

Coleridge Pre-school Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	105957
Inspection date	08 November 2007
Inspector	Brenda Joan Flewitt
Setting Address	The Old School, Jesu Street, Ottery-St-Mary, Devon, EX11 1EU
Telephone number	01404 812663
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Registered person	The Trustees of Coleridge 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Coleridge Pre-school Playgroup was registered in 2001. It is situated in an old school building in the centre of Ottery St Mary, near Honiton, Devon. Children are cared for in two playrooms, with adjoining toilet and kitchen facilities, and an enclosed outdoor area. The group opens each weekday morning in term-time, from 09.30 to 12.00. Each afternoon, except Tuesdays, a lunch club is offered from 12.00 to 13.00 and an afternoon session from 13.00 to 15.00. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

A maximum of 30 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 33 children on roll. Of these, 26 are funded for early education. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. There are eight staff employed to work with the children, of whom five have, or are working towards, appropriate child care qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted. They develop independence in good procedures for their own personal hygiene. The facilities are easily accessible and children learn to wash their hands before having a snack as routine. Children are protected from the spread of infection through staff procedures that include a hygienic nappy changing system, and there is a clear sickness policy which informs parents that children must not attend if they have an infectious illness. Children's medication and accidents are generally well managed. Most staff have a current first aid certificate and first aid resources are readily available. There are clear instructions displayed for accident procedures and the relevant records are completed.

Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle. They take part in outside activities on a daily basis which gives them opportunities for fresh air and exercise to promote their good health. Children develop large muscle skills as they use equipment such as wheeled vehicles, hoops, balls, tunnels and a climbing frame. Children confidently climb steps and slide down a slide as part of their play. Children learn to make healthy choices in what they eat through good example and discussion. The café system encourages children to eat when they feel hungry. They choose from a good variety of nutritious snacks which includes options such as raw vegetable sticks, fruit, toast and yogurts, with a drink of milk or water.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in safe and secure premises where risks and hazards are identified and minimised. Staff carry out, and record, daily checks to ensure that the environment is safe for the children to move around safely as they choose their activities. The effective security system means that children are protected from uninvited visitors and that children cannot leave the building unsupervised. There is ample low-level furniture so that children access their activities safely and they use equipment that is kept in good condition.

Children learn what is expected if they must leave the building in an emergency, as they are involved in regular fire drills and discussion. They know that they must 'freeze' when they hear the whistle and listen to instructions. Staff are clear on their roles and responsibilities and the fire exits are clearly marked. This all helps to promote children's safety in a real situation. Children are protected on outings through staff routine procedures which include obtaining parental permission, an increased adult-to-child ratio and fluorescent jackets for adults. Children learn about crossing roads safely and the dangers of talking to people they do not know.

Overall, staff have a good understanding of recognising signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow with concerns. Supervisory staff have recently attended training, and existing injuries are recorded as routine. This all contributes to protecting children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and secure. They enjoy their time at playgroup and make good relationships with staff and each other. Children develop confidence in making their needs known, as they can be sure of a friendly response. They take part in a suitable range of activities,

both inside and out, that help them develop. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework appropriately to plan and assess younger children's development.

Children develop independence skills in practical activities such as using toilet and hand washing resources, selecting equipment and pouring their own drinks at snack time, and managing their clothing. For example, from a young age, children learn the café routine. They wash their hands, choose a cup and plate and sit at the table. They make choices from food and drink and develop skills in pouring from a jug. When they have finished children remove their equipment and post their name label into a box.

Children use a selection of play equipment arranged by staff each session, but cannot easily access alternative resources to extend their own play and learning. The rooms are arranged into various areas of play which include table-top activities, a book area, role play, small world toys, and messy play. However, the full range is not always available during each session, therefore there are not always opportunities for children to use their senses to explore and investigate a wide choice of materials and objects.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Overall, staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and use this to plan a suitable range of activities, over a period of time. The planning clearly links to the stepping stones in the six areas of learning, however, the resources available at any one time do not give the children regular opportunities to extend their own learning. There is a key worker system which includes staff completing observations of children's activities and achievements, which are recorded in their individual profiles, together with photos. A termly report is completed which informs planning for each child's next step.

Children receive friendly interaction from staff, who are interested in them as individuals. Some planned, or adult-led, activities offer challenge to extend children's thinking. However, support of children's activities is not always consistent, so children are not regularly encouraged to solve problems and build on what they already know, to help them reach their full potential. Therefore, children are making satisfactory progress in their learning.

Most children use language well to communicate, they like to talk about events in their lives such as the recent local 'tar barrel' event. Children learn to recognise their written name through daily routines which include labelled individual trays to store their art work. They start to gain an awareness of initial sounds through the 'letter of the week' activity. Some children enjoy books and stories in groups or individually. There is a selection of books available for children to choose for themselves, however, these are not organised well to encourage children to select for themselves. Children start to develop a sense of number, shape, and position through planned activities. They sometimes join in counting in groups and hear staff use words such as 'taller' and 'shorter', but do not regularly solve problems through practical everyday activities or in their play.

Children have opportunities to construct and make models with a variety of resources throughout the term. They take part in planned activities where they use paint, modelling materials and glue. For example, displays show that children painted their self-portrait, one child recalls that she put 'lipstick' on hers. However, the storage of resources does not encourage children to be creative and express their own ideas on a regular basis. They use their imagination well, using various equipment to act out real life and imaginary situations. For example, some children

pretend the climbing frame is a space ship which crashes in the sea, they wriggle on their stomachs as they 'swim' in the 'sea'.

Children develop an understanding of where they live through adult-led activities and discussion. Their awareness of the wider world is raised through exploring festivals such as Diwali where they try different foods, look at pictures and take part in connected art work. There are limited opportunities for children to use technology.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are respected as individuals. Key workers get to know about each child through effective communication with parents, and as they observe their activities. Children with additional needs are well supported. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator liaises with parents, staff and connected professionals to ensure that all children are included. Children start to develop a sense of belonging to a community. They like to see photos of themselves and their work displayed in the setting, and take part in local community events such as the carnival.

Children behave well. They learn to take turns and share through routine and during their play. They learn the 'children's code' for working in harmony and staying safe. Children are cooperative, many are keen to help pack away equipment at the end of a session. They receive regular praise and encouragement from the adults who work with them, which helps build their self-esteem. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the positive relationships between staff and parents. Parents receive good information about the setting by way of notice boards and displays, regular newsletters and the 'new families' pack. They are well informed about their children's learning and progress. Staff complete a termly report for parents and invite them to discuss the individual profiles either by appointment or at open evenings. Parents are welcomed into the group to help with sessions and they have the opportunity to have an active voice in their child's care and education by joining the management committee.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by suitably qualified staff who work well as a team to provide smoothly run sessions, where children know what to expect and therefore, settle quickly. There are satisfactory staff recruitment procedures which includes making sure that applicants are subject to procedures to ensure they are suitable to work with children. However, there is no clear system to obtain information about any health issues, to ensure that children's welfare is fully protected. The clear staff induction makes sure that staff are informed about the policies and procedures that promote children's safety and welfare. However, the organisation of resources on a daily basis does not fully extend children's learning. All the required documentation and records are in place, well organised and stored confidentially. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The management committee and staff have clear roles and responsibilities. There are some systems in place to help monitor the provision for nursery education. These include regular staff meetings, reviewing the self-assessment forms and visits from local authority advisors. Annual staff appraisals are completed to help identify staff development and areas for improvement. However, some recommendations from the last

inspection have not been fully addressed. Good links with the local school helps the smooth transition for children as they start in the reception class.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended: that systems were implemented to ensure that all policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated including procedures to be followed if a child is not collected at the end of a session; and that a suitable range of toys and activities are provided, in order to meet the developmental needs of all children, and to allow them plenty of choice of resources at each session.

Policies and procedures are reviewed annually and there are clear written procedures to follow in the event of a child not being collected. This promotes children's safety and welfare. Although there is a selection of activities planned and implemented which are suitable for the age range of children attending, there are still times when the choice is limited and they cannot easily access resources to extend their own play and express their ideas.

The last nursery education inspection recommended: that the organisation of sessions was reviewed, to ensure that a wide range of practical activities and daily routines is used effectively to promote children's learning, especially in mathematics and literacy; and that assessments of children's achievements are used to plan appropriate challenges for all children, especially older or more able children, in mathematics and physical development.

Training on literacy and maths has been sought. Children regularly identify their written name, and hear sounds connected with letters. They use some one-handed tools and equipment which helps to develop skills for writing, and they sometimes write for a purpose such as naming their work or during their play. However, children do not regularly solve mathematical problems. Staff use an assessment system appropriately to identify children's next steps. There are regular opportunities for children to develop their physical skills, however, daily activities are not used well to challenge children in maths.

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):

- review the organisation of resources available on a daily basis, to enable children to freely access a full range and extend their own play and learning (also applies to nursery education)
- develop the staff recruitment procedures to include all aspects of suitability.

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 consistency in staff interaction, to ensure that children are regularly challenged to reach their full potential in all areas
- 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