

Cashes Green Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101678
Inspection date	13 September 2007
Inspector	Shirley Ann Jackson
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Registered person	Cashes Green Playgroup
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?

Cashes Green Playgroup opened in 1991 and operates from a classroom within Cashes Green Primary School on the north-west borders of Stroud. The group has sole use of a classroom and shares use of the school hall, toilets and outdoor facilities. There is an enclosed outdoor area and sensory garden. The school playground and field are used as additional play space.

The playgroup is registered to care for 22 children aged between two and under five years at any one time. There are currently 19 children on roll aged from two to four years. The playgroup is in receipt of education funding and at present has 12 funded children attending. The playgroup is open from Monday to Friday, from 09.00 until 11.45 a.m. during school terms. Children attend from the local community.

The children are cared for by a team of six members of staff, of whom three have recognised childcare qualifications. All staff have completed first aid and child protection training. Parent helpers assist at the playgroup on a rota basis.

The committee run playgroup has close links with Cashes Green Primary School and receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children begin to learn about positive hygiene practices as they follow established routines. They see staff cleaning tables when snack has finished and after messy activities. However, they are not aware of why they are washing their hands before they eat. Children's health is supported as all staff hold current first aid certificates and a first aid box is easily accessible if needed. There are clear procedures in place for dealing with accidents and administering medication.

Children are offered snacks at the group. These are healthy, balanced and are offered in suitable quantities for the children to enjoy. Staff do not routinely talk to the children about the benefits of eating healthy food. Children are offered drinks of water or milk at snack times. However, children do not pour their own drinks and they are not always actively involved in the preparation of snacks. Drinking water is freely available to children during each session. This is offered in named bottles which children are encouraged to access themselves.

Children can choose during the session if they want to play indoors or outdoors. This ensures that children enjoy fresh air and exercise. Staff take the children on to the school playground where they run around and move and jump from the balance beams. However, physical play is not always challenging for the more able children. Children show respect for other children's personal space when playing among them. They show an awareness of their own needs with regard to eating and hygiene. Children engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in premises which are bright, clean and well maintained. However, displays and posters are mostly positioned at adult height or higher. Consequently children's view of these is limited. The room used gives children plenty of space to move around freely. Staff have identified and minimised potential risks so children can move around safely. Staff supervise children effectively when playing indoors and outdoors. However, children are not always told why their actions pose risks to their safety, such as walking with a straw in their mouths.

Children are offered a suitable range of toys and resources which are safe and suitable for their age and stage of development. Staff set out some resources before children arrive and children can then choose from this selection. Through the session, children are also able to independently select resources from accessible low-level storage. Toys and resources are good quality and are well maintained.

All staff hold current children protection certificates so are able to safeguard the children in their care. Staff are aware of the indicators of abuse and neglect and are aware of the correct procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. A child protection policy is in place, is available to parents and contains details of the procedure if an allegation is made against a member of staff. These procedures help to protect children's welfare and well being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are broadly content and settled at the group. They show an interest in a range of purposeful, first-hand activities and experiences. Children are interested in a suitable range of developmentally appropriate activities indoors and outdoors. Relationships between children and adults are generally good. Children generally manage their behaviour appropriately and begin to understand that their actions affect others.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Senior staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum as they have completed relevant training to support them. They are clear about the aims of activities and have a suitable understanding of how young children learn and progress. Staff have recently changed the way they plan and offer activities to the children. They are keen to follow children's interests and to offer activities which relate to these. This is still in its infancy and staff are still working to find out which methods best suit the group. The level of challenge to the children is sufficient to interest most children in the activities and enables them to make suitable progress in their learning. However, activities do not always offer sufficient challenge for the more able children to progress in their learning, particularly in maths and physical development.

Children talk confidently to familiar adults and to their friends. They respond to simple instructions, such as, putting their pictures in to their own drawers ready to go home. Children listen to and join in with stories. They show an interest in illustrations in the book as they listen to the story. Some children begin to recognise some words as they find their name cards when they first arrive at the group. Children engage in activities which require hand-eye coordination, for example, painting, drawing and playing with the hammer and nail set. Some children attempt to write their own names but they are not routinely asked to name their own work.

Children show an interest in numbers and counting. For example, a child knows what age she is now and how old she will be on her next birthday. Some children begin to represent numbers using their fingers, for example, counting to three before they start singing. However, staff do not use everyday routines to extend children's abilities and to build on what they already know. Children show an interest in shape and space by making arrangements with objects such as building bricks. More able children show sustained interest for a length of time on a pre-decided construction, such as, a house for a toy elephant.

Children remember and talk about significant things that have happened to them, for example, 'I've been on a boat'. They investigate construction materials such as building bricks. Some children realise that tools can be used for a purpose. Children have opportunities to join construction pieces together when they use re-cycled materials to make models. They have opportunities to show an interest in the world in which they live as they plant and water flowers. However, children have limited opportunities to learn how to operate simple equipment.

Children recognise and differentiate colours as they talk about what colour of paint or brick they are playing with. They enjoy singing and join in with familiar songs. Some children sign to themselves as they play. Children use available resources as props to support role play, for example, putting dolls clothes in to the washing machine. They engage in imaginative play based on their own first-hand experiences, such as, getting 'tea ready'. Children are able to

show an interest in what they see, hear, smell, touch and feel as they play with sand, water, play dough and compost.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children become aware of diversity as they play with a suitable range of resources and take part in activities which help them to become aware of the wider community. This helps children to develop a positive attitude to others. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported by knowledgeable staff who have a clear understanding of their requirements. This enables all children to take part in activities in their own way and at their own level.

Children settle quickly into the group as their families receive effective support from the staff team. They separate from the main carer with confidence and are keen to start their play and to try new experiences. Children show increasing independence in selecting and carrying out activities, for example, during free play time. This decision making begins to build confidence and promotes children's self-esteem. Children talk freely about their home and community. They are learning to share and take turns, for example, two children painting said "we're doing it together".

Staff are positive role models for the children. They have a calm and re-assuring manner which children seek out when they are unsure. Children follow this lead and their behaviour is generally good. Staff use praise and encouragement to promote positive behaviour. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are provided with clear initial information about the group and what it offers. Ongoing information is shared through newsletters, notices and regular chats with parents. There is brief information about the Foundation Stage and how the group promotes it. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning by helping on rota duty. Parents spoken to are happy with the care offered to their children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are sound procedures in place for recruiting and vetting new staff. The person in charge of the setting is appropriately qualified to provide care for young children. She is supported by an enthusiastic staff team and supportive committee. The staff team are committed to further training to aid their professional development as well as benefiting the children attending the group.

Staff make effective use of time, resources and accommodation so children are well supported in their play and learning. Organisation of the space enables children to make choices in their play and enables them to independently choose which resources they want to use. There is a clear staff structure and staff work well together as a team. Children receive effective support as adult: child ratios are maintained at each session.

All legally required documentation is in place, well maintained and stored confidentially. The daily register provides a record of children's attendance. The certificate is displayed so parents have access to information about the group's conditions of registration. However, some of the group's policies and procedures are out of date and contain incorrect information.

The leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities. Their practice is regularly reviewed following training and support visits from the local authority. Points for improvement raised at the last inspection have been tackled in a positive manner to help the group to improve the service it offers to children and parents. The development plan to address areas for improvement in the group is carried out verbally. Positive links have been built with the school where the group operates, easing the transition of children in to the school. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group agreed to; develop and implement induction training for all new staff to include health and Safety and child protection policies and procedures; and ensure that the attendance register includes required detail; conduct a risk assessment to include all aspects of care and ensure insurance cover is in place and develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures.

Children's safety has improved as all new staff now undertake induction training and the daily register now shows who is on the premises at all times. All staff hold child protection certificates, a risk assessment has been completed on the building and the group has up to date insurance.

At the last education inspection the group agreed to; ensure planning includes opportunities to link sounds and letters and hear and say initial sounds in spoken words and provide more opportunities to develop awareness of simple addition and subtraction.

Staff help children to link sounds and letters as all drawers and water bottles are named. On arrival at the group, staff help children to find their name cards. Children's maths skills have improved as staff provide opportunities for them to count, but there is scope to improve this further.

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):

- develop children's awareness of why they wash their hands before eating; the benefits of eating healthy foods and involve them in the preparation and serving of snack
- review policies to ensure that they are up to date and reflect all recent changes

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):

- extend challenges to more able children, particularly in maths and physical development
- improve children's access to simple equipment
- continue to monitor planning, observations and assessments to enable children to move on to the next stage in their learning

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