

Sherborne Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101526
Inspection date	08 November 2007
Inspector	Hilary Elizabeth Tierney
Setting Address	The Old Telephone Exchange, Sherborne,, Nr Cheltenham, Gloucestershire, GL54 3DH
Telephone number	01451 844833
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Registered person	The Trustees of Sherborne Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Sherborne Playgroup is a community playgroup run by a committee of parents in the village of Sherborne, Gloucestershire. It operates from the old telephone exchange and is located next to the village primary school. Children have a large outside play area. The playgroup serves the local and wider community.

The group may provide care for 11 children between the ages of two and five years old. The group accept children from two-years-nine-months old. There are currently 16 children on roll, of whom 13 are funded three-and-four-year olds. The playgroup open Monday and Friday mornings from 09.30 until 12.00 and Tuesday and Thursday from 09.30 until 14.50, during the school term time. The group do not have any children attending who have learning disabilities and/or disabilities or for whom English is an additional language.

Two members of staff work with the children, both of whom hold relevant childcare qualifications. Staff receive support from the Foundation Stage consultants and are members of the playgroup and toddler association.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to learn about healthy personal hygiene routines. Staff encourage children to wash their hands before meals, after using the toilet and being outside. However, hand drying facilities are not appropriate with all children using two small hand towels. This may cause a risk of cross infection. Clear accident and medication books are in place and shared with parents. All necessary written parental permissions are in place. The risk of infection is minimised as sick children do not attend and if a child becomes ill at the setting their parents are contacted immediately.

Children are beginning to learn about healthy eating. Staff provide a good range of healthy snacks that include carrot sticks, apples and cucumber. Staff encourage children to give out plates and cups for snack time, which helps to develop their independence. However, older children have little opportunity to practise pouring their own drinks. Children have easy regular access to fresh drinking water because the staff make sure all children have a named water bottle easily accessible during the session. Older children are able to recognise their names on the bottles and help younger children select the right bottle. Staff have suitable awareness regarding the dietary needs of children and meet them accordingly. Children who stay to lunch have a packed lunch provided by their parents. These are stored appropriately in a fridge.

Children have good opportunities to explore and develop their bodily awareness. They have an enclosed area where they may play happily and safely. This area is easily accessible and staff encourage children to use this area regularly during the sessions. The door to the setting remains open most of the day to enable children to wander between inside and outside. Children have great fun as they play outside with balancing, climbing, painting, construction toys and bikes. Several bottles attached to the fence contain liquids, pasta, glitter and various other items which encourage children to explore how they move and make a noise. Staff plan activities outside, for example, a member of staff makes play dough with the children. They sit round a table and take turns as they measure the ingredients and mix them together. Children feel the flour, water, oil and salt and talk about the feel and textures with the member of staff. The children are left to play with the dough. They play happily with it using their imagination and sticking leaves in for candles.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, warm environment. There are displays of children's work around the room which gives them a sense of belonging. Due to the small room, children can not always access easily some resources. Staff are aware of this and try to ensure a suitable range is put out each session. Children may request more resources and staff will get these out. Clear labelled boxes of resources help children to start to recognise names of items.

Staff are vigilant and supervise children well both inside and outside the premises. Regular risk assessments are completed which help minimise the risks to children. However, due to the recent installation of new electric heaters, the guards around them are not fixed to the wall and do not cover the heaters adequately to make them safe for children. Staff ensure that doors are locked and chained when children are inside the building. When children are outside,

staff ensure the gate is suitably padlocked. Regular evacuation procedures are practised with children and clear records kept.

Children are well protected. Both staff have completed child protection training and are clear about the procedures to follow in the event of having a concern about a child in their care. Records of children's existing injuries are kept and shared with parents. Clear written procedures are in place should an allegation of abuse be made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and confident and new children have settled well into the group. The children benefit from the small group and staff know children and their families well. Interactions between staff and children are good. Staff take time to listen and talk with the children. Children have a stimulating range of activities that they take part in with enjoyment and excitement. Children were observed during a painting activity outside. They took great delight in painting the paper, which was attached to the fence, using brushes, rollers and their hands. Children then decided to paint themselves some more, they painted their faces and arms. They squealed with delight as they painted themselves. One child said to staff 'look at us we are getting messy', all children laughed and the member of staff laughed. Children play happily together, they share and take turns as they play. They enjoy taking part in all activities, they help to tidy up, organise games with each other and interact well together.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are learning and developing in most of the areas of the curriculum. Children have suitable opportunities to start to develop their mathematical language, staff ask clear open-ended questions, for example, 'how many more', 'what number comes before/after this one'. Children have easy access to books and are beginning to learn about linking sounds to letters. There is a cosy book corner where children may look at books. Children understand the concept of turning pages and the meaning of words. Easy access to writing materials helps to encourage children to make marks and start to write their names. Staff encourage the more able children to write their names on their drawings. Children thoroughly enjoy stories being read to them, they sit enthralled as staff read to them. They take part with excitement. Children have choices in activities from the suitable range that staff put out for them during the session. There is a suitable balance between adult-led and child-led activities. Staff are careful to develop children's interests and allow them to develop activities for themselves. For example, children were observed playing in the garden collecting leaves. One child observed some sticky paint on one leaf, so a member of staff discussed with them why the paint was there and how they could make a pattern on a piece of paper. The child got paper and put the leaf on the paper looking at the patterns it made. The child then started to do leaf rubbing and looking at the patterns the leaves made on the paper.

Children make satisfactory progress in all areas of learning because the staff have a suitable understanding and knowledge about the Foundation Stage and the learning outcomes. Staff use their time effectively and set aside time for the planning of activities, assessment and observation of children. However, this does not enable staff to track children effectively and help them identify and support children's next stages of learning. Children have limited experience and knowledge of everyday technology, for example, the use of computers and programmable toys. This is due to a lack of resources in this area. The use of time and resources

is well planned and staff allow the flexibility of activities to help develop children's interests and learning. Children enjoy taking part in activities and thoroughly enjoy their time at the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff help children understand the world around them with a suitable range of resources that reflect the diversity in the community. Children have a sense of belonging, they all have their own labelled drawers where they may put their work to take home. Staff treat children with equal care and concern. They demonstrated their understanding about how they would offer support to children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language.

Children are well behaved. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children understand the boundaries within the group. They show care and concern for each other. Children are encouraged to share, take turns and be polite to each other as they play. Staff are good role models. They talk to children with respect, and show care and affection to all children equally. They offer cuddles and reassurance when needed. Staff are consistent in their approach and are helping the children to develop a sense of fun and humour. For example, one member of staff asks the children to line up behind her, the other member of staff tells her the children are ready, and when she turns round all the children have hidden in the garden. The children giggle with delight as she is shocked they are not there. Staff use praise and encouragement throughout the session and the children respond with good behaviour.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Information is shared with parents through verbal communication, regular newsletters, information on the Foundation Stage curriculum and the notice board. The play leader makes time to see parents on two afternoons a week should they need to discuss any issues. Parents spoken to are happy with the care provided, information received and the approachable staff. The parents' poster is displayed clearly and they understand the complaints procedure.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

All legally required documentation required for registration is in place. Policies and procedures are reviewed regularly and are currently in the process of being up-dated. However, there is no system in place for the recording of any complaints. Registers are clear and up-to-date and a record of visitors is maintained. The registration certificate is clearly displayed and enables parents to see the conditions of registration. Staff are aware of the need to maintain confidentiality and all records are kept securely.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff and committee are committed to improvement and have completed self evaluation forms regularly to help them identify their strengths and weaknesses. The committee provide adequate support for the staff and are receptive to new ideas. A suitable recruitment process is in place and ensures that any adults are suitably checked before working with the children. Both the chair and play leader are new to their roles and are starting to work together effectively. Staff are energetic and thoroughly enjoy their time with the children and work well as a team.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Care

The provider had one recommendation from the last inspection. This was to update the complaints policy to include a contact for Ofsted as the regulatory body. The provider has updated policies, so the complaints procedure now includes the regulator's contact number.

Nursery Education

From the last inspection the provider was required to link activity plans to the stepping stones to ensure that all aspects of learning are effectively covered and given equal emphasis; complete assessments more regularly to ensure that individual needs are identified and then used to inform planning; and develop daily routines to include opportunities for children to practise simple adding and subtracting. These have been addressed and staff now link activity plans to the stepping stones and most aspects of learning are now covered; staff complete regular assessments and are able to identify children's individual needs and help with planning of activities.

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 hand washing procedures reduce the risk of cross infection
- ensure that the electric heaters are made safe or inaccessible to children
- develop systems for the recording of any complaints.

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):

- encourage older children to develop more independence, for example, during snack time
- develop further the planning of activities, so that all adults are able to use them effectively to help identify and support children's next stages of learning
- develop further activities to help increase children's knowledge and understanding regarding the use of everyday technology, for example, through the use of computers and programmable toys.

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