

# St Davids Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	226237
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Dianne Lynn Sadler
<b>Setting Address</b>	St Davids Church, Greenhill Road, Coalville, Leicestershire, LE67 4RL
<b>Telephone number</b>	07780743935
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	St Davids 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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

St David's Playgroup opened in 1992 and is run by a committee. It operates from two rooms with associated facilities in St. David's church hall in Coalville, Leicestershire. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each week day from 09:15 to 11:45 term time only.

There are currently 41 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, 24 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

The playgroup employs six members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for well in a clean, tidy environment. They stay healthy and thrive because staff follow well-written policies and procedures which reflect current environmental health and hygiene guidelines. Good procedures, such as staff wearing gloves and aprons when dealing with bodily fluids, help reduce the risk of infection. Children are learning to understand and becoming aware of good health and hygiene practices, which are promoted through the good support and guidance given by adults. For example, children wash their hands before snack times and after toileting. Children receive good care when they have an accident or become ill. All staff have received appropriate first aid training.

Children are sufficiently well nourished. There is a well written snack menu displayed which shows they enjoy snacks that are varied, but not always healthy. This may compromise children's health and understanding of healthy eating. For instance, children choose from a selection of biscuits daily with a different option once a week, which at times includes fresh fruit. Children can choose when to go to the 'Milk Bar' which is open throughout the session, therefore developing their independence and helping them to make choices. Children also enjoy drinks which include milk and water throughout the session. The dietary needs of children are discussed with parents and recorded well, ensuring that children have their needs met appropriately.

Children are learning about the importance of a healthy lifestyle through some well-planned activities which include health, food and hygiene. They discuss healthy eating and benefit from using stethoscopes to listen to their heart rate before and after physical activity. Children enjoy developing their skills at every session by riding the bikes, trikes and scooters. They also enjoy fresh air and exercise outdoors regularly. For instance, they access the local school's outdoor play area, they enjoy going on nature walks and participate in sports days. Children are able to rest and be active according to their needs. For example, they can select quieter activities such as reading books or sleep in a designated quiet area.

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

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a welcoming and safe indoor and outdoor environment, which helps them feel secure and comfortable. They move around with ease from activity to activity which helps them to settle well and feel confident. A clear and concise risk assessment is carried out on the premises and equipment annually and is appropriately recorded. All hazards have been identified and minimised. For instance, brick pillars in the hallway have been made safe with bubble-wrap. This protects children from the risk of accidental injury. Effective policies and procedures are in place to ensure children are kept safe. For instance, all children are supervised well at all times.

Children use good quality, suitable and safe furniture, equipment and play resources, appropriate to meet their different needs. Resources are easily accessed by children. Many resources are displayed on low-level shelves and in well-labelled boxes. This helps to develop all children's independence. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe. They practise the emergency evacuation procedure four times each term and benefit from visits from a police officer who discusses stranger-danger with them.

Children are well protected from harm because staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection. Staff are aware of what action they are required to take if they have a child protection concern about any of the children.

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

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting and benefit from positive relationships with both adults and each other. Children are settling well and developing good confidence. Some children arrive keenly and enthusiastically seek their favourite resources and toys. Those who are unsure and upset are comforted by caring staff who encourage them to join in and play. Children benefit from a stimulating and interesting environment in which most are happy, content and secure. They benefit from seeing their work displayed and all resources are easily accessed. Staff know the children well and explain the different stages that individual children are at and what steps are being taken to help them progress effectively. This is clearly documented in the child's 'Play plans' and assessment profile.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities and imaginative experiences which positively supports their development and learning. They concentrate well whilst painting a picture of an ogre and make five fat sausages with the play dough whilst singing the nursery rhyme. They develop their imagination whilst playing in the role play section, feeding the baby dolls and ironing the clothes. They develop their physical skills when using the bikes, trikes, scooters and doll's pushchairs.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a strong knowledge of the Foundation Stage and a clear understanding of how young children learn and progress. As a result all children are included and make good progress towards the early learning goals. The setting has developed very good links with the local primary school which ensures children confidently enter the school. Staff use a good range of teaching methods to maintain children's interest. Staff know that the children learn better when they are happy and relaxed and they ensure children are well settled before they concentrate on their learning. Staff sit with children, ask questions and offer support when needed. Staff effectively help raise children's awareness of the community and the wider world and there are a good range of resources to promote this. Most children are motivated and keen to learn. The playgroup session is organised well and children benefit from participating in structured activities as well as being able to initiate their own play and develop their own ideas.

Planning indicates that all areas of learning are covered over a period of time and repeated to enable children to practise what they have learned. This ensures children make good progress. Staff have a clear idea of the learning intentions for children and plan their next steps in learning using effective play plans. The assessment procedure is sufficient. Staff record observations they make on children's development and transfer this information to children's profiles. However, the assessment records do not clearly show the children's starting points as they enter the Foundation Stage, therefore the next steps planned for children may not be appropriate.

Most children are interested and engaged in their play as they select and carry out activities. New children are developing their confidence by trying new activities and all concentrate appropriately. They assume responsibility for their personal care and their independence is

being effectively developed. For instance, they choose when to go to the 'Milk Bar' for their snack and pour their own drinks. All Children are learning to understand between right and wrong. They are learning to share, take turns and work as part of a group. Some children seek out their friends, calling them over to join in with a role play activity. Others share the bikes and trikes available and ride their bikes one way, as directed by printed arrows. This effectively develops positive relationships. All children communicate well with staff making their needs known through expressive language or by gestures. Most children can speak clearly and confidently, sharing their experiences. They use language for thinking when stating 'This dummy stops baby crying' whilst cradling a doll in their arms. Others discuss daddy going to work and chat about a birthday party and going to school. This also develops their self-esteem and sense of community. Children benefit from seeing print in the environment and show a good interest in books. They concentrate well sitting on the mat selecting a story sack labelled 'The star that fell'. Children use the imaginative resources available to follow the story read by an adult. Most children recognise their names on name cards as they enter the playgroup and at snack time. They attempt writing for a purpose using notebooks and labels in the role play section. Some children attempt to write their names and older children clearly write recognisable letters of their name, correctly formed.

Children benefit from seeing some numbers displayed in the environment and confidently use numbers for counting in their play. For instance, they select different colour keys and match them to pictures of keys on a card recognising and counting numbers up to ten. Older children successfully use big numbers counting up to 20. They are also developing an understanding of more than and less than when counting the keys and when making balls out of play dough. They know that one ball cut in half makes two. All Children are recognising and recreating simple patterns. For instance, they copy a picture of a tractor using mobilo bricks and proudly show their parent at the end of the session. Children develop an initial sense of time and place. They write letters and go to the post office to send them to their parents at home. They also enjoy a nature walk in the woods identifying different insects and collecting leaves. All children explore and investigate objects and living things using their senses and imagination. For instance, they participate in 'Pet week', where pets from home, such as rabbits, dogs and a tortoise come and visit the children. Children also enjoy a visit from a parent dressed in a 'Hijaab' discussing the use of a prayer mat at home. This helps them to learn about their own culture and those of others.

Effective use of the indoor space helps children develop their physical skills. All children move confidently when negotiating their way around the playgroup from activity to activity. They access resources such as bikes and scooters every session, which develop their skills. They are learning to travel under, over and through using a parachute and tunnel. They also travel in one direction on the wheeled toys aided by printed arrows displayed on cards. Children are learning the importance of staying healthy and recognise the changes that happen to their bodies when they are active. For instance, before and after physical activity, they listen to their heart rate with a stethoscope. All children use small and large equipment well. They use one-handed tools competently as they paint their pictures using brushes and use media such as cornflour, sand and water. All children are able to express themselves freely through creative activities, exploring media and materials. For instance, they enjoy mixing paints to create colours such as pink and orange. They also enjoy making a large dinosaur out of collage materials such as sponge shapes and materials that are stripy and spotty. All children use their imagination in a variety of ways. For instance, a four-year-old decides to paint a picture of a friendly ogre and children iron and peg the clothes on the washing line in the role play area.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Effective relationships with parents ensure the staff know the children well. Children receive appropriate care consistent with home. All parents share information about children's care and development needs, preferences and cultural and religious needs. For instance they complete a 'My favourite things' form which indicates, for instance, children's favourite toy, song, food and friend. Good procedures ensure both parties are well informed. For example, parents benefit from an informative notice board and regular newsletters. They also benefit from receiving an informative prospectus and a comprehensive policy booklet. However, the complaint policy is not updated and there is no system to record complaints made. This compromises children's welfare.

Clear, concise policies work effectively in practice to promote equal opportunities for all children. They enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other. Children feel a sense of belonging as they are greeted warmly by staff as they arrive, which enables them to enter the setting and separate easily from their carers. Younger children who are upset and new to the setting benefit from a very good procedure which encourages parents to stay and participate in their children's settling-in. All children are fully included. They are valued and respected as individuals and have their individual needs met appropriately. There are good procedures in place, reflective of the Code of Practice, to ensure children with disabilities and additional needs are supported appropriately.

Children are being made aware of the wider society. Staff ensure that the resources positively represent the children who attend as well as the wider world and children are made aware of all celebrations and festivals. For instance, parents are welcomed into the setting and discuss with children the use of a prayer mat at home.

Children's confidence and self-esteem is being developed well by staff with the use of praise and encouragement and the children's work being displayed or proudly taken home. All children are learning to understand responsible behaviour. They respond well when being reminded by staff to ride their wheeled toys in the same direction and they are learning to take turns, share play resources and show respect for others. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The behaviour policy is well written, understood by staff and effective in practice. Therefore, children's behaviour is managed well, promoting their welfare and development.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents are actively encouraged to become involved in their child's learning in meaningful ways. This helps children progress and enables them to make a positive contribution. For example, parents support planned themes by coming into playgroup dressed in traditional costume, such as an outfit known as 'Hijaab' and discuss with children how they pray to god using a prayer mat. Parents are well informed about their children's progress and achievements. They benefit from receiving an end of year report and they are able to speak with their children's key worker at any time. In addition they are invited to a formal meeting each term and are able to verbally share information with staff about their child's development observed at home. However, this information is not recorded or acted upon. Therefore the next steps planned for children's learning may not be appropriate. Parents receive good information about the educational programme provided and the six areas of learning. The Foundation Stage curriculum is included in the playgroup prospectus and displayed on the entrance hall notice board. In addition they

also receive information about the planned themes through regular newsletters and posters. Consequently, children's development in all six areas of learning is fully supported at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who are experienced, well established and committed to their well-being. Staff work well as a team, providing a stimulating and interesting environment conducive to the care, teaching and learning of all children. The ratio of adults to children is good enabling staff to work closely with children and carry out a successful settling-in procedure. This helps to establish secure relationships. The recruitment procedures are clear and there is a sufficient induction and annual appraisals to ensure that staff are fully aware of their responsibilities towards children. There is a vetting procedure to ensure staff are suitable to care for children, however it is not sufficient. There is no system in place to ensure staff remain mentally and physically fit to care for children. This potentially compromises children's safety and welfare. The level of qualified staff working with children is good and there is a commitment to ensure staff develop their skills and knowledge by attending training courses. This has a positive impact upon children's care and experiences. Records and documentation in place are available for inspection and shared with staff and parents.

The leadership and management is good. Staff are well motivated and have developed a supportive team approach, aiming for good quality education for all children. There is clear leadership within the setting. The manager offers good guidance and is committed to improving nursery education. The monitoring and evaluation of the nursery education provision and quality of teaching is good. There are successful systems in place for the manager and committee to observe and monitor the teaching and children's learning. This significantly improves practice and positively supports children's learning and progress.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Care.

At the last inspection the playgroup agreed to ensure that the complaints procedure contains the address and telephone number of the regulator and keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children. Sufficient progress has been made ensuring children are cared for safely, promoting their well-being. There are effective records for managing the administering of medicines and the complaints policy includes the telephone number of the regulator, although this now needs to be further improved upon.

Nursery Education.

At the last inspection the playgroup agreed to organise large group sessions and match teaching to meet the needs of all children present. They also agreed to provide a balance between adult-directed and child-initiated activities. Significant progress has been made in all areas ensuring all children are included and their needs met well. Sessions have been reorganised. Children now participate in small group sessions and although some activities are planned children now develop their independence by initiating their own play. All staff now know the children well and ensure activities are differentiated to meet all the children's needs well.

## **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 the 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 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):

- provide healthy and nutritious foods at snack time
- improve knowledge and develop systems for the recording of complaints, in line with regulations
- ensure staff continue to be mentally and physically fit to care for children.

#### **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):

- ensure assessment records show the starting point of children's learning
- value and act upon information gained from parents about children's achievements observed at home.

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)