

# Brockenhurst Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	109732
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Clare Moore
<b>Setting Address</b>	Village Hall, Highwood Road, Brockenhurst, Hampshire, SO42 7RY
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<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Brockenhurst Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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?

Brockenhurst Playgroup opened in approximately 1968 and operates from a room in the village hall. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

A maximum of 26 children aged from two to under five years may attend the group at any one time. There are currently 27 children on roll and of these, 21 receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup is open each weekday during term time from 09:00 to 12:00 and there is an optional lunch club between 12:00 and 12:55.

The playgroup welcomes children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup employs five staff, four of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment where their good health is fully protected and the risk of illness from cross-infection is minimised through the comprehensive procedures that are in place. Children are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times, paper towels are provided and there is an attractive picture above the hand wash basin to support this. Relevant documentation is in place to ensure that children are appropriately cared for in the event of a medical emergency and entries in the accident book have been countersigned by parents. Children's good health is also supported through the healthy snacks and drinks that they are offered. Children choose from a selection of fresh fruit and they help to cut up and prepare sandwiches. They drink either water or milk which they skilfully pour for themselves, with water being available throughout the session from a dispenser. Children's individual dietary needs are well respected. All staff are fully aware of these and a large notice is placed on each snack tray to act as a reminder.

Children have daily opportunities for physical exercise most days when they play outside in a play area which has fixed equipment in it, and is just across the car park. Children practise their balance and coordination as they clamber on the climbing frame, run along the bridge and go down the slide. They enjoy the swings and walking on flower-pot stilts. They practise their aim by rolling balls to each other in the hall at circle time and outside by throwing bean bags at a target. They use balls, hoops and enjoy playing games. Children move confidently and safely, negotiating spaces for example, when they walk along a narrow path holding hands with two others they need to walk sideways to get through. They take part in yoga which takes the form of story activity sessions. This gives them opportunities to move and stretch as they energetically act out the sequences demonstrating their enjoyment through their enthusiasm.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises that are self-contained and secure for the duration of the session. Entrance to the playgroup is made welcoming by the information that is placed on the doors and by staff who greet each family and child individually as they arrive. There is a delightful tree mural, displays of children's work, low level posters and a good choice of activities and resources set out which helps to make the room attractive to children. Children are provided with a good range of furniture, equipment and toys all of which are clean and in good condition. Appropriate measures are in place to ensure that the premises are safe for children, for instance cleaning materials are stored out of children's reach. There are daily risk assessments and the outdoor play area is checked before use.

Children's awareness of keeping themselves safe is raised through taking care, listening and looking when crossing the car park to the play area and roads when out on a walk. This is further promoted through a visit from a fireman with discussions about home safety and activities in the setting using a zebra crossing with a visiting lollipop man. In addition children know about why they should walk rather than run in the setting and are reminded to avoid running their hands along the fence which could result in splinters embedded in their hands. On outings they are protected because staff carry emergency contact details, a mobile phone and a first aid kit.

Children have opportunities to learn about how to respond in an emergency because they participate in fire drills which are recorded in a log. Children are protected in areas of concern because there is a thorough child protection policy in place, several staff have attended recent training and an identified member of staff who is clear about her role. Policies are shared with parents when children attend the playgroup.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy attending, they enter confidently and quickly settle to activities making choices about playing with friends or alone. Children form good relationships with each other and staff alike, and are confident to approach staff calling them by name. Settling-in plans completed with parents by the key worker help to ensure that staff are fully aware of each individual child and how best to help them when they start at the group. Children under three benefit from staff's awareness of the Birth to three framework and the adjustments that are made within the daily plans for them to be fully involved in all the activities that are offered. The framework is used to help to inform the planning and to help to keep track of children's progress. Staff make notes about children's individual learning styles which helps them to plan to cover all needs.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Staff are all enthusiastic about their work, committed to providing good quality care and education for children and they undertake training and work together with outside agencies to achieve this. All staff meet together to contribute ideas to the plans and the manager ensures they are clear about the intended learning outcomes. Staff use observation sheets during activities making relevant notes about discussions, activities and including photographs. This information is transferred to their individual red books and then to their records of achievement. The playgroup is committed to offering a continuous curriculum where play is child initiated and links are made across different activities, for example exploring shapes in ice, when making sandwiches and outside on a walk. Focused activities work very well, practitioners thoroughly plan and well resource these, providing appropriate props which gain and sustain children's interest. At snack time staff sit with the children having interesting conversations with them about the current theme, what it is like to live in a cold country and how we keep warm. At circle time they introduce new words such as vein when exploring a body puzzle which helps children to expand their vocabulary. The outdoor area is equipped with large scale physical resources, however it is not yet so well equipped to enhance and develop other areas of learning.

Children show good levels of personal care. They put on and take off aprons for painting and also their coats when going out. They pour their own drinks at snack time and serve themselves fruit using a fork or spoon then pass the plate to the next child. They help each other, for example an older child showing a new child what to do with their used paper towel. They are curious and sustain interest in their activities, for example exploring ice, construction and in the home play area. Children are good talkers and have lots of conversations between themselves. They are thoroughly absorbed and attentive at circle times with rhymes and songs and captivated during the story when they join in with familiar words. They sometimes spontaneously select books alone, in pairs or in small groups with the staff in the comfortable book area. Children's listening skills are developing because they are given opportunities to listen to and distinguish different sounds. They have frequent opportunities to make marks and write and some are beginning to label their own work. They start to read their names as they select their name

card when they arrive with appropriate support and hang it on the tree as they arrive. They also start to recognise that words carry meaning as they use the well labelled resources and notice signs and letters in the outdoor environment.

Children benefit from frequent opportunities to count within the daily routine, for example when going out to play and when they explore and count ice cubes. They also count and compare groups of numbers using sequencing, sorting and counting frogs, rods and cones. They explore shape when they use games with geometric shapes, when they select shape cutters to make sandwiches and when they consider the shapes they see when out on a walk. They consider size in a story comparing the caterpillar before he starts eating holes way through the leaves then when he is big enough to make a cocoon. They compare heights when they build tall towers and compare how tall they are.

Children find out about and identify some features of living things. They study frogs following their life cycle and make a collage which includes leaves, flowers and frog spawn. They enjoy a visit from handlers of a hedgehog, a puppy and a hen. They find out about technology as they use a till, two way radio telephones, remote controls and a toy camera. They explore the lives of people in different cultures when they discuss the cold and what people wear, how they keep warm and how they live. They are absorbed as they explore the dry sand, watching entranced as it falls through the sieve and as they pour it from the containers.

Children develop fine muscle control through a variety of activities. They competently use scissors to cut and skilfully squeeze glue out onto their craft work. They use cutters and rolling pins to shape the play dough, sponges and brushes to apply paint and they use pencils and crayons of varying sizes in the language and literacy area. They use knives carefully to spread the bread for sandwiches.

Children express themselves through different types of art work. They sing and join in with familiar songs and enjoy using a selection of musical instruments, for example percussion and keyboards. They explore colour through applying paint in different ways, for example with foam stars, finger painting, using brushes and making foot prints. They also mix two colours to produce another. They use the role play area to develop their imagination, for example cooking, looking after the dolls, making picnics and going on a journey offering staff and other children refreshments along the way.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel valued and respected because their individual needs are met. Staff find out all the relevant information when children start as discussions take place between the key worker and the parents. For example, one child only spoke French when she started and so staff ensured that they included some French during the session. This also helps other children to realise that other people use different languages to communicate. Visitors to the group help children learn about the local community and they visit the local school and they also learn about other people who live in the world. Traditional stereotypes are broken down through using books about occupations and roles and visits from parents who share experiences. Children's understanding of disability is promoted through observations, for example meeting a mobility vehicle user and considering what it is like to be visually or hearing impaired. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are appropriately supported because a member of staff has been identified as the Special Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and she links with parents and other professionals.

Children's positive behaviour is nurtured by frequent praise and encouragement from the staff. Children are very polite with many routinely saying please and thank you. They are learning to recognise their feelings and those of others because staff use cubes and a poster with images of different facial expressions to discuss these with the children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The setting keeps parents informed about the provision and things that are relevant to their children through discussion, newsletters and the notice board. Letters are issued about topical things such as fundraising and books to share at home to support the activities.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents enter the playgroup at drop-off and collection times and like to share information informally with the staff. A welcome pack is given to each family when a child starts which informs them about how the provision runs and about how their child will be cared for.

Initially parents are given some brief details about early years education in the welcome pack and further information is sent out about activities and the stepping stones. Record books of staff observations are accessible near the entrance so that parents can look at them at any time and children's records of achievements are stapled inside these. Staff invite parents to share these on a termly basis.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. The staff organise the space well ensuring children can access their activities and self-select art and craft materials from the trolley. They are working to provide more opportunities for children to access resources from storage. They spend the majority of their time working directly with the children.

There is a robust system in order to ensure that all adults connected with the group are vetted, records of visitors are kept as are records of staff and also of children's attendances.

Leadership and management are good. The committee supports staff in their work with children and provides any necessary resources that are asked for. All the required policies and procedures are written and in place and have been reviewed within the past year. Annual appraisals are now well established for all staff. Staff are encouraged and supported to undertake training that will enhance their development and that of the playgroup. The staff team works well together using staff meetings to pool their ideas and to share knowledge gained from attending training courses. The setting also works together with outside agencies to develop their professional expertise, for example the Area Inclusion Officer, local schools, the advisory teacher from the local authority and the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The close liaison with the school helps children to achieve a smooth transition as they enter the next phase of their education.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting was asked to ensure that staff and committee members making up the registered person are thoroughly checked, that registers of attendance include the times of arrival and departure and that Ofsted is informed about significant changes. These requirements are now met which helps to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded.

They were also asked to provide appropriate challenges for the children, to provide parents with more information about the early learning goals and to share records more often. Since

then staff have attended training, they have developed planning to include more challenges and have key worker meetings with parents to share the records and information about how their child is progressing. This helps children to make good progress and to enjoy the time they spend at playgroup.

### **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**

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 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 more opportunities for children to access resources for themselves from storage.

#### **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 resources to support learning in the outdoor environment.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)