

Teversham Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 221765
Inspection date 11 March 2008
Inspector Heidi Falconer

Setting Address Teversham C of E Primary School, Church Road, Teversham, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB1 9AZ
Telephone number 01223 293357
E-mail
Registered person Teversham 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 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?

Teversham Playgroup is run by a voluntary committee and opened in 1972. It operates from a mobile classroom in the grounds of Teversham Primary School, Cambridgeshire. A maximum of 20 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09:00 to 11:30 during school term time. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 33 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 16 children receive funding for early education. The playgroup currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The playgroup employs six members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are suitably nourished and their good health is promoted through the healthy snacks that are on offer. For example, they have fresh fruit such as apples, pears, kiwis and mangos which are donated by parents. Staff take opportunities to talk to children at snack time about foods which are good for them. Children say that having 'lots of fruit' and 'oranges' make them healthy. Children have access to drinking water throughout the session in order to reduce their risk of dehydration. When children first start at the setting staff seek information about any dietary requirements or preferences and ensure that these are catered for. This helps to maintain children's good health.

Children develop good personal hygiene routines and self-care skills. They independently wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children say that they wash their hands 'because they may have germs on them' and that 'germs make you poorly'. During 'all about me topics' children further develop their understanding of good personal hygiene routines as they have visits from a dentist and a nurse.

Children's health is promoted well because the playgroup has good procedures in place to minimise the risk of cross-infection and promote their health. For example, all tables are cleaned with an anti-bacterial spray before snacks are served. In addition, parents are asked to adhere to the setting's sickness policy and exclude their child if they are suffering from an infectious illness. A high number of staff hold a current first aid certificate. This means they can give appropriate care if there is an accident. Parents are asked to sign all accident records to confirm that they have been notified.

All children enjoy energetic outdoor play. Children climb with confidence and balance well as they use climbing apparatus in the garden. They show good spatial awareness when riding scooters in the garden, taking care not to bump into each other. Children handle tools appropriately and enjoy using them with malleable materials such as dough. For example, children use scissors, rolling pins, tongs, serrated cutters and knives as they make 'birthday cakes' out of dough.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe at the setting. As they take part in woodwork activities staff show them how to handle tools such as screwdrivers and hammers safely. These activities are well supervised by staff which additionally promotes children's safety. Children's risk of accidental injury is reduced as staff take good precautions to keep them safe. For example, heaters are fitted with appropriate guards, the external door is kept locked during each session and rubber guards have been placed on the toilet doors to prevent children from trapping their fingers. In addition, detailed risk assessments are carried out of the premises and the cleaning products used at the setting.

Staff have a good understanding of their role in safeguarding children. The majority of staff, including the designated child protection officer, have attended training in this area. They are familiar with possible signs of abuse and know who to contact if they had a concern, or if an allegation was made against a member of staff. The setting's child protection policy is in line

with current legislation and information from their Local Safeguarding Children Board is readily available to support them if a concern arose.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. As they arrive staff greet them at the door and there are displays of children's artwork and photographs of them taking part in activities. For example, currently displayed in the entrance area, are photographs of children on a recent trip to a local farm. As they arrive they are keen to look at these and show them to their parents. Children have access to a large outdoor play area which has both a hard and barked area. Indoors and outdoors children use a wide range of resources which are of suitable design and well maintained.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy at the playgroup and enjoy the range of interesting activities on offer each day. They self-select toys and staff support their play well by joining in their games and activities. Staff ask children questions which make them think and extend their learning. For example, as children match picture cards staff ask 'why would you match apples and bananas?' children reply 'because they are both fruits'. As a result, of the support they receive in their play and the ability to freely choose activities, children are interested in what they are doing and enjoy their time in the setting.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress as staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and plan a wide range of interesting activities. Children respond positively to the activities on offer as the staff plan these in response to their interests. Staff make regular observations on all children and add these to their assessment files. These records are then used to inform planning so that activities move the children on to their next stage of development. All staff carry 'play plan cards' these detail children's next steps in learning and staff effectively refer to these when supporting children in their play.

Children use mathematical language to describe shape, size, quantity and capacity, and they use it in context as they play. For example, as children play with dough they make balls of varying sizes and hide them under cups. They then ask staff 'can you find me the biggest one?' when the cup is lifted off the children say 'no that's not the biggest one, that's small'. Children are able to sort and match objects by size, shape and colour. For example, they can match the shapes of animals to insert games. Children count confidently with some of the older children being able to count over ten.

Children are able to recognise their names, which they collect and post in a box as they arrive. As they play with wooden letter bricks staff encourage them to recognise the letters which are in their name. However, there are fewer opportunities during everyday activities for children to hear sounds and begin to link them to letters. Children enjoy books and most listen well to stories. Notepads are provided for the children to use in their play to support their early writing skills. However, older and more able children are not consistently encouraged to write for a purpose such as writing their names on their artwork.

Imaginative play is promoted well and children have free access to a wide range of props such as shoes, clothes, necklaces, tiaras and play items such as kettles and irons. The accessibility of these resources helps children to develop their own ideas. For example, children set up the

ironing board before selecting clothes to iron. Once they have ironed their clothes they hold them up to show others saying 'that's nice and smooth isn't it', other children reply 'yes that's lovely'. As children take part in woodwork activities they are encouraged to explore the materials and talk about how the different items feel. As they feel cotton wool children describe it saying 'it feels like sheep'. As they rub sandpaper they observe the differences between the coarse and fine paper.

Children have opportunities to explore the natural world and to find out and identify some features of living things. They go for nature walks around the school field and grow seeds and plants. For example, they have recently grown cress and in the summer they grow strawberries and tomatoes outside. The staff have also just started to take the children on local trips to places in their community. The children are keen to talk about their recent trip to the farm and exclaim 'chicken's give us eggs'. Children have good access to resources such as binoculars, echo microphones and play tills which help them to understand and question how things work. However, children have less regular access to the setting's computer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Good procedures are in place to ensure that children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included and supported at the setting. Staff work closely with parents and outside agencies as required to ensure children's individual needs are met. Visual aids and timetables help children to understand what things are, or what is coming next, helping them to organise their thoughts effectively. In addition, to ensure that children with communication difficulties are fully included a member of staff has attended training and uses Makaton with the children. As a result, they are able to fully take part in activities such as choosing songs at group time and joining in with birthday celebrations. Children learn about diversity in society through taking part in activities throughout the year planned around festivals and celebrations. These include the celebrations which the children celebrate at home. For example, on St. David's day they painted pictures of daffodils and ate Welsh cakes.

Children behave well. They are considerate towards the feelings of others and happily share resources and take turns. For example, as three children play with a game called 'Old McDonald' they say 'we are playing this as it is her favourite game, then we will play our favourite games'. As they play they understand the need to take turns to roll the dice reminding each other 'it's your turn now'. Staff support younger children in developing these skills as they ask children to share popular resources such as the trains. Staff use lots of positive interaction and praise to help promote children's confidence and self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children under the age of three also benefit the positive relationships that staff develop with their parents. When children first start, staff request information about their favourite toys, songs and any other information which parents feel the staff should know about the child. Staff then use this information to help children settle at the group. Newsletters are also used to inform parents of events at the setting and topics. The partnership with parents and carers of nursery funded children is good. They receive good information about the Foundation Stage and six areas of learning. The weekly planning is on display so that parents and carers can see what children will be doing at the playgroup and support them in their learning. Assessments are shared with parents and they are asked to comment on their children's learning. Additionally, when parents make comments on their children's achievements through informal discussions

staff also add these to the assessment records. Children benefit from this close working partnership.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

A wide range of policies and procedures are in place which are effectively implemented by staff to support children's all round care. These are regularly checked and updated to ensure that they reflect changes in legislation and good practice. All policies and procedures are readily available to all parents in the entrance area of the playgroup. Accurate registers are maintained of children's attendance, however, up to date records of staff's attendance are not always maintained.

Generally effective recruitment and induction procedures are in place, overseen by the committee. However, there is no clear system to be followed when recruiting staff and therefore in some cases references have not been obtained. Inductions are carried out with all new members of staff to ensure that they are familiar with the ethos of the setting and the procedures that they follow. For example, within the first week of employment staff are made familiar with the settings' child protection policy and their fire evacuation procedure. This helps to ensure that children receive consistent care and that their safety is promoted. Staff work well together as a team and are deployed well to ensure that children receive appropriate support in their activities.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The new manager is enthusiastic and is keen to make changes to continue to support children's learning. An appraisal system for staff is currently being developed to the setting to identify training needs. Staff meet regularly to plan the curriculum and to discuss children's progress. However, there is not currently a system in place to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to improve the registration system, ensure the oven and heaters are safe, improve the strategies to support any child who speaks English as an additional language, ensure all appropriate committee members are vetted and develop a procedure for uncollected children.

Since the last inspection the staff have taken appropriate action to improve children's safety at the setting. The registration system has been improved to include children's times of arrival and departure and the names of staff and any visitors present, covers have been fitted to all heaters, all committee members have submitted to the required checks, a procedure is in place for uncollected children and the oven no longer poses a risk to the children. However, the staff's attendance is not always recorded on a daily basis. The staff have developed suitable strategies to support children who may attend who speak English as an additional language.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to further develop opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning and to develop the planning.

Since the last inspection the staff have worked hard to provide more opportunities for parents to be involved in their child's learning. For example, information is provided for them about the curriculum, topics and assessments. Planning has been developed further it covers all areas

of learning equally and care plans have been put in place to ensure that all staff are able to extend all children in 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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 records of staff's attendance are accurately maintained
- improve the system for recruiting and vetting staff.

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 that children have regular opportunities to use information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their learning
- improve the programme for communication language and literacy by providing children with opportunities to write for a purpose and begin to link sounds and letters.

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