

Stafford Leys Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 226483

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Inspector Shami Kumar

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Type of inspection Integrated

Type of 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?

Stafford Leys Playgroup has been established since 1977. It is a privately owned facility and is situated in the Community centre area of the Stafford Leys Primary School.

The playgroup has the use of a large hall, a separate smaller room and associated facilities. The playgroup operates during term time only, 09:15 to 11:45 weekdays, excluding Wednesdays. Children attend a variety of sessions each week. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup is registered to provide care for a maximum of 24 children from two to five years at any one time. There are currently 29 children on roll which includes 10 funded four-year-olds and 17 funded three-year-olds.

There are four staff available to work with the children, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The playgroup receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because staff follow clear hygiene routines. For example, they use different coloured cloths for cleaning tables before snack time and after messy activities. Children learn about the importance of washing their hands before eating snack and after using the toilet through the daily routines. They are beginning to carry out self-help tasks for themselves as staff provide steps so that children can visit the toilets and wash and dry their hands independently. During circle time staff remind the children about covering their mouths when they cough so that germs do not spread.

Children are well protected in the event of an accident because all staff hold current first aid certificates and the first aid box is stocked appropriately. Medication administered and accidents are recorded carefully. Whilst appropriate measures are taken when children are ill so that their health needs are met, the playgroup does not have written permission from parents to obtain emergency medical advice or treatment. Children's dietary and health needs are well met because staff work with parents to ensure they are aware of individual needs. Children benefit from the snack provided during the session. They enjoy the fruit and biscuits and they are encouraged to make choices of what they would like to drink. Children learn about the importance of a healthy lifestyle through topic work and general discussion.

Children enjoy physical play opportunities both in the outdoor play area and inside in the playgroup. They run and jump, and develop balance and co-ordination on the sound range of equipment for physical play. For example, they ride wheeled toys, confidently use the climbing frame and throw and catch balls. They have opportunities to develop awareness of space and to move creatively as they join in with group activities involving actions to music.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are safe and generally well cared for in premises that are secure and they are happy and settled. The building meets the needs of the children and they are able to move around independently. Children use a range of equipment that is clean, suitable and safe. Through planned activities children learn to care for resources as they help staff to clean the toys and bathe the dolls. The playgroup provides child sized-furniture and equipment which are appropriate for their purpose. The provision is organised to meet children's needs and the resources are attractively arranged so that children are encouraged to self-select safely.

Children's safety is satisfactorily promoted because staff take steps to promote safety within the setting. For example, the front door is kept locked, low-level glass conforms to safety standards and the fire equipment is checked annually. A daily visual check is made of the indoor and outdoor play areas. However, risk assessments are not carried out regularly which has the potential to affect children's safety. Staff position themselves well at arrival and departure times and ensure that children are seated until their parent or carer arrives. Parents are asked to inform staff if anyone different is to collect their child and proof of identification is asked for. This is to ensure that children only leave the playgroup with known adults.

Children learn to keep themselves safe by practising fire drills and know where they are to go to stay safe. Within the setting children understand safe practices as staff remind them about

not walking on wet floors, not running and picking toys from the floor to avoid accidents. Children are protected well by the staff, some of whom have attended child protection training. They have a sound awareness of child protection procedures and know how to put these into place should they have any concerns about the welfare of a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well at the playgroup. Playgroup children and their parents and carers are warmly welcomed by staff. Children of all ages gain confidence through routines and the relationships they develop with staff and other children. Children develop their independence as they express their ideas during play using a range of resources. For instance, they enjoy making cakes in the imaginary play area and roll their cars through a long tube and laugh and giggle excitedly. The majority of the children receive funding and those who do not follow the same curriculum. Children of all ages and developmental stages enjoy their time in the setting. They separate from their parents and carers easily and arrive eager to participate. Staff are experienced and enjoy the company of the children in their care. They spend time talking to and playing with them. Staff provide good support to all children and encourage them to take part in planned activities and they cope well with routines.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are involved in planning which means that they are well aware of learning intentions. Children's progress is monitored through observations which are carried out on each child. Staff use assessment records appropriately to identify the progress the children are making towards the six areas of learning. Planning of activities are clear, however, activities are not fully evaluated, therefore, information gained is not used effectively to inform future planning to ensure that children move to the next steps in their learning. Staff use their sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage, a reasonable range of teaching methods and a secure understanding of how children learn and progress. Most children are confident learners and access activities independently. Staff encourage the children to think, predict and remember. For example, they talk about what day, month, season and what the weather is like on a daily basis. Staff ask questions to make children think. For example, "What do we need rain for?" and "What happens if you walk on a wet floor?". Staff use planned and spontaneous opportunities to develop children to learn different colours, shapes and count objects. Children are keen to get involved in activities and freely choose from the opportunities that are provided for them. They form relationships with adults and other children and are able to understand that they are part of their families and the playgroup. They are beginning to concentrate for longer periods of time, especially when working individually or in small groups. For example, they concentrate while they draw pictures and make collage pictures. Children play well together, share and take turns while playing board games. Children become less focussed and restless however, when they are involved in large group sessions where their differing abilities and interests are not always catered for. Children on the whole behave well and show an awareness of right and wrong although a few children sometimes test the boundaries towards the end of a session.

Children's speaking skills are developing well. They confidently tell the other children about what they have brought from home, their families and going on holiday. Children develop language as they become familiar with stories and discuss the pictures. During large group sessions children are easily distracted which has an impact on their learning especially during story time. They participate and talk about the different foods the hungry caterpillar ate and

enjoy doing actions to rhymes. Children are beginning to recognise their own names and practise linking sounds to letters and writing for a variety of purposes. For example, they make shopping lists in the home corner and use different types of pencils and crayons in the graphics area. Most children are starting to count confidently and use mathematical language such as 'more' and 'less' as they play board games. They are beginning to problem solve, match and sort as they complete puzzles and play card and domino games. They compare size by looking at how tall they are and how tall their sunflowers have grown.

Children learn about time and place and the world around them through topic work. Children participate in activities relevant to different seasons and talk about what that they would wear for different types of weather. For example, wearing wellies on a rainy day and wearing sun glasses on a sunny day. They have appropriate opportunities to explore changes through activities such as baking, growing seeds and talking about why some animals hibernate. They discuss different baby animals and develop a sense of the local community as they enjoy visits from the vicar and police officer. The children use equipment in the role play area such as cash tills, phones, pretend lap top and a world globe to develop their learning of everyday technology. Children have sufficient opportunities of developing their imagination as the role play area is well used. For example, they enjoy playing families and make food and cakes and pretend to be doctors and nurses as they use a stethoscope to listen to a heart beat. The children have opportunities to explore different textures such as water, sand, play dough, and paint. Children enjoy singing and also express themselves through circle games and music and dance. Children's physical development is catered for through indoor and outdoor activities. Children learn to balance as they go up and down on the see-saws, they climb and throw and catch balls. They ride a variety of wheeled toys and play parachute games. Children are beginning to develop their finer manipulative skills and co-ordination by using a range of resources and tools which include scissors, nuts and bolts, threading beads and stencils.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are warmly welcomed and feel a sense of belonging as they take part in the life of the setting. Staff work with parents and carers to meet children's individual needs such as dietary requirements. Children bring items from home which they show and share with the other children and they move freely between activities. Staff are proactive in ensuring that appropriate action is taken to identify and support children who speak English as an additional language and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children become aware of their own and other cultures through topic work, resources and the use of books. They participate in activities such as colouring in dragons, making cards, masks, dressing up in a selection of costumes and listening to different music.

Children generally behave well and are polite as they respond to the praise and consistent guidelines set by staff. A behaviour book with illustrations are used to remind children about sharing, taking turns and how their behaviour may affect others. Staff treat the children with respect and listen to them which encourages them to value others. The setting has a policy which outlines strategies of managing behaviour but this does not include a statement on bullying which has the potential of affecting children's well-being. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children's care, welfare and development are promoted through positive working relationships with parents. They receive information about the playgroup through a brochure which gives information about the Foundation stage,

notes being sent home and current themes are displayed on the notice board. Parents receive regular informal updates from staff about their child's progress through regular discussions. Parents are positive about the setting and their children benefit because they feel confident and able to approach staff to discuss any concerns.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Policies and procedures generally promote children's good health, safety and enjoyment. The organisation of the group ensures that children are well cared for by suitable staff. Staff create a happy, welcoming and friendly atmosphere. Space and resources are appropriately organised to create an accessible and welcoming environment for children. Staff support children well during activities and allow them the time and space to initiate and develop their own learning.

The children are grouped together as the majority of the children receive funding. The playgroup is a small compact group and the staff know the children well. Children access activities and move around freely. All the staff hold an appropriate childcare qualification, are experienced and attend regular on-going training to develop their knowledge and practice. These include first aid training, managing behaviour and National Vocational Qualifications. Necessary documentation such as accidents, registers, medication records are accurately completed. All documents are confidentially stored in order to protect children and their families. The high adult to child ratios positively supports children's care, learning and play.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager is proactive in ensuring that the practice of all staff contributes to children's health, safety and enjoyment. This results in an enthusiastic and committed staff team who work well together. Informal staff meetings are in place which ensure that children's care and educational needs are met. However, as there are no appraisal systems in place, the setting are not entirely successful in identifying the playgroup's strengths and weaknesses. Therefore although the staff team are committed to continue improving the nursery education for children this is not yet fully effective. There are close links with the local school making the transition from playgroup to school a positive experience for children. For example, the children attend school assemblies and the reception class teacher visits and introduces herself to the children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was required to ensure that there was at least one person on the premises or on outings with a current first aid certificate. They were asked to make sure that written records of medicines given to children are signed by parents. They were required to have operational procedures for the safe conduct of any outings provided and to ensure that there was a system for staff induction training.

Since the last care inspection all staff hold a current first aid certificate. There is now a system in place which ensures a written record is kept of medicines which are given to children and these are signed by parents. The setting now has an operational procedure in place for outings and there is an informal system in place for staff induction training. These aspects have improved children's safety, health and overall well-being.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was required to give clear indications of the learning objectives within planning and to ensure that children's assessments are undertaken to plan what children could usefully do next. They were asked to make sure that parents have an effective involvement and influence in the development assessment process in their child's learning. They were required to ensure that staff have knowledge of and regard to the Special Educational Needs Code of Practice.

Since the last nursery education inspection parents are now more involved and are aware of the assessment process of the setting. Staff have a satisfactory knowledge of the Code of Practice as they have attended relevant training. However, the planning and children's assessments do not fully give clear learning objectives and how these are used to plan for the next stage of children's development so this remains as a further recommendation.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- obtain written parental permission to the seeking of any emergency medical advice or treatment
- conduct a risk assessment of the premises with action plans to minimise identified risks
- ensure the written policy and procedures on managing behaviour includes a statement on bullying.

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):

- review procedures for monitoring the quality of the nursery education and ensure that observations and assessments are used effectively to plan for children's individual progress along the stepping stones

- review the organisation at group time to ensure that all children are able to gain the most from this session.

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