

Uley Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101520
Inspection date	13 February 2008
Inspector	Timothy Butcher
Setting Address	Village Hall, The Street,Uley,, Dursley, Gloucestershire, GL11 5AL
Telephone number	01453 861 024
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Registered person	Uley 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?

Uley Under Fives Playgroup operates from Uley village hall, in a rural location on the outskirts of Dursley, Gloucestershire. The facilities include an entrance hall, main hall, side room, kitchen and toilets. Outside play areas include an enclosed semi hard surfaced strip to the side of the premises and an enclosed orchard to the rear. The group serves local villages and outlying areas.

The group are registered for 24 children and children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 29 children aged between two years six months and five years on roll. Of these 24 children receive funding for nursery education. The group support children with special needs. The group receive support from the local authority. The group is open during school terms between 09.15 and 13.00 on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday.

There are four members of staff who work with the children and there is a parent helper on each day. All staff except one hold at least a level three qualification in child care.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is strongly promoted because good procedures and practices are in place to meet their individual physical, nutritional and health needs. Children are well cared for by staff who consult closely with parents and carers. There are clear policies and procedures for dealing with accidents, incidents and the administration of medication. Parents sign in acknowledgement that information has been shared in regard to accidents. They are not asked to do so in regard to the record of medication given to children, although it is good practice to do so. Parents report positively on the good care that is given to children should they become ill while at the pre-school. The majority of staff hold first aid qualifications.

There are good procedures in place to prevent the spread of infection between children, for example there are policies in place to exclude children when they are ill. Children learn good self-care skills and are confident to address their own physical needs such as the blowing of noses. They learn about their bodies through everyday conversations with staff and can easily identify that they need coats to play outside when it is cold. They know that hand washing is important and many will automatically wash their hands after messy play.

Children enjoy free access to their outside play area and happily explore the water tray on a cold day because it has been filled with warm suds for their comfort. Children enjoy a good range of physical activities that contribute to their good health and help them develop control and coordination of their bodies. They get plenty of fresh air and in warmer weather visit the adjacent enclosed orchard for picnics and to explore the natural environment. Children are given choice of play equipment that is brought inside. They opt for sit-on and pedal equipment in one session and the large slide on another day. They giggle and laugh as they successfully and safely negotiate obstacles and each other when using the trikes.

Children are encouraged to eat healthily. Parents are asked to provide an item of fruit each day and this is cut, prepared and attractively presented to children. The staff are fully aware of children's dietary needs and allergies. Water is made readily available and children develop their self-care skills as they have independent access to the water jug throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Staff work very hard to provide a very welcoming, attractive and stimulating environment for children where children's needs come first. Children benefit from the very thoughtful use of space throughout the premises. The hall is very appropriately laid out for its purpose and staff provide high quality resources that are creatively presented. This effectively supports children to exercise choice as they have easy access to the very good range of resources on offer. The room is made attractive with many examples of the projects that children have undertaken displayed on the walls. The welcome area at the start of the day has good information for parents and children arrive and relax.

Children have a safe environment in which to play. The provider has carried out a comprehensive and thorough risk assessment of the premises and has effective control measures in place to reduce the risk of accidental injury to children. The premises are secure and access is closely

monitored. Children do not enter the kitchen as a safety gate is in place and the staff are vigilant in the supervision of children at all times. They prompt children to follow basic safety rules.

Children have their welfare safeguarded because staff have a sound awareness of their responsibilities in regard to the protection of children and a clear understanding of the possible signs and symptoms of potential abuse. The play leader and the chair of the committee have a satisfactory understanding of the procedures they would follow and have suitable documentation to help them should there be a concern about a child's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The quality of care is very good. Children are well cared for by a skilled and committed staff team who provide good learning experiences for children in a play environment that is most often vibrant. Children thoroughly enjoy coming to the pre-school and are enthusiastic learners. They are purposefully engaged and relaxed from the outset as flexible settling-in procedures ensure that children become increasingly confident to separate from carers and parents become confident in the good quality of care provided. A key worker system is used for each child and parents are warmly welcomed. The day-to-day information about a child's needs is routinely shared. This contributes to the good continuity of care for children. Parents attending as part of the Parents Duty Rota have additional opportunities to see their child at play and be involved in their learning experiences.

Staff carefully plan the environment to enable children to access very good resources and make independent decisions about their own learning. Younger children benefit from the challenge of sharing activities with older children because staff are skilled at adapting activities and supporting children. There is a good balance of free-flow activities and more structured activities so that children purposefully learn at their own pace.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are very knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage curriculum and maintain generally good records of children's achievements to plan for the future learning of individual children. Observations of the progress that children make are made but delays in recording impinge on the effectiveness of the planning processes. Observations are used to link achievements to the stepping stones that lead towards the early learning goals. Children's developmental records are shared with parents through informal coffee mornings. However, the records have yet to be used in discussions with them about setting goals for future learning. Teaching provides realistic challenge for children and is often inspiring. All children are offered choice in their play and activities are planned to follow their interests. Staff sensitively and skilfully guide children to come to the correct answer or to think further. Children's learning is often maximised by an enthusiastic and skilled staff team who interact well with children. They ask questions and prompt children to explore and to think for themselves.

Children are supported to make good progress in all areas of their development because they take part in a wide and varied range of activities and play opportunities that provide them with rich learning experiences. A varied selection of good resources are set out to cover each of the areas of learning and children are provided with good opportunities to express further choice through out the session. Creative activities are often inspiring, for example, the role-play area is set up as a florists shop. Children have bunches of flowers to buy and sell. They exchange

money and the 'shop keeper' counts the cash. There are real plants on show and props include compost, trowels, seed trays, dressing up clothes, pen and paper, telephone and a cash register. Children thoroughly engage their imaginations and happily extend their role-play to include a wedding ceremony and then they 'go shopping'. Children have good opportunities to explore paints and a wide range of other materials through well planned activities that integrate children's learning across several areas of learning. Children learn to name and recognise shape using paints and container to print the shapes. This is then used as the basis for a wall display to remind children of the names of different shapes.

Children have very good opportunities to take their learning outside as the outside space is well planned for children to self-select activities themselves. They thoroughly enjoy the water tray. They explore capacity as they fill containers of their choice and explore what floats and what does not. They squeal with delight as they pour water onto the pebble path to watch it create a rivulet then soak away. Children work well together and share resources, two children amiably share fishing rods to hook fish shapes from the puddle that has been created. Children make broad patterns on the paved area with large chalks. They then use brushes and rollers dipped in water to 'make them disappear. A child is enthralled as he explores colour on a large sheet of paper attached to the garden fence. He carefully adds different colours with a big brush and considers the effect when he paints over the edge onto the grass beside him.

Children use mathematic skills in everyday activities, for example, they count five speckled frogs with their fingers during circle time, cake cases during a Valentine sweet making activity and each other during snack time. Children gain confidence in using numbers in their play and respond enthusiastically to challenges to extend their mathematical vocabulary and skills in planned activities. They begin count, sort and sequence numbers in activities such as compare bears and when using simple programmes on the computer. They learn about colour and shape through a host of activities including a collage and a mosaic.

Most children recognise their own written names such as at self-registration time. At snack time where they find their place at table through name labels. Children have good opportunities to learn that print carries meaning and to look at books. They clearly enjoy stories being read to them and also told to them by the story teller, who visits weekly. They spontaneously self-select books and sit together in the book area to look at the pages.

Staff are perceptive to children's interests during self-initiated play and use questions very successfully to challenge children's thinking and to develop children's language skills. Staff skilfully interact with children to help support listening skills and concentration. In the show and tell session children learn to listen and to respond. They express feelings and talk about their emotions such as feeling 'happy' or 'sad'. Children grow in confidence in talking to a group and listen to each other.

Children learn about the world around them through talking with visitors about their lives and occupations. They are beginning to develop a sense of time and the sequence of natural events through well planned activities such as the planting of flowers in the orchard and discussions about the days of the week and the weather, at registration time.

Children are happy, confident and behave extremely well. They strongly benefit from the warm interactions with staff and from the vibrant learning environment that is created.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children strongly benefit from the very good exchange of information. Parent and carers report very positively about the setting in particular, the quality of care, the approachability of its staff and the nurturing environment for children. They are closely consulted and their consent is fully sought. They have good opportunities to express their views through the questionnaire that is regularly sent out. There is a regular newsletter that informs parents about forthcoming topics and activities. Clear information about the setting is made readily available. Parents are warmly welcomed. The key-worker system and parents coffee mornings ensure that parents are kept informed about their child's progress although this has not yet been extended to include discussions with them about setting goals for future learning.

Children are highly valued; their choices are respected by a caring staff team that are committed to ensuring that each child's needs are identified and closely met within the setting. Planned activities such as the celebration of the Chinese New Year and Diwali, successfully introduce children to the wider world and to different cultures. Children also learn about diversity through the positive images they encounter when using a range of multi-cultural resources including dressing up materials, home corner equipment, toys, puzzles, small world figures and books. Children have good opportunities to learn about their own culture and the locality through strong links with the local community.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities have their specific needs appropriately met. Children with individual education or other plans are well supported by staff who work very constructively to carry through specific plans. Staff consult with other professionals in order to fully support children's progress. All children are helped to join in activities and are encouraged to express their individuality.

Staff have high expectations of children and have a positive and inclusive approach to the management of behaviour. Children are learning right from wrong because staff provide clear and consistent boundaries and are themselves good role models. Children are treated with respect. They are strongly helped to feel good about themselves through positive praise. Children get on well with each other and are very social. They show care and consideration for each other and are generally able to share and take turns. They are happy, settled, and quickly become involved in activities, leaving little time for boredom or undesirable behaviour. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by very good organisation. Time, space and resources are used flexibly and very effectively to offer children a wide variety of experiences, in a child-friendly and well-organised environment. The premises are well organised. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out well to maximise play opportunities for children. The staff team work well together to ensure children have suitable routines. Children are grouped appropriately; at story time and registration time as they are split into two groups so that all children are able to contribute. They benefit from the generous staff/child ratios. Children freely take their learning outside, with appropriate adult support. Free-flow and more structured activities are well planned to provide rich experiences for children.

Documentation, policies and procedures are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. All legally required documentation is in place and is regularly reviewed. Parents are fully consulted, however, they are not asked to sign in acknowledgement that the information about medication given to children has been shared. The staff team are appropriately supported by a management committee whose roles and responsibilities are defined. There is a clear system in place for the recruitment of new staff and for checking the suitability of all staff in line with current legislation.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The play leader provides a very good role model. An overview is held and there is a sound awareness of the main strengths and weaknesses of the provision. Observations are not yet used consistently to be effective within the assessment process. As a result children's learning is not always maximised as processes are sometimes less responsive when planning for children's immediate next steps in learning. There is a strong commitment to continuous improvement as demonstrated through the training courses undertaken by staff. The group have started to implement the Early Years Foundation Stage(EYFS). The group continue to gain support from an advisor from the local authority.

Children are cared for by a capable and skilled staff team. They benefit from the good adult-child interaction and from the vibrant play environment. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides well.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of care, recommendations were raised to improve hand-washing procedures and in regard to prior parental permission for medicines administered to their children. Since the last inspection both recommendations have been satisfactorily addressed as new hand washing procedures have been introduced and the record of medication administered to their children has been significantly revised. As a result children's good hygiene is better promoted and prior parental permission for medicines administered to their children is now consistently gained.

At the last inspection of education, recommendations were made in regard to the management of circle and snack times; equipment and materials made available to children so that they could make independent choices; information made available to parent helpers and the development of the planning and assessment processes.

All the recommendations have been satisfactorily addressed. Circle time and snack times are now well organised and meet the individual needs of all children. Children have good opportunities to make independent choices as their play has a balance of free-flow and adult-led play. Children now have a wealth of resources that are creatively presented and as a result the learning environment is very good. The planning processes have significantly changed over time resulting in them becoming more focussed on children's next steps in development. However, the setting has recently introduced EYFS documentation and this has led to the planning being a little less responsive at present, in part due to delays in the process of recording observations.

The setting have yet to fully address the recommendation in regard to parent helpers and as a result although parent helpers have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities; the planning and learning intentions are not shared with them and this limits their effectiveness in supporting 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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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):

- develop the record of medication further to ensure parents sign in acknowledgement that information has been shared.

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):

- develop further children's assessment and development records to ensure that they are used to closely inform the planning of children's immediate next steps in learning.

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