

Guilsborough Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	220214
Inspection date	18 July 2007
Inspector	Andrea Ewer
Setting Address	School House, The Green, Guilsborough, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN6 8PT
Telephone number	01604 740761
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Registered person	Guilsborough Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, 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.

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?

Guilsborough Playgroup opened in 1967 and operates from The School House within the village of Guilsborough, Northampton. The pre school is divided into five rooms. A maximum of 23 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09:30 to 12:00 each weekday and from 13:00 to 15:00 on Monday and Thursday, during term time only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 29 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the village and surrounding areas. The nursery is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs nine members of staff. Of these, six hold an appropriate early years qualification and two are working towards a qualification.

The Playgroup receives support from a local authority advisory teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in clean and tidy premises where their good health is promoted well. Children are starting to understand the importance of personal hygiene as they wash their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet as part of everyday routines. Staff effectively maintain standards throughout the day by implementing the clear hygiene procedures. Tables are cleaned before and after snacks are served and good attention is given to ensuring all areas are kept clean and tidy. This contributes to positively promoting children's good health.

Children receive appropriate care in the event of minor accidents or illness because most staff hold an up to date first aid qualification and a readily accessible first aid kit is available. Records that support staff to promote children's good health are well maintained such as, information from parents regarding any special medical or dietary needs and written consent to seek emergency medical treatment. Children enjoy healthy meals and snacks, which take account of their individual dietary needs, for example, crumpets, pitta bread with houmous, fresh fruit and a choice of milk or water to drink.

Children regularly benefit from a wide range of activities that promotes their physical skills both indoors and outdoors. Children negotiate space as they speed up and slow down to avoid others when running around outdoors, and develop increased control of their bodies and co-ordination as they throw and catch balls and climb the climbing frame with increasing skill. Children develop their large muscles as they push and ride wheeled toys.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment where attractive displays of their artwork helps them to feel a sense of belonging. Generally rooms are set out so children can choose from a broad range of toys and activities that meets their play and development needs very well. At times, however, space is not organised effectively enough which limits children's ability to move around freely or participate in activities comfortably. Staff make good use of the outdoor area to provide an inviting space that children enjoy using. Children play purposefully in the ice-cream parlour and garden centre, as well as using the climbing frame, which at times is changed to stimulate children's imagination. For example, flags and other props are added to create a pirate ship.

Overall, effective measures are in place to ensure children's safety is promoted well. The well written child protection procedure complies with local guidelines and supports staff to protect children from harm or neglect. Staff have a sound understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and implement procedures consistently. The premises are secure and prevents children leaving or unknown visitors entering unsupervised. Regular written risk assessments identify potential hazards and sets out clearly any action to be taken to prevent accidents. Although the ratio of staff to children is met and maintained, at times staff deployment does not always promote children's safety effectively enough. Fire drills are practised regularly to ensure children are familiar with what to do in the event of a fire and fire safety equipment is in place. Children start to understand how to keep themselves safe. Staff supervise them on the climbing frame and explain that children must be careful as they climb. Children stop pushing the wheelbarrow when they reach the imaginary traffic lights to talk about what colour the

lights are and understand that the red light means they must stop and the green light means it is safe to go.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy their time in the playgroup. They are cared for by consistent staff who know them well and meet their needs both as individuals and the group. Children actively participate in a variety of worthwhile activities planned around the 'Birth to three matters' framework, that helps them to build on skills they already have. Children benefit from staff who are interested in what they say and do and interact warmly with them throughout the day. This positively supports children to develop their physical, emotional, social and intellectual skills. Children confidently make their own decisions about whether to play inside or outside and when to have their snack. They become independent as they choose their cup and plate before sitting and serving their own snack.

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Most staff have secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and use a variety of teaching methods to help children learn. Some staff however, are less confident in some aspects of the Foundation Stage and at times this results in missed opportunities to extend children's learning. Staff do, however, plan and provide a stimulating range of activities around each area of learning. Information from children's progress records and evaluations are used effectively to plan for individual children and includes providing challenge for older, more able children which successfully contributes to them making generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children have many opportunities to develop their social skills. They start to understand what is expected of them and overall they play co-operatively. Children feel secure because they are familiar with everyday routines and start to take responsibility for their own behaviour as they contribute to setting the rules which staff display attractively around the building. Children become increasingly confident as they select additional resources to develop their play and ideas and some children enjoy staying for lunch which prepares them for school. Children speak with confidence. They use language to recall past experiences, explain what is happening and anticipate what might happen next. For example, they confidently answer questions about familiar stories, share stories about what they did at the weekend and talk happily about their favourite television programmes. Children have excellent opportunities to develop their early writing skills. They have regular access to mark making materials and equipment where many children form the letters of their name correctly and younger children ascribe meaning to marks. Children understand that writing can be used for various purposes as they copy write the ingredients needed to make ice cream, write out messages in the police station and observe the list of items for sale in the garden centre. Children are developing a love of books and stories. They often look at books for enjoyment and most children listen with interest to stories. Children actively participate in the playgroup's book sharing scheme which further supports their interest in books.

Children are making good progress in mathematics. They regularly join in many activities that promotes their understanding of numbers and mathematical concepts as part of everyday practical activities. Children count spontaneously and start to learn simple calculation. They enthusiastically join in simple action songs and rhymes such as five little specked frogs, where they count how many frogs are left after each one jumps into the pool and understand that three children can use the bathroom at the same time because there are three toilets and three hand basins. Children gain an understanding of volume and capacity whilst filling containers

with dried beans and use mathematical language well such as big, bigger and biggest while comparing the size of their banana's.

Children competently design and make models with a range of materials and are confident using simple computer programmes. They have very good opportunities to learn how things work as they listen to stories on the tape recorder, play with telephones, robots and electronic toys and games. Children start to gain an understanding of time and place as they regularly talk about which day and month it is, celebrate their birthdays and festivals and visit local places of interest such as the local church and school. Children explore various textures and colours using their senses. They mould and make models with the chocolate playdough and carefully pour dried beans from one container to another. Children express themselves creatively during craft activities where they choose from a wide range of materials to make collages and models and start to make sense of the world as they play at being police officers and doctors.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural needs are fostered. Children feel highly valued because their individual needs are met well and they are all fully included. Children feel secure because staff work in partnership with their parents which ensures they receive consistent care. Information is obtained from parents about children's specific needs during the settling in period and shared daily thereafter. The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents receive information about the Foundation Stage, policies, routines and activities, which enables them to be involved in the setting. They have good opportunities to become involved in their children's learning because useful information about the Foundation Stage, including planning, is displayed around the building and helps them to understand what their children learn from the activities provided. This is supported by meetings where information about children's progress is shared with their parents. Parents are also able to make their own contributions by recording their observations of their children's achievements in their busy books.

Children begin to appreciate diversity as they participate in activities and play with resources that positively reflects themselves and people of other races, cultures, religions and abilities. For example, children play with dolls of various colours including some who have a disability and puzzles and many books. They enjoyed tasting noodles and fried rice for snack during Chinese New Year and make Diya lights for Diwali. This contributes to children developing a positive self-image and a good understanding and respect for others. Children who have, or may have learning difficulties receive appropriate care because staff confidently implement the special educational needs code of practice. They carefully monitor any concerns they have about children and work closely with parents and outside agencies to ensure care is provided to support children to reach their full potential.

Children respond well to the high expectations for their behaviour. Staff offer warm and caring support as well as frequent praise and encouragement. Children enjoy the security of familiar everyday routines and learn to share and take turns as staff provide good role models. This reinforces what is expected of children and effectively supports them to behave well.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children's welfare and safety are promoted because the playgroup carries out clear recruitment and vetting procedures that ensure staff are appropriately experienced and suitable to have regular contact with young children.

Children benefit from regular daily routines that meets their needs for meals, active and quiet play. The deployment of staff and use of space is not always effective enough, which at times compromises children's welfare and safety. Comprehensive policies and procedures which contribute to children's well-being are understood and implemented consistently by staff. The prospectus provides useful information for parents about the service being provided and children's records are well maintained.

The leadership and management is good. Children benefit from the manager and committee members strong commitment to developing the quality care and nursery education provided. They regularly review their own practice to identify areas to be developed. Induction procedures for new staff and annual staff appraisals are used to monitor the quality of care and nursery education provided. Clear plans are in place to meet the training and development needs of staff and to address the issues of staff deployment. Staff work well as a team and are clear about their role and responsibilities. Effective systems are in place to ensure they are kept up to date with any changes in policies and regular team meetings are used to plan the curriculum and discuss any issues relating to specific children.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended that the playgroup ensures any concerns or significant events are recorded. Children's welfare is now safeguarded more effectively because a system is in place to record any significant events.

The playgroup further agreed to develop the planning for funded children, to ensure sufficient detail is included to enable staff to adapt activities to promote the learning of all children, use information from children's progress records to plan the next steps for children and develop the use of evaluation to monitor all aspects of the playgroup. Children's learning is promoted much more effectively because effective systems are now in place to plan for individual children. Information from their progress records and daily evaluations are used to identify the next steps for children and plans show how activities are adapted to meet the needs of all children including challenging older, more able children. The playgroup receives support from a local authority advisory teacher and the manager and committee use ongoing self reflection to monitor and evaluate all aspects of the playgroup. This supports them to identify where they have been successful in promoting children's care and learning and areas to be improved.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints that required Ofsted or the provider to take any action.

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 the use of space to ensure children have sufficient space to play comfortably at all times
- ensure staff are deployed effectively to promote children's safety and welfare.

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):

- develop the quality of teaching to ensure children's learning is consistent and that they are sufficiently challenged.

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