

# St Paul's Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	148682
<b>Inspection date</b>	29 October 2007
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional care, Out of School 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](http://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?

St Paul's Playgroup opened over 30 years ago. It operates from a classroom within Emmbrook Infant School, in Wokingham, Berkshire. The playgroup serves the local area.

The playgroup is registered to care for 23 children aged three to five years. There are currently 47 children on roll. This includes 39 children who receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and can support children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 to 11:30 and 12:45 to 15:15. They also run a holiday club in August from 09:00 to 13:00.

There are 10 members of staff who work with the children. Of these, three have a recognised early years qualification and two staff are working towards an early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene, as they are encouraged to wash their hands before having their snack. Children have easy, independent access to toilets and sinks. Staff maintain accident and medication records effectively and have received first aid training, helping to ensure that children are cared for appropriately, if they have an accident or become unwell. Children are provided with good role models by staff, who pay close attention to basic hygiene practices, such as wiping tables before snack time and ensuring children have access to tissues if required and reminding them to put them in the bin when they have finished with them.

Snack time is a pleasant social occasion, children can choose when to have their snack and sit at the snack table with other children and talk to each other, for example, talking about the activities they have taken part in or their favourite food. A variety of snack foods are offered which provide healthy food options, for example, fruit, cheese, crackers, carrot strips and peppers. Children help to pour their milk at snack time and further drinks are freely available throughout each session. Staff ensure the packed lunches the children bring when they attend the holiday club are stored appropriately.

Children's physical development is very well supported through a wide range of planned activities and experiences for example, at the beginning of each session they participate in "brain gym" where they choose the actions they are going to follow to music, including star jumps, hopping and stretching. Good use is made of the outdoor areas to further promote their physical development as they play parachute games and jog around the playground in both the playgroup and holiday club sessions. Inside they enjoy many activities, which support their small muscle development, such as sticking, painting, using small tools with the play dough and drawing.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and well maintained premises. A high ratio of adults to children and effective deployment of staff both inside and outside ensures children are well supervised. Staff accurately record children's attendance times and they are aware of who is able to collect the children. Children use a range of suitable toys, resources and equipment which are safe and age appropriate. Most of the resources are readily accessible to the children and are cleaned and checked on a regular basis by the staff.

Children's safety is well maintained and precautions are taken to promote safety within the premises, however although the outdoor area is enclosed with a fence, the bolt on the gate is at child height. This means children may be able to open the gate. Staff carry out daily risk assessments and any concerns are recorded and the action to be taken. Children are gently reminded about their own safety for example, staff gently remind the children to be careful when going down the steps to the outside area and to walk along the pavement when walking to the school playground. Children regularly practise the fire evacuation procedures so they are aware of the steps to take in an emergency; staff record the evacuation times and any problems encountered to ensure children can exit the premises quickly and safely.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by good staff awareness of child protection. Policies, literature and training support staff in understanding their role in child protection and ensure they are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident. Staff warmly welcome the children into the setting and the children readily approach the staff for support and a chat. This shows they feel secure in the setting. Children enjoy a good range of stimulating activities that hold their interest and support their development. Staff also provide a range of suitable activities and experiences for the children who attend the holiday club. Children have the opportunity each day to make suggestions of the activities and resources they would like to use or be available to them the next day. Staff write all children's suggestions and ideas onto a white board for the children to see and ensure the resources and activities are available for them the next day. This ensures children have a sense of belonging and is an effective way of informing staff of the children's interests.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff's knowledge of how children learn through play and the Foundation Stage is evident as they provide a range of play activities and experiences relevant to the children's needs. Children's progress is monitored and recorded by their key workers. All children are keen to learn, self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. Children arrive confidently, separating from their carer with ease. They greet the staff and respond well to familiar adults. They are aware of changes to the environment as they comment when walking to the school field that the trees have been cut over the holiday and they have a discussion about where the leaves and branches have gone.

Children are keen to help and know the routine for tidying up; they all help in a small way to the process. Staff praise and thank them for their help, reinforcing their positive behaviour. Children develop positive relationships with others. For example, playing card games and helping each other build items out of boxes and tissue paper. They attend to their personal needs independently, showing skill and knowledge, they competently put on and take off their coats and know that if it is cold it is best to wear your coat outside. Children gain increasing control of their bodies as they use small hammers and nails to make a picture with shapes and use glue brushes. Balance and co-ordination is encouraged by a range of indoor and outdoor activities. They talk about their bodies and the effects exercise has on their heart as they can feel it beating faster.

Children's awareness of number, quantity, shape and position is developing through their play experiences and guidance from staff for example; staff encourage children to count in routine activities enabling children to become familiar with the associating number and quantity. Children treat books with respect, they have good access to a range of books on a daily basis, and a library system allows them to share the books with parents. Children can access colouring freely and some children are beginning to recognise their own name however, staff do not encourage the children to purposefully mark make and extend opportunities or provide resources for them to begin to recognise and write their own name independently.

Children are provided with many opportunities to be creative using a range of different materials they enjoy making Hoovers and mobile phones out of junk boxes. Dough provides opportunities

to create shapes and experience textures in addition to providing valuable opportunities to develop skills at using tools such as cutters and rolling pins. Children enjoy participating in imaginative role play and use the home/role play corner to act out preparing meals for each other, such as pizza and tea. However, they cannot independently access all the imaginative play resources and role play clothes as part of the area is cluttered with storage boxes. This limits the children's imaginative play and independent learning. Children use the computer technology confidently; they know the function of the mouse and enjoy operating programmable toys for example, they guide the 'bee bot' around a maze of boxes on the floor.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Staff promote an inclusive provision and all children are positively welcomed. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported through good partnerships with both parents and professionals. Staffing arrangements are designed to meet the individual needs of the children to ensure that children are able to fully participate in the life of the setting. Children are becoming aware of the wider world as staff provide children with positive images of diversity and plan activities which explore a variety of celebrations, including Diwali, Christmas and Chinese New Year. Children are encouraged to think about the lives of others in different countries and how they can help for example, they have purchased a goat, which the children have named "Spiderman", via a charity to help support families from other countries. They have created a wall display which includes a picture of the goat and children from different countries.

Children's behaviour is very good in response to the staff's positive and consistent approach to behaviour management. Staff regularly praise children and take time to acknowledge good behaviour. Consistent boundaries are set in both the playgroup and the holiday club. Staff support younger children in sharing and turn taking and encourage all children to take responsibility for their own behaviour. For example, conflict resolution; where children are learning to negotiate and resolve their own disputes, and the use of egg timers to assist them in taking turns on popular activities, such as the computer. Children's efforts are clearly valued by staff and achievements are acknowledged. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are given the opportunity to meet their child's key worker before their child starts to discuss their child's individual needs and achievements. This enables staff to build on what children already know as well as providing appropriate care. Parents receive information regarding their child's day and regular formal meetings also allow staff and parents to share information about their child's individual progress and development. Parents comment on how happy they are with the care and education their children receive and show their appreciation by giving thank you cards to the staff when their child leaves.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being able to independently choose to play in the outdoor or indoor areas. Staff deployment is effective and ensures good supervision at all times. All required documentation is in place. Regular reviews and staff meetings ensure everyone is aware of any changes to the policies and procedures. Effective recruitment and induction procedures ensure

all staff are suitable and have the necessary skills, qualification and experience to work with the children.

Leadership and management are good. Regular appraisals identify training needs and staff have access to relevant courses. Staff are encouraged to share any information and ideas from the courses they have attended to further extend the knowledge of the staff working with the children and to put into practice any new ideas gained. Staff work well together as a team and their enthusiasm is evident. Good support and guidance allows the staff to provide a stimulating and well balanced programme. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection two recommendations were given; these were to ensure a record is in place if children arrive early or late and to keep a record of significant issues and share these with parents. The supervisor has put in place a document which records the early and late arrival of children and all significant issues are now shared with the parents to further promote the care and the welfare of the children.

At the last education inspection the setting was asked to increase opportunities for children to practise their writing skills in everyday practical situations and for children to explore number and simple calculation through everyday activities. Children are encouraged to practise their writing skills in everyday situations and staff encourage the children to count number and calculate in everyday opportunities, such as snack time and circle time.

### **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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

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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):

- ensure outdoor area is secure

## **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):

- improve children's access to resources in the home/role play area to support their independent learning and imaginative play
- provide resources and opportunities for children to practise purposeful mark making and begin to write their own names in everyday routines

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