

# North Muskham Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	253292
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 February 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Angela Hufton
<b>Setting Address</b>	Village Hall, Nelson Lane, North Muskham, Nottinghamshire, NG23 6HL
<b>Telephone number</b>	01636 708592
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Muskham 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 inadequate – notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

North Muskham Playgroup opened in 1991. It operates from the Village Hall and the group has access to two large rooms, a kitchen and appropriate toilet facilities. The building is shared with other users and does not have outdoor play facilities. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open Wednesday and Thursday from 09:00 to 11:30 hours and a lunch club is run from 11:30 to 13:00 on Wednesday. The group are also registered at the adjacent school and operate from there at other times. The group is open term-time only.

There are currently 31 children aged two and a half to five years on roll. Of these children 19 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the village and surrounding areas. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The playgroup employs four core staff who work directly with children and has additional relief staff available. Most of the staff, including the supervisor hold an appropriate early years qualification, with other staff working towards qualifications for their role. The playgroup is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a suitably clean environment where their risk of infection is minimised. Staff follow current hygiene guidelines and appropriate policies and procedures such as cleaning tables before and after snacks. Children begin to learn to keep themselves healthy and begin to follow routines which reinforce a healthy lifestyle. For example, children wash their hands after using the toilet or before snacks and learn to use tissues to deal with their runny noses. Children receive appropriate care and treatment in the event of an accident. There are sufficient staff trained in first aid and they have access to suitably stocked first aid kits. Staff are effectively deployed to ensure at least one person with a first aid qualification is present at all sessions. Systems are in place to record accidents, however, at times these are not sufficiently detailed and the injuries that children arrive with are not consistently recorded. This does not promote children's ongoing health and welfare.

Children have free access to fresh drinking water and other drinks to ensure they are not thirsty. They enjoy their snacks, expressing preference between the apples or pears provided and asking for more toast. Snacks are planned to meet their individual dietary needs. Children begin to learn about healthy options and are willing to try new foods. They know that milk comes from cows and some older children also know that calcium helps bones to grow. Children enjoy regular opportunities for energetic play to develop general physical skills and they learn about the need for exercise to help keep them healthy. They access a suitable range of equipment such as stilts to develop their balance and footballs to develop their coordination. Children in receipt of funding for early education access a suitable range of physically developmental activities. They enjoy moving their bodies in a variety of ways such as when they play with hoops or as they do actions to familiar rhymes and songs.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children are cared for in a bright and welcoming environment, however, children cannot move around safely. Positive steps are not taken to minimise the risk to children such as placing socket covers in the entrance lobby and potential hazards are not identified. For example, unlocked doors within the main playroom provide access to the entrance lobby. This means the main playroom is not fully secure and children could gain access to store cupboards with stacked chairs and changing rooms containing broken light fittings and glass bottles. Suitable risk assessments are not carried out. Children open and close the connecting door between the main and small hall, closing it forcibly with the potential to trap other children's fingers. Children use suitable and safe toys and equipment that are appropriate for their stage of development. These are organised for children to access safely and independently.

Children are kept safe in the event of a fire because regular practices are carried out. They are beginning to learn how to stay safe in some circumstances through explanation from staff such as why they should be careful when using scissors or why they should not kick the ball too hard near other children. They are not kept safe in the event of child protection concerns. Where these are identified, staff are not sufficiently confident of their responsibilities or the procedures to follow in order to ensure children are protected. The child protection policy does not comply with regulations. There is no clear procedure in the event of allegations against a members

staff and the designated person is unaware of the various agencies to report to, potentially leaving children at risk in the event of such concerns.

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

The provision is good.

Children of all ages are usually contented and settled within the playgroup. Children are confident in moving freely around the play areas both in the main and smaller hall. Older children are relaxed in their dealings with others and form good relationships with their peers and staff. They invite others to join in their play and freely talk to staff, particularly during snack times. Children are happy, content and are mostly purposefully occupied. They enjoy playing with construction toys, building train tracks, freely throwing and catching balls or using stencils to draw pictures. They show care and concern for others, for example, as a child trips slightly going into the role-play house, another child asks if they are alright. Children have consistent routines within the setting and they are beginning to learn what is expected of them such as coming together for registration or snacks. Staff have a suitable understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are beginning to use this in their practice.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff work well together to create a welcoming and supporting environment, therefore, children are settled and show a suitable degree of independence within the setting. Staff have sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan activities which cover the six areas of learning. They observe what children do so they are clear of children's capabilities and record these in children's assessment files. However, the planning of activities does not effectively link to these assessment files or children's next steps to maximise their progress. Planning is in place for specific focused activities. These are not sufficiently evaluated to identify children's specific learning. Staff use a variety of teaching methods including small and whole group activities. At times this is not effective to meet the specific needs of the children taking part. For example, children who are shy or reluctant to take part in large groups do not benefit from an alternative individual or small group activity. Staff listen to children when they talk giving them opportunity to express themselves and develop their thoughts and ideas. For example, as children look at a vase of daffodils staff help them to think about how they are going to paint the picture and what shades of colours they need.

Children are included in decision making which promotes their feeling of being valued and promotes a sense of belonging. For example, children explain what they would like to do in the main hall when given a variety of suitable choices by staff. Staff generally use open-ended questioning techniques to encourage children to think and children respond appropriately. Most children are competent speakers when conversing with their peers or adults. For example, they talk to adults about their community and family members, explain what they are making or recall what they did yesterday. They have real-life experiences and begin to develop an understanding of how to be caring towards others.

Children show a sense of belonging as they identify 'their picture' when they arrive at the setting. They engage in activities showing concentration in small group, large group or sole activities. For example, they are creative as they make individual Mother's Day cards or they play together in the soil tray putting compost into various sized plant pots and planting flowers into these, concentrating for at least 15 minutes. They use their senses through exploring music and playing with different materials such as play dough or water. Children have a positive

approach to new experiences such as tasting different food and fruit from other cultures, including Chinese food. Most children take responsibility for their own self-care as they put on their coats and attempt to fasten them. They are generally well behaved, cooperative and know what is expected of them, for example, they sit nicely at snack times and show good manners as they say 'please' and 'thank you'.

Children show interest in numbers and most of them can count up to 10 without support, while others can count beyond 10 and correctly count at least five objects in order. They develop knowledge and become familiar with numbers in numeral form and can recognise simple shapes such as a circle or square. For example, they know that footballs are round and that rugby balls are more like ovals. Children are beginning to use positional language when communicating and can differentiate between sizes and colours of objects. Older children can distinguish between light and dark shades of the same colour, for example, they show the inspector two blue toy pieces and correctly state which one is the lightest.

Children use their imagination to construct and create models and have good opportunities to develop their imagination through role-play. They enjoy the 'Garden Centre Café' and develop their play through selling various items such as pizza and develop their mark-making as they take orders. Children show an interest in operating equipment such as a calculator or a computer mouse. They use simple tools reasonably well, for example, they correctly use a hole punch and select small trowels to fill their plant pot with compost. Children's hand and eye coordination is developing and also their skill of using one handed tools such as scissors and pencils. Older children correctly write the first letter that their name begins with and the majority of children can link sounds to letters. Children show interest in having stories read to them and become familiar with printed words as they look at books themselves. They eagerly join in with favourite stories with most children enthusiastically saying 'I can run faster than you' as it reoccurs in the story.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children generally behave well, however, staff use inappropriate methods for managing unwanted behaviour. For example, during the singing time at the end of the session, staff continually get up and take hold of children by the wrist to move them to another seat because they are not paying attention. Children are offered no explanation as to why they are being moved, as a consequence children continue their behaviour and staff yet again take hold of them by the wrist and move them. For some children this happens numerous times within a short period, the children complying as they are familiar with this method of behaviour management. The reasons for children's lack of attention are not sufficiently considered and they are not encouraged to learn to manage their own behaviour.

Children are encouraged to share resources and take turns. They enjoy some opportunities to develop their understanding of the wider world. For example, through jigsaws of other cultures. They access an appropriate range of resources to develop this, including a selection of role-play resources and participation in activities linked to cultural festivals. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are suitably welcomed into the setting. Staff know the children well and are aware of their individual care needs. Children follow established daily routines such as sitting together for snack and begin to understand how to act in group activities. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive appropriate support as staff have undertaken relevant training. Children's care needs are suitably supported through parents' access to a prospectus and copies of the setting's policies and

procedures. However, the complaints policy and procedure does not have all required details to ensure they are fully aware of this aspect and does not comply with regulations.

Partnerships with parents and carers of children in receipt of early education funding is good. Staff work closely with parents to meet children's individual educational needs effectively. The good interaction between them provides a forum so that information is easily exchanged, therefore, providing continuity of care for children. Parents are kept well informed in a variety of ways regarding their children and what is happening within the provision such as informal chats and notice board information. They have positive views regarding the service of the setting and are included in extending children's learning. Children's individual development files are available for parents to see how they are progressing.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Children and staff registers are in place. However, these are not accurately completed to show the actual times of children's arrival and departures or a clear record of the names of the persons who looked after them as staff times of arrival and departure are not recorded. Most records are readily accessible on the premises or easily accessed at another site used by the playgroup.

Children receive suitable levels of support and supervision to help them feel settled and confident in the setting. Each child has a key worker enabling them to build secure relationships. Children move freely in the setting and access sufficient play materials because staff organise space and resources appropriately. They benefit through staff accessing training to enable them to improve the care offered.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager has a 'hands-on' approach which enables her to give staff appropriate support. Staff work together as a team to provide children with a caring and happy environment. They have suitable knowledge of nursery education and receive support from other professional workers, such as the early years specialist teacher, to help them to provide a system which encourages children to progress in their development. This is developed further through staff appraisals and support from the committee. Both the manager and staff evaluate activities and assess children's development which informs them of children's next steps. However, planning is not effectively linked to children's next steps and their developmental files are not all sufficiently up-to-date. This means children's progress is not maximised.

Overall, the provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the setting agreed to one recommendation to improve fire safety by carrying out regular fire drills to ensure that all staff and children have the opportunity to take part. The setting have suitably addressed this and regular fire drills are now carried out, protecting children in the event of a fire. At the last nursery education inspection the setting agreed to two recommendations. The first of these was to develop systems for parents to contribute to their child's assessments. Termly open evenings are now held and parents have regular meetings with their child's key worker enabling them further opportunities to contribute. The second recommendation was to place more emphasis on providing opportunities for children to know about the uses of everyday information and communication technology to support their learning. Children now have regular opportunities to access the computer and also enjoy

using other communication technology equipment such as digital cameras. They have great fun looking back at photographs of themselves on the laptop computer and learn to operate simple programs.

### **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 record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

## **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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- take positive steps to promote safety by ensuring all hazards are effectively identified and measures taken to minimise the risk to children including ensuring they are unable to access unsuitable areas, that doors are made safe and sockets are covered
- ensure that the child protection policy and procedures complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB), includes procedures in the event of allegations against staff and demonstrate how all staff, including the designated person, have sufficient knowledge and understanding for their roles
- develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development and demonstrate that methods used are appropriate and agreed with parents
- ensure all required policies, procedures and records required for the safety, welfare and care of children are in place and demonstrate how these include sufficient detail with particular reference to registers for staff and children, accident and medication records and the complaints policy.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

#### **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):

- improve the use of assessment records to ensure these reflect children's current achievements and use these effectively to inform planning for each child's next steps

- ensure planning reflects the learning needs of each child and maximises their potential with particular regard to the use of focus activities and the organisation of group activities.

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)