployment means that children's individual needs are met, that they can make choices and are well supported, with staff spending much of their time sitting directly with children. Good liaison between the two staff teams in the playgroup and out of school club ensures consistency for the children and a positive environment.

Documentation is generally maintained well to promote the efficient and safe management of the setting and most policies and procedures are in line with requirements, reviewed regularly and work in practice. However, the complaints policy and log and child protection policy have not been updated to reflect changes and are not shared effectively with parents.

Leadership and management with regards to the nursery education are good. Clear staffing procedures and a supportive management structure are in place. The manager works directly with staff and children to act as an excellent role model, which reflects in staff working as an extremely enthusiastic, dedicated and effective staff team. Regular staff meetings and excellent arrangements for staff development ensure that consistency in improving the care and education for children is maintained. Excellent arrangements are in place to promote a successful transition for children leaving playgroup to commence school, ensuring their confidence and self-esteem.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection a small number of recommendations were made with regards to documentation and the procedures for the administration of medicines. Staff have enhanced record keeping required for the efficient and safe management of the provision by devising a log for incidents of physical intervention. Children's safety and welfare is enhanced through detailed medicine forms that include prior written parental consents.

At the last nursery education inspection a point for consideration was raised with regards to sharing additional information with new parents. Parents are now informed via the welcome brochure about information kept on the children, which enhances working in partnership.

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 all 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 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 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 that provision is made for children who wish to relax, play quietly or sleep, equipped with appropriate furniture
- improve the security of the premises, including any outside play area and ensure that risk assessments are conducted for all areas used by children

- review and update the child protection statement and the complaints policy and log to ensure that they are in line with requirements and ensure that these policies are shared effectively with parents.

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):

- further develop children's understanding of health and bodily awareness with regards to hygiene
- enhance planning systems with regards to the information included about differentiation.

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