

Henwick Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	205382
Inspection date	22 February 2008
Inspector	Valerie Fane
Setting Address	Oldbury Park School, Oldbury Road, Worcester, Worcestershire, WR2 6AA
Telephone number	01905 424878
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Registered person	Mrs Carole Denning and Mrs Patricia Watton
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?

Henwick Playgroup is owned by a partnership and was registered in 1980. It operates from one room in Oldbury Park Primary School in the St John's area of Worcester and has an enclosed area for outdoor play. The playgroup serves the surrounding area.

The playgroup is open Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 11:45 in school term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 37 children on roll. Of these 33 children receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Eight staff work with the children. Of these two have appropriate qualifications to Level 3 and one member of staff is working towards a Level 2 qualification. The playgroup receives support from a mentor teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about the importance of good hygiene routines as they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. They receive good care in the event of an accident or needing medication because all staff have current first aid knowledge. Staff keep accurate records of any accident that occurs or medication given and ensure that these are signed by parents. Children with specific medical needs receive appropriate care because staff have obtained detailed information from parents and have put a care plan in place that is readily available in an emergency.

Children develop their understanding of the principles of healthy eating as they enjoy a range of healthy snacks that includes a choice of fresh fruit or wholemeal toast and a drink of milk. Children try new foods because staff bring in unusual fruit such as a mango for them to try. They extend their understanding of healthy eating through a range of activities. For example, they enjoy a visit from a chef who helps them to make healthy sandwiches with wholemeal bread and fillings such as cucumber, tomato and carrot. When children do a topic on healthy eating they are encouraged to continue their learning at home because the staff send out recipe ideas to parents.

Children enjoy regular opportunities for fresh air and exercise because they play outside for part of each morning using a wide range of equipment. They gain control of small equipment as they have fun trying to throw a ball or a beanbag through a hoop hung above their heads from the branch of a tree. They use the balancing equipment with increasing confidence and staff support younger children and encourage them to learn to balance by moving across the blocks with one foot on the plank and one on the ground. They usually play in their own outdoor area but they also have use of the school playground where they make good use of the larger space and enjoy running round the trails marked on the playground.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children use premises that are suitable and are kept clean and well maintained. The layout of the equipment is attractive and welcoming. Children see their own work displayed as well as information to support their learning such as a number line. Children use a good range of high quality, well-maintained equipment. They self-select from the range put out by staff each morning.

Children receive care in a safe and secure environment because staff have assessed and minimised hazards. For example, they have identified a very hot pipe in the toilets and the school have responded to their request to provide a protective case for the pipe. Children are safeguarded because there are clearly defined procedures in place for their collection. Parents provide written consent in a daily diary if someone different is collecting their child that day. Children learn to use different types of equipment safely. For example, in playgroup they know they must tuck chairs under the table when they stand up so that the room is safe and when they are playing outside with the musical instruments they learn not to run around while blowing a recorder.

Children are not fully protected because both the uncollected child policy and the child protection policy lack detail and the latter is not in accordance with current local authority

guidance. In other respects children's welfare is safeguarded because the staff have a sound understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow if they were to have concerns about a child in their care. Children develop their awareness of their personal safety because they have regular visits from the police to reinforce messages about risks posed by strangers. They learn how to respond if they do not like other children's behaviour because staff encourage them to ask the other child to stop and if they do not get an appropriate response to seek adult help.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well. Staff use good strategies to help less confident children to settle in discussion with their parents or carers. Children relate confidently to staff and begin to form friendships with each other. A few children under three years of age attend the group. They enjoy times of free play and move confidently between the activities. For example, they like to explore the treasure basket or they develop their imagination and their communication skills as they pretend to talk to 'mum' on the phone.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff assess children's starting points through discussion with parents during children's preliminary visits and through their own observations. All children, including those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, then make good progress towards the early learning goals. This is because staff provide a well-planned programme of activities that covers all aspects of the six areas of learning and provides some differentiation for children of different age and ability. They have a good understanding of the breadth of learning that children gain from different activities and they make good use of questioning to extend children's learning. Children progress well because staff carry out regular observations and use these alongside informal evaluations of activities to inform future planning. However, children do not benefit from clearly identified individual learning targets for different areas of the curriculum. Children behave well and become engrossed in their play and learning because staff manage their time efficiently and support children well. There are currently no children in the group for whom English is an additional language but there are no procedures in place for the support of such children.

Children enjoy the lively atmosphere of the playgroup and confidently self-select from the wide range of activities available during free-play sessions. They like to explore a treasure basket and use different senses to explore each item. They take turns well and develop hand control as they use the tongs to choose an item. They use interesting language to describe the objects and try to identify what they are made of or what they are used for. For example, they discover the sound made by a strip of Velcro as they pull the two pieces apart and they smell a raffia ball. Staff encourage children with appropriate challenges such as finding an item in the basket that smells.

Children come together at the start of each morning for circle time. They answer their names on the register and count how many children are present. They develop simple calculation skills because they work out how many children there would be if the absent ones come in later. They improve their understanding of one-to-one correspondence because they check if there is one tick for each child present in the register. They practise the days of the week and develop an awareness of past and present as they decide what day it is if yesterday was Wednesday. They improve their knowledge of letters as they identify the letter of the week and begin to

hear initial sounds as they talk about items they have brought from home beginning with this week's sounds.

Children enjoy playing with musical instruments outside. They choose instruments from a wide selection and have time to explore the sound they make. They come together as a group and march around like a band playing their instruments. They stop and take turns to play their instrument. The other children listen and learn to name the different instruments. Staff help children to look closely at the similarities and differences between instruments such as a tambourine and a drum.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are secure in the playgroup because their parents are well informed about the provision. Staff develop close relationships with parents and carers. Parents see the detailed information pack when they come for a preliminary visit and they are able to take the pack away to read if they wish. Children's continuity of care is supported because staff ask parents for detailed information about their child and their level of development. Parents are aware of their child's key worker and they obtain ongoing information either from the managers or from their key worker at the beginning and end of sessions. Children are protected because parents are made aware of how to make a complaint to the regulator and a log is in place to record any complaints that might be made.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. The information pack includes details of the six areas of learning in the Foundation Stage and parents receive ongoing information about topics and activities through regular newsletters. Parents are involved in children's learning because they help children to bring in items from home for the sound table each week. They have opportunities to attend parents' evenings twice a year and they are invited to a show at the end of the summer term. They see what their children are doing during normal playgroup sessions when they spend a morning in playgroup as a rota helper.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children improve their understanding of our wider society as they play with toys such as ethnic dolls and musical instruments and listen to stories that support their awareness of gender equality. They discover other cultures and religions as they celebrate a variety of different festivals. At Christmas they talk about the Christmas story and other aspects of Christmas such as Christmas trees and the food people eat. At Chinese New Year they make a cardboard dragon's head and decorate a long piece of material to make the dragon's body. Children benefit from close connections with the primary school and older children attend school assembly once a week.

Children behave well. Staff support good behaviour with stickers and praise. Any challenging behaviour is managed effectively because staff encourage children to think about what they have done and the effect they have had on other children and how they now feel. Staff keep a written record of any serious incidents and discuss these with parents.

Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive good care because the playgroup staff liaise closely with their parents and, if appropriate, with outside agencies. Such children benefit from the support of an individual education plan and a personal support worker if appropriate. Staff attend extra training to help them to meet the particular needs of individual children. Effective procedures are in place to identify children with learning difficulties and/or

disabilities. Their needs are met because staff encourage parents to seek help from outside agencies and liaise closely with them to identify appropriate support.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is potentially compromised because less than half of all child care staff hold at least a Level 2 qualification appropriate for the care or development of children. However, children benefit greatly from the high ratio of adults working with them and the depth of experience of the unqualified staff, who have attended regular training sessions both in-house and with external teachers on a wide range of relevant topics.

Children are protected from harm because the recruitment and vetting procedures are thorough. This ensures that all staff have been vetted and are suitable to be in contact with children. Children's welfare is safeguarded because all required policies and procedures are in place. Staff keep accurate attendance records for children, staff and visitors. Parents provide all necessary information and consents before their child attends the group.

Leadership and management of the funded children is good. Children flourish because the two managers work closely together to provide clear leadership and they complement one another's strengths well. They lead a team of highly experienced staff who work very well together and all attend regular training to improve their knowledge and practice. Children benefit from the managers' clear vision to support each child to learn through play and to reach their full potential coupled with their commitment to ensure that all staff are involved and part of the team. They have a clear view of the strengths and areas for improvement of their group and actively look for ways to develop the provision or embrace new initiatives.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the playgroup was recommended to ensure that the register contains actual times of arrival and departure for children if this differs from the session times. The point for consideration for the nursery education was to provide opportunities for younger children to develop name recognition and for all children to access free painting.

Children are safeguarded because times of arrival or departure are recorded on the register if these differ from the session times. Children enjoy regular opportunities for free painting as part of the free-play session. They learn to recognise their names because they have their own named coat hook and they find their name at the table for snack time each day.

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):

- set out an action plan detailing how the group will ensure that at least half of all child care staff hold a Level 2 qualification appropriate for the care or development of children and in what timescale
- update the child protection policy to ensure that it is in accordance with current local authority guidance and includes all the required information and expand the procedures to be followed in the event of a child not being collected to define clearly what will happen if all attempts to contact parents and named contacts fail.

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 the observation and recording system to identify learning targets for individual children in different areas of the curriculum
- provide written procedures to indicate how support will be given to children for whom English is an additional language.

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