

Holy Innocents Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113530
Inspection date	15 January 2008
Inspector	Helen Penticost
Setting Address	Church Room, Church Lane, Southwater, West Sussex, RH13 9BT
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Registered person	Catherine Walden
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Holy Innocents playgroup was first established in 1970, the current provider has owned the playgroup since July 2000. It operates from the church hall, which is located within the village of Southwater. The playgroup offers sessional care during the school term. It opens five mornings in the autumn term and an additional two afternoons in the spring and summer terms for the benefit of four year olds. Sessions are from 9.15 to 12:15 and from 13.00 to 16:00. Children attend for a variety of sessions. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 29 children receive funding for early education. Children attend from the local community. The nursery are able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs seven members of staff and one bank member of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and one staff member is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because staff effectively follow clear health and hygiene procedures. Highly effective daily routines ensure children wash their hands automatically after visiting the toilet and undertaking messy play, which helps them understand the need for good personal hygiene. Children understand why they must wash their hands and this is discussed regularly with the children. Before snack time children visit the bathroom and wash their hands and then once sat at the table they also use anti bacterial gel to ensure that infections do not spread. They are well cared for because staff always follow appropriate nappy changing routines, for example they wear protective gloves and use anti bacterial sprays. Parents give prior written permission for the administration of medication and for the seeking of emergency treatment. This ensures that children's well being is highly promoted. Prompt action is taken if a child becomes ill in the care of the nursery. Staff also take good precautions to ensure they do not return until they are completely well and provide parents with written guidance about specific conditions. The proprietor ensures that staff attend first aid training to enable staff to give appropriate care to children if required.

Children enjoy very nutritious snacks because staff positively promote healthy eating in line with the playgroup's food policy. Drinks are also readily available and children can freely access their own labelled drinking cups. The setting uses snack time as a purposeful social time where staff promote interesting conversations between the children and with adults. The setting effectively encourages the children to understand about healthy eating and all food is stored safely and hygienically served. The manager of the setting ensures that all appropriate dietary information is obtained from parents and that the setting acts upon this in order to meet children's needs.

Children have very good opportunities to develop their whole body movement by engaging in a variety of physical play experiences. Children enjoy energetic play and have access to a well equipped outdoor area, where children enjoy using wheeled toys and various climbing equipment. Children are also strongly encouraged to physically express themselves during group games and other activities. Children are becoming confident in developing their fine motor skills. They enjoy activities which involve cutting, manipulating IT equipment and using brushes and pencils.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are looked after in very secure surroundings with highly effective systems in place to ensure any potential safety risks are minimised. Effective safety procedures help to protect children and well documented risk assessments are regularly used to highlight and address any concerns. The arrival and departure of children is closely monitored. The main front door is answered personally by staff and the identity of all visitors checked. Children are very well supervised as they move around the playgroup. Children are kept safe in the event of an emergency as the setting regularly undertakes fire drills where the building is evacuated; a written log is maintained of this and the setting has proper fire detection and control equipment in place.

Staff support children very well as they undertake the activities that are available and the high levels of supervision are good as children play. Children are able to take risks such as cutting

with scissors in safe surroundings closely monitored by staff. The setting has a very good range of appropriate furniture that accommodates the needs of all its children and promotes a diversity of activity. There is a very good range of toys and resources in use within the setting that are well maintained, clean and capable of promoting children's development in all areas. The playgroup is a stimulating environment which is bright, colourful and child friendly. It also makes very good use of displays that celebrate children's work and gives information to learners and parents.

The overall safety of children is positively protected because staff are very knowledgeable about their roles and responsibilities in child protection. They are familiar with the processes for monitoring, recording and reporting concerns and have clear written procedures to follow.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children look forward to their day at playgroup because they receive an extremely warm welcome from staff. They separate easily from their parents and eagerly join friends, forming small companionable groups. New, less confident children are gently introduced and become equally well settled because staff are very aware and treat any anxieties with a great deal of sensitivity.

The close and affectionate relationships between staff and children is very apparent. Children enjoy warm and consistent care from their key workers who understand and respond well to their individual needs. Children benefit from staff's clear understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and their progress is well monitored. Staff keep clear, detailed observations and effectively use plans to provide an interesting and stimulating range of activities to support children's development. Staff interact very well with children and the overall atmosphere during planned activities is relaxed, calm and purposeful. An extensive and well cared for range of resources is made easily accessible to children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children engage in very interesting, worthwhile activities and are making very good progress toward reaching their early learning goals before they go to school. This is because staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan well for their future development. Children's progress is effectively monitored and clearly documented observation records help ensure they are appropriately assessed by their key worker on a continual basis. Plans have meaning for children because they are based on their interests and emerging skills. Staff are very good role models and demonstrate a positive attitude towards learning by presenting activities in an interesting and enthusiastic manner. Staff interact well with children, supporting their learning in the role play area by asking questions. This helps children organise their thoughts and extend their creative ideas.

Children are extremely interested and motivated to learn. They are able to work together co-operatively sharing resources and show good levels of concentration. The children become thoroughly engrossed in the activities and flourish with the support of the staff who are able to extend their knowledge at an appropriate level for each child. Funded children arrive confidently and separate very easily from their main carer and seek out peers to play with. They are confident to approach staff for support, indicating good, trusting relationships are built. Children are given excellent opportunities to be independent throughout the session. Staff value each child and talk with them about their families and things that are important to them.

They encourage all the children to share experiences and their achievements. Children behave well and respond to requests for good behaviour. They understand the rules within the setting and abide by them which ensures good relationships and harmony.

Parents are given comprehensive information on sounds of the week and encouraged to support children to bring in items beginning with the sound. Children are actively supported, praised and encouraged to talk about their sounds with staff and other children. Children are able to freely access a wide range of pens and pencils both in and outdoors. Children enjoy books and handle them carefully. They spend time 'reading' and sharing books with friends and adults and can relate well-known stories by looking at the pictures. Some children are able to write their own names and all children are encouraged to do so on their drawings and paintings.

Children count confidently and recognise numbers that are important to them. They choose number activities during free play and enjoy number rhymes and songs. Children understand the concept of simple addition and subtraction. They can say what is one more or one less and attempt to add two groups of objects. Children's understanding of space, shape and measure is developing well.

The environment is exceptionally well set up to encourage children to show curiosity and explore. Children are able to access resources freely and staff competently follow children's interest in activities. Planned and spontaneous activities give children opportunities to explore. For example, children have the rare opportunity to explore snow and make a snowman. Children demonstrate excellent cutting and joining skills. They select and use appropriate materials and tools competently to create beautiful collages. Children are given extensive opportunities to become aware of the technology around them. Children have access to a laptop, tape recorder and headphones and also have use of a digital camera and printer. Children are beginning to understand past and present as they discuss people, places and events in their own lives. Children learn about different cultures and beliefs through well planned topic work.

Children enjoy music and respond enthusiastically during music sessions. They express themselves creatively through a range of mediums. Children's physical development is promoted well through a range of activities to promote fine motor skills, for example, mark making and art activities. In addition the outdoor area allows children to undertake exercise and use their imaginations. Children have good access to art materials to enable them to work imaginatively.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are highly valued and their families are warmly welcomed and play a full part in the life of Holy Innocents Playgroup. Staff have a good awareness of individual needs and respect the family context of each child. Children have extensive opportunities to learn about the world around them and the setting has strong links with the local community. For example, children have visits from Police Officers. Liaison and close links with other local schools are excellent. Children visit the reception classes and staff from neighbouring schools regularly visit the playgroup. These positive community links help children to have a happy and smooth transition to their next school.

Children have a wealth of opportunities to learn about their own and other cultures. The nursery celebrates a number of different festivals. There is a very strong commitment to providing an inclusive service. The owner and supervisor have joint responsibility for learning difficulties and disabilities. They have attended a good range of training courses. When appropriate,

children have an individual play plan which means that suitable activities are planned for their learning needs.

Children in the setting behave very well and they benefit from staff that have a calm and considered approach. The nursery use appropriate and effective strategies for young children. They have a strong emphasis on explaining why some behaviour is not appropriate and children are encouraged to think for themselves. Children learn important social skills, share and take turns and they benefit from lots of praise and encouragement. These strong aspects of the provision foster children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. This contributes significantly to the children's well-being. The play group's effective arrival and departure procedure ensures that all children and parents are warmly welcomed by staff, who take this opportunity to informally exchange pertinent information about the children and the day's activities. Parents receive a good range of information about the Foundation Stage and the topics. This means they are actively involved with their children's learning. Throughout the year, there are many evenings and social activities for parents. For example, during a parents' evening the owner and supervisor lead a practical session. This demonstrates how much children can learn from playing with play dough, such as textures, colours and numbers. The setting shares the developmental records with parents on a number of occasions. Parents are very happy with the setting. They feel the staff are warm and obviously very fond of all the children and are genuinely committed. Parents feel the nursery gives the children a good foundation for their future education.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

All staff maintain a great enthusiasm for their work with children and constantly seek to update their knowledge and effectiveness by regularly attending training. Staff in the setting have a very good understanding of how children learn and of the importance of careful assessments and planning. Staff deployment is extremely good, relationships in the setting are excellent, resources are of a high standard and the accommodation is spacious and stimulating. The setting responds very well to children's needs. Children's wellbeing and care is given high priority. Children are given the chance to acquire important life skills of how to keep safe and healthy and a love of learning.

Staff work extremely well together and this contributes to the very warm and happy atmosphere enjoyed by children. Space in the setting is well prepared in advance of their arrival and is organised in a very accessible and child friendly way. The playgroup session runs very smoothly because staff take great care to explain to children why particular routines are important.

Clear and comprehensive written policies and procedures relating to children's health and safety are effectively put into practice. All staff are fully checked for their suitability to work with children and there are contingency plans in place to ensure ratios are maintained in case of staff absence. Documentation is well organised and securely stored. The certificate of registration and previous inspection reports are clearly displayed on the nursery notice board.

The leadership and management is outstanding. The proprietor and supervisor have a clear vision for the setting which is firmly focussed on the development of children in a supportive and well organised environment. They lead the team of staff well, ensuring that all training needs are met, that a team spirit permeates the setting and that all realise the importance of the work that they are doing for the benefit of children. They have developed a very good

approach to planning and assessment and have evolved excellent relationships with parents. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection two recommendations were raised. These were to ensure child protection policy includes procedure to be followed should an allegation be made against a staff member and to ensure the complaints procedure includes the contact details of Ofsted. These are both now included in the setting's policies and procedures, which are available to parents.

At the previous Nursery Education inspection two recommendations were raised. These were to develop the organisation of the session after free flow time and to develop the opportunities for children to climb and balance. The sessions are thoroughly organised at all times and children are provided with stimulating activities to retain their focus. Children are taken to the park to enable them to make use of the climbing frame and equipment has been purchased to enable children to undertake climbing and balancing within the setting itself.

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

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The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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