

Carbrooke Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 254006

Inspection date 20 November 2007

Inspector Susan Cox

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Registered person The Trustees of Carbrooke 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 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?

Carbrooke Playgroup has been registered since the 1970s and is run by trustees. It operates from a room in the Carbrooke village hall. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. It is open Monday and Tuesday from 09.00 to 12.30 and Wednesday to Friday from 09.00 to 15.00 during term time only. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 36 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 19 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the village and surrounding area. The playgroup currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The trustees employ five members of staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications. The playgroup receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning about healthy eating through a range of projects and activities such as making 'wraps' using lettuce they wash, carrot and cheese they grate, and ham that has been chopped for them. They chatter about what they are doing and explore what is good for them as they work with the staff. At snack time they hand around a dish of cream and plain biscuits knowing that they may only take two. This is followed by a selection that often contains fresh and dried fruit, vegetables or cheese and biscuits. Staff try to encourage all children to try the healthy option but some are not tempted and eat only the biscuits. As a result, nutritious snacks are not fully promoted. Children help themselves to a drink of water as they wish and staff explain that it is important to drink frequently to stay well.

Children's medical needs are met as staff gather information from their parents at registration. Training is taken to accommodate children with special medical conditions, and a care plan drafted, so they may be given appropriate support. If children have an accident, they are cared for by staff who hold current first aid training and a record is shared with their parents so they may take any further action needed to ensure their children's welfare. Children are learning how to manage their personal hygiene effectively. They are accompanied to the toilet, for their safety, and little ones are supported sensitively as they acquire the required skills.

Children love playing in the fresh air, and run up and down the grassy mound with delight, playing with their friends. Balls are kicked, hit back and forth with bats or golf clubs and games played with bean bags and hoops. They climb and slide on the fixed play equipment and walk the 'wobbly' bridge. As a result, they are learning a range of physical skills and how their bodies work. They also take part in a good range of activities in the fresh air throughout the year as parents supply appropriate clothing. This not only benefits their health but also helps children who learn better in an outdoor environment. When children are tired they settle comfortably in the book area to rest according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to settle quickly and engage in play as staff make the hall a bright and welcoming environment. They are well-organised and ensure an interesting range of activities are set out ready for the children as they arrive. Staff conduct risk assessments, take relevant action to minimise risks, and ensure the premises are secure so that children play in a safe setting. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe through free play and planned activities. Reminders are given about how to play safely in the sand, not to wander around with scissors, and not to run in the hall, or they may have an accident. Staff work consistently to reinforce these rules so children understand what is expected of them. Children take part in fire drills so they know how to leave the premises safely in an emergency and care is taken to warn children of the risks, and minimise them, when crossing the car park to the outdoor play area.

Children's care and education is enhanced by the very good use they make of the enclosed outside play area. Although there are problems with vandalism of the fencing, it provides a good boundary to the area, which the children respect, enabling them to play happily. Staff

take appropriate measures to minimise the risks regarding gaps in the fencing and maintain close supervision to ensure children's safety at all times.

Children play freely with a very good range of resources during the early part of the session and when outside. This supports their learning in all areas and promotes their independence as they often confidently make their own choices. For example, children look in the trolley to find resources for the craft table and put their jumper in their personal drawer knowing it will be safe there until they need it. Staff monitor resources as they are used to ensure they remain safe and appropriate for use.

Staff have a very clear understanding of child protection procedures. They follow the comprehensive policy, which is available to parents, and know what to do if they have concerns about children's safety. As a result, children are appropriately protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of activities, during much of the session, which helps to effectively promote their development and learning in all areas. They quickly settle to play, confidently selecting activities set out for them. For example, digging in the sand and listening to how to make sand castles, considering if they need more sand, or have too much, and being excited when they turn them out and consider the results. Children play with friends in the role play area; they go shopping with baskets, weigh fruit and vegetables and love wrapping them in bags, as they act out real experiences, and learn about shopping and foods that are good for them. Older children make their own 'money' by drawing around circles to make coins which extends their play appropriately. Staff are well deployed, ready to help the children, and sensitively exploit learning opportunities as they arise. As a result, children are happy and relaxed as they ask for help when needed and respond well to the praise and encouragement that is freely given. Opportunities to play in the fresh air, walks in the local community and a range of visitors to the group help to add interest and ensure a good balance of activities to develop children's interests.

Children are forming happy and secure relationships with their peers and staff. They readily find friends to join in their play and know that staff will listen to and value what they say and do. As a result, children are developing confidence and self-esteem. Younger children are sensitively supported as staff have an understanding of how to implement 'Birth to three matters' and they use this in their planning, observations and next steps to help the children make good progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are eager to learn and take part in a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities during much of the session. Staff plan effectively to ensure all areas of learning are covered, observe what the children do and use this to plan the next steps in their learning. The key person takes responsibility for writing up the children's Learning Story and colour coding helps to spot gaps in learning and track progress. Consequently children are well supported and are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are becoming confident in making their own choices of activities during free play. Many manage their own coats and shoes well with younger ones being helped to learn the

relevant skills. Aprons are found for messy activities, and are returned to the pegs after use, showing children understand what is expected of them. Children happily play with their friends and are learning how to manage their behaviour effectively with sensitive support. They enjoy helping and understand this is part of the daily routine; they collect the dishes and beakers after snack and place them on the trolley and help to tidy up resources when requested. Celebrating festivals and taking part in activities such as Chinese New Year and finding out about life in South Africa helps extend their understanding of the wider world. Most children chatter confidently and enjoy exploring new words, for example, repeating 'hydrated' several times as they are told what this means. Children enjoy looking at books and many sit and listen attentively to stories in a large group. Children make marks and practise early writing skills frequently with some able to write their name legibly.

Children use a range of mathematical concepts in planned activities and free play. They count how many children are present, how many are at the sand tray and how many bowls they need on the snack table for everyone to have one. Counting songs and rhymes help them learn simple calculations and fingers are often used to count on or take away. Staff spot learning opportunities as they arise, for example, seeing a child putting a pear on the scales leads to discovering it is made of wood and that it is heavier than the plastic orange. Drawing around an adult, then children, helps them understand about height and size and making towers of bricks and comparing them extends this further. Playing outside most days gives children practical experiences of the weather and how to dress appropriately. They eagerly play with ribbons, notice how they blow in the wind and thrill to discover fresh mole hills and use the soft soil in their play. Meeting a reindeer and seeing a hot air balloon on the field, and finding out how it works, is fascinating and enjoyed by all. Children become 'construction workers' as they put on hard hats, play in the sand, use gravel and manoeuvre large pipes in the outside area. Consequently they are developing a good knowledge and understanding of the world.

Children play actively inside and in the fresh air developing a good range of physical skills. They draw, paint, glue, cut with scissors, make models and complete puzzles which helps with increasing control of small muscles and coordination. Painting at the easels, children explore colours and are proud of their work. They sing songs and rhymes and enjoy using the instruments to make music. Dressing up as fire fighters sees them acting out real life situations and allows them to recreate the experiences of a visit from a local brigade. Children are therefore using creative skills in a variety of ways.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. This is because staff work effectively to meet children's individual needs and they are introduced to the wider world through a good range of resources and planned activities. This helps to promote respect for all and an understanding of our multicultural society. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are fully included in activities, and enabled to work with their peers, building secure relationships with individual support staff if required. All staff have a clear understanding of team work to help the children and advice from other professionals, with parental consent, is readily accepted. As a result, children with particular needs are sensitively supported to make good progress.

Children's behaviour is good. This is because staff implement the positive behaviour management policy well and set clear expectations for the children. For example, simple safety rules are explained regularly; all are expected to help tidy up and staff give gentle reminders not to run

in the hall. When there is an upset, staff take time to get down to the children's level, talk to them and explain so they understand. This helps the children realise the implications of what they have done, apologise to their friends, and then resume play with their self-esteem promoted.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. A visit to see the group in operation, and time to ask questions, enables parents to make an informed decision about using the group. Daily chats with staff enable all to be up to date to meet the children's needs and a wealth of information helps parents understand what their children are learning. For example, topics and how they link to the areas of learning are included in the newsletters so parents may send in resources and discuss them with their children. A white board is used each day to let parents know what their children have been doing and they are encouraged to see and contribute to their children's files. Many parents help on the rota and feel this gives them a good insight into what their children are learning. Parents express their satisfaction with the group and explain that they feel their children are well supported and making good progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Procedures are in place and followed to make sure the staff working with the children are suitable for their position. However, checks have not been completed on all the trustees to show they are appropriate for their role. Staff work effectively to ensure people who have not been checked do not have unsupervised access to the children for their safety. Children benefit from the commitment the staff show to training and the way they use new skills within the group. Staff show an enjoyment in their work and respond to children with kindness and care as they work with parents to meet the children's needs. Although the first part of the session is well-organised and provides rich and stimulating activities, many of these are cleared away early resulting in restricted choice for children later in the session and during the lunchtime period. As a result, learning opportunities are not always promoted effectively at these times and this also impacts on the quality of nursery education. Children's health is generally promoted although some are not sufficiently encouraged to enjoy healthy eating.

All documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and well-organised to be readily available as required. Overall children's needs are met.

Leadership and management is good. The manager effectively supports the staff team on a daily basis and through staff meetings and appraisals. This creates a happy and relaxed team who work effectively, to meet the needs of the children, particularly during the early part of the session and in the garden. The manager and her deputy take responsibility for planning and both have a good understanding of the spread of activities needed to help children make good progress in all areas of their learning. They are keen to take advice from outside agencies in order to further develop the care and education of the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to update the procedure for lost children and to provide more opportunities for children to calculate and to select resources to develop skills in building and constructing. The lost child policy has been updated appropriately to show the correct action to take in such an event. Children now do simple calculations in many planned activities, and in their chosen play, and freely select resources to build and construct in a variety of ways.

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

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 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):

- further promote nutritious snacks for all children
- review the organisation of the session to extend the time children may spend making their own choices and taking part in the comprehensive range of activities available to them (also applies to nursery education)
- make sure Ofsted is notified promptly of changes to the trustees.

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):

- make improvements as indicated in the care section above.

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