

All Saints Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101469
Inspection date	06 November 2007
Inspector	Ruth Tharme
Setting Address	John Wood Room, All Saints Church, All Saints Road, Cheltenham, GL52 2EY
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Registered person	Christine Knight and Hilary Fraser
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 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?

All Saints playgroup was registered in 1990 and operates from a church hall in the Pitville area of Cheltenham. The group is privately owned and managed. It serves the surrounding area and beyond and children attend for a variety of sessions throughout the week.

Sessions are on weekdays during term times. They run from 09.15 to 13.00. There are currently 25 children on the roll. This includes 12 children who are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group supports children for whom English is an additional language.

There are five members of staff who work directly with the children, all of whom hold, or are working towards, relevant qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health and physical well being is actively promoted in the setting. There are daily opportunities to spend time in the fresh air, on the group's allotment, play area or on walks in the church grounds. Dance, music and movement and activity sessions using large play equipment provide children with regular exercise.

High standards of cleanliness and hygiene, promoted through well-established hand-washing and nappy-changing procedures, reduce children's risk of infection. The exclusion of children who are infectious minimises the risk to others. Should a minor accident occur, staff are well trained in first aid and have relevant equipment readily available to ensure that children receive prompt and appropriate treatment.

Children have access to their own, well-labelled drinking bottle which means that they can have a drink of water at any time. Any individual dietary needs are met as staff are well informed and take full account of children's requirements when preparing food. Daily snacks of fresh and dried fruits, bread sticks and drinks of milk or water form the basis of a healthy and balanced diet for the children.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The play room is attractively decorated with posters, displays and examples of work which contribute to the warm and welcoming environment experienced by the children. The building is clean, warm and well maintained so children feel safe and comfortable there. They are able to move round freely and access toys and activities with ease as the use of available space has been well planned to meet their needs.

Children can select and use toys and resources comfortably as they are stored and displayed where children can reach them, and are well labelled using both words and pictures.

Children's safety is actively promoted throughout the setting. Staff are well deployed to ensure good levels of supervision and the risk-assessment programme is used effectively to identify and address any possible danger to children. Procedures ensure children's safety in an emergency situation. Evacuation plans are clearly displayed and drills are practised regularly.

Staff are trained in safeguarding so they are able to support and protect children who may be at risk of abuse. Procedures ensure that issues are dealt with appropriately to ensure children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of interesting and stimulating activities throughout the session. Staff have regard for the Birth to Three Matters framework and the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and therefore plan activities to encourage children's all round development.

Children are encouraged to make decisions for themselves, choosing their own activities and resources. They explore and investigate, both in and out of doors, making good use of the allotment, recyclable materials and resources such as dough, water and sawdust.

There is a key worker system in place which works well to support individuals throughout the setting. Practitioners take an interest in what children say, and successfully build on their interests, for example, by developing the role play area to support and extend their play. Children are happy and relaxed in the setting. They often sing to themselves as they play and interact freely with practitioners and their peers.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Staff have attended relevant training and are clear about how children are expected to progress. Planning is generally good, and builds on children's prior learning, but it is not yet sufficiently developed to target individuals. This means that occasionally the challenges set are not appropriate for all. For example, group story sessions are overly long for some, so children's attention begins to be lost.

Sessions are well organised so children have time to enjoy and complete their activities. Staff remain flexible to allow children to build on their interests, for example, by extending the outdoor-play session so they can observe and explore the falling autumn leaves.

The regular programme of observation and assessment forms a solid basis for planning, and is used effectively to inform parents of their child's progress.

Children have a positive approach to new experiences, joining in enthusiastically with new activities such as dance class. Staff take time to speak with and listen to children, valuing their opinions and ideas which effectively promotes the development of self-esteem and confidence. Communication, language and literacy skills are developing as children enjoy listening to favourite rhymes and songs, such as 'five little ducks'. They draw and paint, sometimes giving meaning to their marks, developing their writing skills. Mathematical development is progressing well as children enjoy counting activities throughout the session. They confidently compare numbers, deciding which group has the larger number at play time. Children are increasing their knowledge and understanding of the world as they explore and investigate a variety of resources and activities, talking confidently about what is seen and what is happening. They manipulate the computer mouse with ease and carefully complete simple programmes. The well considered and equipped role play area allows children to develop their imagination. They notice what adults do, and imitate them in their play, dressing up in hats, scarves and coats, and rubbing their hands together as they pretend to keep warm around an imaginary bonfire. Physically, children judge their own body space well and respond to music and rhythm, particularly enjoying music and movement sessions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are included and have their differences acknowledged and valued. Detailed information about personal circumstances is requested on joining, and parents are actively encouraged to share their knowledge and skills for the benefit of all children in the setting. For example, by

preparing foods enjoyed at home, and sharing their experiences of celebrating significant festivals.

Children who speak English as an additional language are effectively supported. Staff use Makaton and present activities using visual resources. This promotes children's knowledge and understanding, and their inclusion within the setting.

Children generally behave well. They are clear about the boundaries set and what is expected of them. Staff have a positive approach and use praise consistently to encourage positive responses.

The partnership with parents is good. They are well informed about the playgroup. Parents are provided with a good range of information, including daily updates on activities, regular newsletters and a clear prospectus which provides details of most relevant policies and procedures. Staff take steps to ensure that they are available on a daily basis to discuss any concerns parents may have. An annual parent's evening is one of the strategies used to keep them suitably informed of their child's progress.

Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child, and to be involved in their child's learning. They regularly contribute to daily diaries, and share library books to read at home.

There are clear procedures in place to deal with any concerns raised, but the complaints policy includes out-of-date information on how to contact the regulator. This presents an obstacle for parents who may wish to raise concerns.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a suitably trained staff team. The play leader holds a level 3 qualification. Other team members hold, or are working towards, appropriate qualifications. Suitability checks are completed on all new staff, but these are not reviewed at regular intervals to ensure children's continuing safety.

Arrangements ensure that good levels of adult support are maintained at all times. High staff to child ratios are consistently implemented. Bank staff and a named deputy are available to provide cover in case of absence or illness. The daily register is well maintained and provides a clear record of children's attendance.

Documentation and most policy information is shared appropriately with parents. Information about the conditions of registration is readily available as the certificate is clearly displayed.

The leadership and management of the group is good. The staff team is well established and are clear about their individual roles and responsibilities. They have developed strong links with local schools which aid children's transition when moving on. There is a clear commitment to ongoing improvement. Advice from a local authority advisor is accepted readily and used to improve practice. There is a basic system of self-evaluation in place which clearly identifies the strengths of the setting. However, the self-evaluation programme is not yet well established which means that areas for improvement are not identified clearly.

The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there were several recommendations made. Since then, the group has made significant progress and has addressed the issues raised well.

The group's policies have been reviewed and are regularly updated to promote the welfare and wellbeing of all the children in the setting. Resources such as glue, scissors, card and paper are now readily available at all times so children are able to create freely for their own purpose. Role-play areas are well equipped with mark-making resources and number lines, which support children's writing of numerals. Children are developing their independence at snack times as they make selections from the snack bar and carefully pour drinks for themselves. They are able to practise balancing and climbing skills using the climbing frame and balance track as part of daily physical activity. Adults are now using their observations to influence their planning so children are building on prior learning.

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):

- ensure that parents have access to up to date information on how to contact the regulator
- develop robust systems to ensure that the ongoing suitability of all staff members is regularly monitored

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):

- continue to develop the planning cycle so that targets for individual children are identified and addressed

- continue to develop the programme of self evaluation to ensure that areas for improvement are identified and addressed

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