

The Village Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	260895
Inspection date	06 November 2007
Inspector	Carly Mooney
Setting Address	The Community Village Centre, Church Street, Werrington, Peterborough, Cambs, PE4 6QE
Telephone number	01733 571224
E-mail	e.turczyn@aol.com
Registered person	The Trustees of The Village 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?

The Village Playgroup was established over 25 years ago. It is situated in the village hall in Werrington village situated to the north of Peterborough. The playgroup serves the immediate village and surrounding areas. It operates five days a week, term time only. Sessions are from 09:15 to 12:15 hours. A lunch club is offered from 12:15 to 13:00 hours each day.

The playgroup is registered for 25 children at any one time from two years to under five years. There are currently 30 children on roll. This includes 15 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The playgroup employs six staff. All staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about personal hygiene through regular routines, such as washing their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet. Staff are clear role models for the children as they take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection by wiping down tables with anti-bacterial fluid and washing their own hands before serving food. Most staff are first aid trained which enables them to respond appropriately to a child if an accident occurs. Appropriate procedures and record keeping are in place to ensure good care is given if a child becomes unwell or sustains an injury during their time at the playgroup.

Healthy eating is promoted well through interesting topic work and discussions with staff at snack times. Children are offered fresh fruit on a daily basis and have taken part in activities, such as making their own sandwiches and tasting foods from Italy and China. Children have grown and harvested their own potatoes which helps them to develop an understanding of where foods come from. Outside visitors, such as a nutritionist further supports children's understanding of healthy eating to promote growth and development. Children and staff have recently entered the 'Werrington Carnival' under the theme of 'five fruit or vegetables a day', where they thoroughly enjoyed dressing up as healthy foods after learning about them in the playgroup. Children independently pour their own drinks at snack time and are able to help themselves to water throughout the session, enabling them to control their own thirst.

Children are able to develop and use their physical skills on a daily basis both inside and outside in the fresh air. Appropriate equipment, such as balancing beams, crawling tunnel and a small trampoline allows them to practise their jumping and balancing and effectively use their large muscle skills. Children's fine muscle skills are developing well as they use a range of equipment, such as play dough tools, peg boards and glue sticks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in safe and secure premises. They are able to move about freely and safely under the constant supervision of the playgroup staff. The room is organised effectively so that children have independent access to a wide range of safe and suitable equipment which is kept in good condition.

Children's ongoing safety is promoted well by staff who continue to review risk assessments on a regular basis and implement procedures to keep children safe. For example, the main door is alarmed with a very loud noise so that children cannot leave unattended and visitors cannot enter undetected and there is a high staff to children ratio at all times. Activity planning sheets also includes possible risks so that hazards can be kept to a minimum. Consideration has been given to the safety of the children as they play, such as using soft tarmac flooring in the outside area. Topics, such as road safety which the children have just taken part in, further support their understanding of keeping themselves safe in different situations. Fire drills are regularly carried out, helping staff and children become familiar with the routines to be followed in the event of an emergency.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded and promoted by staff who have a sound understanding of child protection procedures as outlined in the Local Safeguarding Children

Board. All staff have received up to date child protection training and are aware of the procedures to be followed should they have any concerns about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, confident and enjoy their time at the setting. Staff are very caring and sensitive. They provide good one to one support to a child who is new to the playgroup, allowing her to settle at her own pace. All children join in eagerly with the freely accessible activities, such as bug making with the play dough and knocking down skittles with a ball. They show good concentration skills as they listen to stories in the book corner and become confident communicators as they play with small world toys, which enables them to develop their story telling and imagination.

Staff are aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and therefore plan accordingly to develop learning and assess progress for children under three. They gather information from parents about their child when they begin at the group and set realistic targets to help them monitor their achievements.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a very secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and provide a broad range of interesting and stimulating activities to help develop children's learning. The written activity plans are very detailed and clearly linked to the stepping stones to ensure that children access a balance of learning opportunities over time. All staff recognise opportunities for extending children's learning and ask appropriate questions to provide challenge, such as 'how did that make you feel?' when talking about the loud noise fireworks make. However, although the six areas of learning are effectively covered daily through inside activities, this is not the same with the outside environment. Therefore all available play opportunities are not always maximised during outside play.

A parents' evening before the child starts the pre-school provides staff with information about each child to give them a starting point for learning. During their time at the pre-school children are regularly observed by their key worker who uses their observations to complete very detailed records of achievements. Children's next steps for learning are addressed thoroughly each term and used effectively to develop future planning.

Children are confident when attending the setting and on the whole leave their parents and carers with ease. They chat happily with their peers during play and routine activities, such as snack time which is used positively as a social time. Children are independent in their self-care, as they take themselves to the toilet and learn to put on and fasten their own coats. They are developing the ability for sharing and turn taking well, as they wait patiently to play skittles or make a firework painting.

Children communicate effectively and use a wide range of vocabulary to express their ideas and talk about what they know. They describe the bugs they are making from play dough and talk about the treasure hunt they took part in at home with their parents, where they had to find a collection of objects. Staff offer good support in activities and initiate conversations which help to develop children's communication and thinking skills. Children are given consistent opportunities for name recognition, such as snack time, self-registration and independent

access to name cards. Older children are able to recognise and say the letters of their name. For example, 'I have a kicking k and a curly c in my name'. Children have good opportunities for spontaneous mark making in activities, such as hairdressers role play and clear labelling on posters, furniture and equipment helps children to realise that print has meaning.

Children have good opportunities on a daily basis to see numbers in their environment through activities and wall displays. For example, magnetic numbers and numbered skittles. Staff use all available opportunities to develop children's counting through routine activities, such as register time and lining up to go outside. Children are able to count confidently from one to 10 and beyond and talk about one more or one less when counting the children present. They use mathematical language in their play, such as tallest and shortest when building towers.

Children learn about the environment through a range of interesting planned and spontaneous activities. For example, seasons, global warming and items that can be recycled. Participation in local community life, such the 'Werrington Carnival' and visits from outside people, such as a nutritionist further supports children's learning of the world around them. There are regular opportunities for children to use technology in their play, such as the computer which underpins learning in other areas.

Children are provided with daily opportunities to express their creativity through art, messy play and in the role play area. They use their imaginations well as they pretend to cut and straighten hair at the hairdresser's and make up stories with the dolls' house, based on their own experiences of what they have seen or heard. They enjoy singing familiar songs in large group situations and listen to a range of music that plays in the background during the session.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the group and valued as individuals. They receive good support, including those children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to ensure their continuing needs are met. Staff work closely with parents and other outside agencies to ensure they have relevant information to care for children appropriately. Planned activities, such as celebrations of Hanukah and St Lucia's day allow children to value and respect diversity. There are sufficient resources and play opportunities available to promote equal opportunities and acknowledge cultural differences, such as posters, books and jigsaws.

Children's behaviour is good. A positive attitude to sharing and turn taking has developed and children are aware of the need for rules and boundaries to ensure that activities are successful. Children have a wide choice of stimulating activities to keep them occupied which contributes to their good behaviour. They eagerly help to tidy away the resources which gives them a sense of responsibility and includes them in the routines of the group. Staff are consistent in their behaviour management and give clear explanations to help children understand right from wrong. All staff make effective use of praise and encouragement to promote children's self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Thorough policies and procedures and a detailed welcome pack ensures a positive partnership with parents is formed from the beginning. A busy parents' notice board keeps parents well up to date with life at the playgroup and ensures they are aware of relevant information at all times. Parents are encouraged to be part of their child's playgroup life through regular rota duty and fund raising. Parents are very happy with the care their child receives and are supportive of the group.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. It contributes effectively to the progress of children who receive funded education. Parents receive excellent information about what their child will be learning in regular 'activities at home' sheets and planning displayed on the notice board, which enables them to support their child's learning at home. Parents are very well informed about the Foundation Stage through parent evenings and information in the parents' handbook. They are warmly welcomed into the playgroup to discuss their child's progress with their key worker and are given the opportunity to take home their child's record of achievements each term.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Overall children's needs are met. The organisation of the playgroup promotes positive outcomes for children. The environment is laid out attractively with clearly defined areas and enough space for children to move about safely. Children receive a good level of care from staff who are well qualified and have been subject to a robust vetting procedure. Staff have an extensive training record and show strong commitment to keeping up to date with current knowledge, teaching methods and child care practices to meet children's needs.

Most documentation is comprehensive and used effectively to support the smooth running of the setting and the promotion of children's health, safety and welfare. However, the daily register which records staff and children's attendance does not accurately record arrival and departure times, especially for staff. Therefore children and staff's welfare is not fully safeguarded. Staff ensure that policies are regularly reviewed to meet children's continuing needs.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Staff work very closely as a team and are efficient in their roles and responsibilities. The supervisor has a clear vision of how to provide a quality service to children and parents which meets their individual needs. She has a very sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and together with her staff are effective in ensuring that children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are fully encouraged to play an active role in planning, delivering and monitoring the Foundation stage curriculum. They have regular opportunities to meet as a team and share good practice. Parent questionnaires and self-appraisals for staff enable the supervisor to monitor the effectiveness of the setting as a whole, in order to ensure that the continuing learning needs of all children can be met and further enhance the provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to make amendments to several items of paperwork which included accident recording, the child protection policy and complaints procedure. These are all now correctly recorded and up to date.

Under nursery education the provider was asked to look at the provision for knowledge and understanding of the world and provide activities which encourage children to explore and investigate. Planning of activities show that children have regular opportunities to explore and investigate. For example, when growing potatoes and learning about the different seasons. These all have a positive impact on the care, learning and welfare of the children.

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):

- develop the system for registering children and staff attendance on a daily basis.

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):

- continue to develop the provision for outside play in order to maximise all available play opportunities.

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