

# Stutton Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	400344
<b>Inspection date</b>	04 December 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jacqueline Patricia Walter

<b>Setting Address</b>	The Village Hall, Manor Road, Stutton, Tadcaster, North Yorkshire, LS24 9BJ
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Stutton Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 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?

Stutton Playgroup is a committee run provision that is registered for full time care. It opened in 1971 and operates from two rooms in a village hall. The provision is situated in Stutton, which is a village near Tadcaster, in North Yorkshire. A maximum of 24 children may attend the setting at any one time. The provision is open each weekday, during term time, from 09.15 to 15.45, with the exception of Wednesday afternoons. The staff operate a lunch club during the hours of 11.45 to 13.15. Children attend from the surrounding areas and have access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor area.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to four years on roll. Of these 13 children receive funding for nursery education. The provision currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

The provision employs six staff. Four of the staff, including the managers hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is currently working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because practitioners are very active in following current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, they follow good procedures, such as wiping tables and using clean tablecloths before meals take place. There is an appropriately stocked first aid kit, which is on occasions checked and replenished and written consent from parents is obtained prior to care being provided regarding the seeking of emergency advice and treatment. There is also a qualified member of staff in first aid available at all times as a result of all the staff completing appropriate training courses. This means that children are able to receive emergency treatment at any time.

Children are developing a good awareness and understanding of simple good health and hygiene practice. Older children know why they are washing their hands and are familiar and independent with everyday routines, such as washing their hands before snack time. They are able to join in with some cleaning activities, which helps to develop further understanding. For example, they are able to sweep up sand from the floor using a child-sized broom. Children have good opportunities to enjoy and develop physical skills both inside and outside the setting. For example, they are able to experiment with music and movement using ribbons and scarves and develop their co-ordination and skills in group activities when using a parachute.

Children are well nourished through staff and parents working effectively together in providing healthy and nutritious meals and snacks. For example, parents provide fresh fruit on a weekly basis and staff provide alternatives, such as ingredients for sandwiches, cream crackers and toast. In addition to advising parents on how to store packed lunches safely, staff actively encourage parents to provide healthy meals through written guidance and suggestions. Children's dietary requirements are fully taken account of and staff successfully meet their individual needs. Food hygiene is implemented well, through staff following good procedures when preparing food. All staff have completed a food hygiene training course and successfully implement environmental health recommendations, such as recording fridge temperatures. This means that children can eat their meals and snacks safely.

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

The provision is good.

Children are developing a very good sense of belonging in this warm and welcoming accommodation. For example, they are very familiar with routines, such as self-registration and know they can ask to access the outdoor area as they wish. Space is safely and effectively organised with areas, such as a quiet room being made available for more focussed activities to take place and staff making lists of children who are using the outdoor area. Equipment and activities are also effectively organised. They are set out before children arrive and as a result children can safely, easily and independently access play materials of their choice. Staff encourage children's understanding and learning of keeping themselves safe well. For example, children participate in evacuation drills and staff talk and guide them on how to use equipment and conduct themselves safely when in the setting. As a result, more able children know they must go outside with staff when there is a fire and not to run in the setting as they might fall and hurt themselves.

Children are cared for very safely in this secure and safe environment. Staff implement good procedures to ensure their security. For example, temporary fencing is set up when the outdoor area is in use and external doors are locked, with visitors only being admitted when accompanied by staff. Positive steps, such as the fitting of door guards to stop children locking themselves in and staff keeping the kitchen door bolted at all times ensure children have free and safe access to all rooms and areas of play. Children are kept safe on outings as a result of some positive steps being implemented. For example, ratios are reduced to reflect one adult to two children and a mobile phone is taken with them at all times. However, little attention is paid to how safe children are when accessing the venues, and in dealing with accidents. For example, staff do not take a first aid kit with them.

Staff have very good knowledge of the signs and symptoms of child abuse. They are fully aware of the procedures to follow should a child disclose information, such as listening, advising the children that they must report it, praising and reassuring children for their courage and making detailed records of what children actually say. They are fully familiar with the procedures to follow if concerns are raised and know there is relevant guidance and contact numbers for emergency services easily available in the setting. Staff ensure students receive appropriate child protection training as soon as possible and they regularly update their knowledge through the attendance of child protection courses. As a result, children's welfare is safeguarded well.

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

The provision is good.

Children are developing good confidence. They are very independent in accessing activities and are developing good self-esteem through lots of praise from staff for both effort and achievement. Children are curious and motivated. For example, two year olds enjoy investigating what objects attract themselves to magnets, without adult intervention. Children use their initiative well and are stimulated and interested in the activities available. For example, they enjoy feeling and describing the texture of clay as well as experimenting with water to make it more pliable.

Children confidently acquire new knowledge and skills through the staff providing a wide and stimulating range of activities that cover all areas of learning and play. For example, they enjoy making snakes out of pasta, they make vegetable soup for their snacks, grow plants in the outdoor area and learn using their senses by investigating substances, such as snow, gloop and shaving foam. In addition to this, they enjoy developing their imagination and learning by accessing resources in role play areas. For example, a shoe shop.

There are very positive and friendly relationships in place between children and the staff. Children are happy and settle quickly and form good relationships with their peers, linking up well to share their experiences and to engage in their games. Staff listen to and value what the children are saying and know children's individual needs well. For example, they appropriately support children who have not attended through illness by encouraging parents to spend extra time settling them in.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and are fully involved in the planning and the recording of children's achievements. They engage in a good range of teaching methods and have a clear understanding of how children learn and progress. However, they sometimes miss opportunities to promote children's

understanding of calculation through the use of practical everyday activities. For example, when they and the children set up the snack area, opportunities to discuss issues, such as 'how many?' or whether they require 'more' or 'less' milk cartons or plates are ignored. There is also a limited amount of numbers as labels throughout the environment for the children to access and see. Staff devise good quality, detailed planning, which is led by the children's interests and ensures the six areas of learning are covered. Plans clearly show what the children are intended to learn, how practitioners can effectively promote the learning and the resources required. They also clearly identify how the individual children's next steps in learning is promoted and how knowledge, understanding and skills can be extended or adapted to suit children who learn at different rates or who have particular needs. Staff provide a wide and stimulating range of resources and activities, which reflect the interests of the children. They manage behaviour well, make good use of time and effectively organise the environment and resources to support children's learning. For example, they work directly with the children all the time and resources are labelled enabling children to develop confidence and become independent in selecting and returning their play equipment. The use of assessment to develop and monitor children's progress is thorough. Profiles, consisting of examples of children's work, photographs and written observations are collated and the information gathered is then transferred to a Foundation Stage Individual Assessment Record, where staff use colour codes to clearly show what stage children are at.

Children demonstrate very good independence and are curious and motivated. They separate from carers quickly with confidence and are confident in trying out new activities and initiating ideas. For example, three year olds independently investigate the mark making area, suggesting ideas to each other about what to use and what equipment to explore, such as the stapler and hole punch. Children are confident in approaching staff and their peers. They ask questions of staff and excitedly run into rooms to tell other child about their experiences. More able children talk confidently about their families and are able to take turns in conversation. They are also beginning to use language for an increasing purpose. For example, they verbally clarify their own observations, when others are discussing their own observation. Three year olds are able to recognise familiar words, such as their names and are beginning to understand that writing can be used as a means of communication through stimulating activities, such as writing and posting letters at the post office. They are beginning to use number and positional language in their play. However, their understanding of numbers and their skills in calculation is restricted as they are only able to see and handle a few numbers, and they are not encouraged to use language, such as 'more' and 'less' whilst participating in everyday practical activities. Children are able to examine objects and living things to find out more about them. For example, they enjoy investigating gecko lizards, which are brought into the setting. They are developing good designing and making skills through independently selecting resources, such as feathers and pipe cleaners for their collages and are beginning to try out a range of tools and techniques safely. For example, when using a knife to divide up clay. Children show an interest in communication technology using items, such as telephones in their role play. More able children are also able to complete simple computer programs independently. They are developing a very good understanding of features in the place where they live. For example, in addition to going for walks in the local community, they enjoy experiences, such as observing a horse and dray that makes regular deliveries to the local public house. Children are developing some good skills regarding their physical development. They have opportunities to experiment with music and movement and enjoy imitating animal movements during extended activities. They also enthusiastically participate in action rhymes and songs. More able children are beginning to observe the effect of an activity on their body. For example, they inform staff how their hands will get dirty when using the clay. Older children are confident in playing alongside other

children who are engaged in the same theme and effectively use resources to support their play. They are able to differentiate some colours and are developing skills in expressing and communicating their ideas. For example, they explore what happens when mixing different coloured paints and are able to describe the texture of clay using descriptive words, such as 'squashy' and 'sticky'.

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

The provision is good.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. There are professional and friendly relationships in place and staff and parents work effectively together, which ensures children are cared for very well. For example, key workers are allocated to each child, which helps to ensure that good communication and that individual needs are met. In addition to registration forms parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child by completing 'All about me' forms. They are appropriately approached regarding the taking of photographs and are fully informed on how to make complaints or raise concerns. Parents are very involved with their child's learning. For example, they share their expertise on their working roles and responsibilities with the children and fully support the children in settling them in. Some also work as volunteers in the setting or take part as a member of the management committee. Staff have, until recently, used their topic-based work to encourage parents to extend children's learning at home. However, after steering their planning away from being topic based they are now in the process of devising new systems to encourage parents to be again involved in this learning. Information on the setting is shared very well. In addition to information displayed in the setting or advised through newsletters, parents have access to good quality information about the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' curriculums in both the setting's prospectus and welcoming packs. The key learning objectives are also on display in the setting within each area of play. Information on children's development is also shared well. For example, parents take part in one-to-one developmental meetings twice a year, where information on their child's achievements and progress is discussed. They are also informed verbally that they are able to access children's profiles or have discussions with staff at any time.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They gain a very good understanding of their local community and the diversity of the wider world through a good selection of resources and a wide range of activities that promote positive images and awareness. For example, posters in the setting encourage positive relationships with others and children have access to cultural dolls, dressing-up clothes, puzzles and books. Children enjoy activities that reflect different cultures and religions. For example, they taste Chinese food during Chinese New Year celebrations and enjoy Welsh flat cakes on Saint David's Day. In addition to this, they enjoy parents of French origin reading bilingual stories to them and participate in singing Italian songs with grandparents. However, children gain a limited understanding of disabilities as a result of limited resources and activities being available that promote this learning.

Children are all involved and fully included. Those who have learning difficulties or disabilities are supported extremely well as a result of staff effectively working with parents and outside agencies, and staff are successful in including them in all activities and promoting their learning and development. Children behave very well and the staff's management of children's behaviour is very good. They implement effective strategies, which are appropriate to the ages and abilities of the children. For example, they seek advice and information from parents and outside agencies on seriously inappropriate behaviour, and collaborate successfully in devising and implementing action plans, which focus on rewarding the children's positive behaviour.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Management create an effective and improving setting where children feel safe and make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff's ability to assess their own strengths and weaknesses is good as a result of them continually reviewing the effectiveness of what they and children do. For example, through the North Yorkshire 'Principles into Practice' self-evaluation system. In addition to this, focussed activities are evaluated to see what children's responses are and feedback is gathered from parents verbally. Written development plans then clearly identify what areas are to be developed and when these are to be completed by. Staff's ability in monitoring and evaluating the provision for nursery education is also good. Systems, such as the Foundation Stage Individual Assessment Record sheets effectively monitor children's development towards the early learning goals and staff know what works with particular children. For example, they use initiatives, such as the Pictorial Exchange Communication System with children who have learning difficulties and disabilities. Staff are highly committed to the improvement of the care and education for all children. They have completed a wealth of training to develop their knowledge and skills in teaching and welcome and implement suggestions made from the North Yorkshire Children and Young People Service for Quality and Improvement. For example, in developing and implementing the long term planning, which covers the basic provision.

Robust recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for. For example, recruitment procedures include applicants completing a questionnaire where they declare any health issues and the registered body obtains two written references as well as asking candidates to provide their original qualification certificates at the interview. Space and resources are effectively and safely organised, which allows children to make choices and develop good confidence and independence.

Almost all policies and procedures work effectively in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Documentation is professionally presented, maintained well and is easily accessible. This ensures clarity, continuity and consistency in the children's overall care and education.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last day-care inspection it was recommended that the staff ensure that all accident records are dated, that children are not able to accidentally lock themselves in the toilets and that children do not have access to the radiators when they are hot. As a result of this, staff have successfully improved children's safety by ensuring all parents now sign accident records. They have fitted door wedges to toilet doors, thus ensuring children cannot lock themselves in. Staff have also ensured the radiators are thermostatically controlled and have placed furniture in front of all radiators, thereby denying children direct access to them.

At the last educational inspection staff were asked to consider extending opportunities at snack time for children to become more independent and to make full use of daily routines to enhance children's learning and development in mathematics. As a result of this they have successfully introduced a cafeteria style snack time, where children help to set out milk, plates, knives and fruit and then help themselves to their snacks and drinks. This has successfully helped to

promote children's independence. However, staff miss opportunities to effectively promote children's learning of mathematics during this and other daily activities.

### **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 complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaint 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):

- extend the operational procedures to ensure children's safety when on outings
- develop resources and activities that help children develop awareness and understanding of disability, in a positive manner.

#### **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 further opportunities for children to see and handle numbers throughout the environment
- implement the use of practical activities to extend children's use of mathematical language and awareness of calculation.

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)