

# Shurdington Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101543
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<b>Registered person</b>	Shurdington 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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Shurdington Playgroup has been registered since 1992. It is located in the community centre in Shurdington village, a residential area to the south of Cheltenham. The group use the centre's main hall and the enclosed outdoor area. The playgroup is run by a voluntary committee of parents and is open from 09.30 until 12.30, five days a week during school terms.

The playgroup is registered to provide care for 24 children, aged between two and five years and accepts children from two years and nine months. At present there are 14 children on roll and of these, 10 are in receipt of funded nursery education. The group do not currently support any children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities although have previous experience in doing so.

Two members of staff work with the children, and hold NVQ level 3 qualifications in childcare. Staff have completed first aid and child protection training. They are assisted each session by a parent helper, and are supported by the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is safeguarded as staff maintain good standards of cleanliness. Children begin to learn about keeping healthy as staff prompt them to wash their hands when they have touched dirty items and visited the toilet. Easy access to liquid soap, water and a hand-dryer means that children learn to become more independent. Parents receive clear verbal information as to why sick children must not attend. Staff do not administer medication unless during an emergency and with parents' permission. Any distress to children after an accident is minimised, as there are staff members who hold current first aid qualifications. The sharing of the clear accident records with parents enables them to watch for any further symptoms.

Staff closely supervise the children at snack times to ensure they do not share food, which reduces the risk of children with allergies coming into contact with unsafe food. Children have continuous access to fresh drinking water from personally named bottles. Older children are able to pour their own drinks, but are not consistently encouraged to develop this practice.

The pleasant outdoor space offers all children plenty of regular fresh air and development of large muscle co-ordination, when using sit and ride cars, bikes and pushchairs. As story time is one of the highlights of the day, staff read a much loved tale about bears, following it up with a 'bear hunt', which takes place in the fully enclosed play area, promoting fresh air for all children.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are warmly welcomed by staff and escorted into the play room, where they immediately seek out activities of their own choice. The play room offers a huge, well-lit, comfortable and colourful environment in which all children move around freely. The room has been thoughtfully laid out, with areas set aside for reading, writing, art work, home corner and dressing up. The children generally move around safely and with ease, visiting all areas of the room, which capture their interest.

Staff are vigilant when counting their group, monitoring their movements and checking all areas children use indoors, to ensure they are safe. However, on occasions, staff fail to notice risks to children in the outdoor play area, such as a glass jar. Staff do remove such hazards once they become aware of them.

Monthly fire drills ensure that all staff and children can effectively evacuate the building. This acts as a reminder to children about what to do in an emergency. The setting ensures that children enjoy good quality toys and resources as there are effective systems in place to ensure the setting has sufficient equipment.

All staff are trained in child protection. They are able to take action to safeguard children's wellbeing as they have a clear understanding of the main signs and symptoms which indicate abuse. Staff are also aware of their responsibility to refer on any concerns. Current referral procedures are effectively documented, which means the setting can take prompt action when required.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

All children enter the setting happily and they are warmly welcomed by friendly staff, who take time to get to know them. Children and staff have good relationships and children are confident to approach staff for any support they might need. Most children play well together, share and take turns.

Children are provided with many opportunities for free play, when they can make individual choices. However, this is not sufficiently balanced with more structured activities to focus and direct their learning. Story time introduces a higher level of energy into the morning's activities, as staff read out children's favourite story about bears. They successfully engage their attention and follow this up with a lively 'bear hunt'.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff to plan activities that reflect the six areas of learning. Staff are extremely warm and supportive of all children without exception. Staff enjoy what they do and show an interest in all children. There is a range of resources for both indoor and outdoor play, which is regularly reviewed. Daily routines such as snack and tidy up times, encourage children to take responsibility and to feel safe and secure within the setting.

Systems for monitoring children's progress are not secure. Whilst staff make brief informative notes about children's progress, these are not completed frequently enough to give a picture of what children can actually do. Staff do not use this information to identify what children need to do next. As a result, staff's expectations of children are often low and children are not always sufficiently challenged to make progress.

Children enthusiastically enter the setting and settle quickly to chosen activities. Some are able to maintain long periods of concentration. Children are confident speakers because staff listen to them and value what they say. However, as staff's expectations of children are not always high, they do not always maximise learning. For example, when children bring items into the setting such as a bag of conkers, staff simply recognise and acknowledge the contribution. They fail to take the opportunity to share this with all the children to explore and discuss further.

Some older children are beginning to use number names for specific items they might be counting, but there are few opportunities for using numbers in everyday activities. Children enjoy circle time, when they discuss the weather each day and describe what they see and feel. One child retorts, "It's not just sunny, but it's windy today too" and hugs herself pretending to feel the cold outside.

Ready access to written materials means children slowly begin to use written marks as a way of recording their ideas. Children develop and improve hand-eye co-ordination skills, as they use safe scissors, crayons, pencils, glue and everyday tools and equipment of varying sizes.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are treated with respect and are listened to by staff. Children feel valued as staff regularly praise them for listening well or working nicely. Children are encouraged to work in

small groups or individually as a way of increasing personal independence. Staff encourage children to become proficient at putting on shoes or Wellington boots, and older children at tying their laces. All children are given time to achieve these tasks with support from staff.

The setting provides opportunities for parents to share their expertise and knowledge with the children. For example, children are introduced to German culture. They benefit greatly when a volunteer parent comes in to teach simple German words which are subsequently written up on posters, so children can begin to recognise them. There are however, limited resources in relation to raising children's awareness further around difference and diversity. Staff have experience of working with children who have learning difficulties. They welcome parents and work closely with them, planning and adapting weekly activities to suit individual needs.

Staff successfully ease the transition from home to the setting through effective settling-in procedures for all children. Children's behaviour is very good and staff provide clear boundaries, which offer a sense of security for all children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are happy to act as volunteers within the provision and follow a well organised rota system. Staff develop a close relationship with parents and information about children is often shared informally. Parents receive information via daily diaries about what children do during the sessions, although this tends to be very brief and does not give parents a picture of their child's progress. Staff are beginning to strengthen the links between home and playgroup. Parents are sent regular newsletters informing them of future events and activities at the playgroup, as well as fund-raising activities. However, parents are not currently offered information by the setting about the stepping stones and the Foundation Stage of learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff are checked for their suitability to work with children at the time of their employment and children are supervised by staff at all times to keep them safe. Staff have attended child protection training and have suitable training and qualifications to be able to maintain sound professional practice. Induction procedures ensure that staff know about the most important policies and procedures to promote the care and welfare of children. Whilst the setting informs Ofsted of changes in personnel, systems to ensure they forward all relevant information are not sufficiently robust.

Children's care is enhanced through effective organisation of space and resources to generally meet their needs. Records of children's attendance are efficiently recorded at both arrival and departure times. All necessary and important documentation is kept in files, and securely locked inside a cupboard which can only be accessed by staff. The registration and insurance certificates are up to date and on display, for all parents to see. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They receive support from the local authority advisor. They are supported to develop their skills further, for example, they attend training to prepare them for forthcoming changes to the Foundation Stage. The play leader is new to the post and is working closely with her team through regular communication, and is strengthening links

with parents. However, systems to monitor the effectiveness of the nursery education programme are not sufficient to ensure all areas for improvement are identified and addressed.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection, the setting was asked to ensure that the contents of the first aid box were regularly checked and comply with relevant regulations. Staff now maintain the contents of the first aid box to contribute to children's health.

At the last nursery education inspection, the setting was asked to ensure free play activities were made available to support children's mark making and mathematical development, and to encourage more able children to develop their writing skills.

Children are now provided with easy access to an 'art cart' where they freely access writing materials such as pencils, crayons and felt tips. They are also provided with opportunities to write for a purpose during role play. Staff encourage all children to write their own names, and children are able to do this, with varying degrees of success.

Children are also provided with equipment to aid in the development of their understanding of mathematical concepts. For example, staff provide weighing scales on the nature table to enable children to weigh items such as acorns and conkers. However, staff do not always take opportunities which present themselves to develop children's understanding or to introduce mathematical language into children's play.

### **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 by Ofsted.

## **THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION**

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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 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 children are not exposed to hazards in the environment
- ensure Ofsted are provided with relevant information about changes in personnel.

## **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 children's progress is monitored and the information gained is used to identify what children need to do next
- ensure planning takes account of what children know and can do to ensure activities provide suitable challenge
- improve information provided for parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the progress their child is making.

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)