

Scallywags Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY358148
Inspection date	06 March 2008
Inspector	Rhonda Foster
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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 satisfactory. 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?

Sallywags Playgroup opened under its current ownership in 2007. It operates from the community centre in Rothwell, Northamptonshire. A maximum of 24 children from two years to under five years may attend the setting at any one time. The playgroup is open daily from 09:15 until 11:45, except Tuesdays and from 12:30 until 15:00 on Monday and Wednesday afternoons, during term time only. Children attend from the local area and for a variety of sessions during the week. The playgroup accepts children in receipt of funded nursery education and supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The playgroup receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is effectively promoted by staff who follow sound health and hygiene procedures. For example, they wash their hands before preparing food, use separate floor mops

in different areas to clean up spillages, wear gloves when changing children's nappies and ensure that the snack table is regularly wiped down. These actions sustain a satisfactory level of hygiene and helps to prevent the spread of infection. However, children are not consistently washing their hands after using the toilet and before snack. They are not always provided with soap and paper towels to use. Whilst older children are able to wash their hands without much assistance from staff the younger children have problems using the dispenser soap and remembering to dry their hands. Consequently, the effectiveness of children's personal hygiene routines is compromised.

Children receive a satisfactory standard of care if they become ill or have an accident. Staff are aware of children's individual health care needs and monitor them closely. All the required documentation and consents regarding children's health is in place. Staff are effectively deployed to ensure that there is someone with a first aid qualification on duty at all times. Records regarding any accidents children have are well organised and shared with parents, who are reminded to sign the accident form when the child is collected.

Children's dietary needs are sufficiently met through the provision of a healthy snack during each session. Snacks are nutritious and take account of children's individual dietary needs and preferences. Children are able to choose when they wish to have their snack and enjoy being able to sit together at the snack table when enjoying items such as cheese and crackers, fruit salad and crumpets. They also have a choice of milk, water or diluted fruit squash to drink at snack time and throughout the session to quench their thirst and ensure they do not become dehydrated.

Children enjoy a satisfactory range of indoor physical play activities which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. For example, they role play workmen and police officers as they ride in cars and place traffic cones around the hall as obstacles to ride around. Children demonstrate increasing control over small muscle movements as they manipulate play dough, run corn flour mixture through their hands and enjoy junk model making. Children are able to rest according to their needs and can take part in quiet activities such as reading books with staff in the book corner.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where staff take positive steps to minimise risks. For example, effective fire safety precautions are in place and children are supervised closely. During arrival and departure times, staff are deployed effectively so that children only leave with authorised persons. The premises consists of: a large hall which is attractively decorated with displays of children's own work; a kitchen area with restricted access for children, a smaller room for physical play and adequate toileting facilities. The hall is separated into different areas that promote the six areas of learning. For example, a home corner for imaginative play, book corner where children become familiar with books, a craft area for creative play and a separate hall for indoor physical activities. Children are able to move around the different areas freely and safely under the close supervision of staff. Well-organised and child-friendly accessible storage enables children to self-select from the wide range of suitable toys, equipment and resources that meet safety standards. Consequently, their independence promoted and they remain safe.

Children are developing a sound understanding of how to stay safe. There are developmentally appropriate ground rules in place such as not rocking backwards on chairs in case they tip and

not running inside to prevent bumping into each other. They also practise the emergency evacuation procedure and begin to learn about road safety whilst role playing with cars. Children's welfare is the staff's first priority. However, staff are unsure of their roles and responsibilities in protecting children in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. Consequently, children's welfare is not fully protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy coming to the setting. Generally, they are confident and self-assured to initiate their own play and to play with others. Children show interest in their environment and become engaged in a wide variety of activities that promote emotional, physical, social and intellectual development. They have warm relationships with staff who help them to develop confidence and independence through sensitive interactions and encouragement. The organisation of activities and routines allows children to follow their own interests and freely choose to spend their time engaged in activities that interest them, such as making robots with the junk modelling.

The setting actively uses the 'Birth to three matters' guidance in their sound practice with this age group. They use a satisfactory system to record children's achievements against the framework. The framework is reflected in their planning and staff consider how they can adapt the activities and environment to ensure younger children are able to participate.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. There is a sound balance of adult-led and child-initiated play. Consequently, children are interested and engaged in a wide range of developmentally appropriate activities. Staff consistently join in with children's play. However, their knowledge of child development is weak and there are missed opportunities during play to challenge and extend children's thinking.

Planning is based on broad topics such as 'Ourselves', covers most areas of learning and links to appropriate stepping stones. Assessment of children's starting points is based on information provided by parents. Each child has a key worker who regularly monitors their progress and has responsibility for up-dating development records. However, staff have not yet devised an effective system of evaluating these records to formally identify children's next steps in learning and to aid future planning.

Children enjoy their time at the setting. They have a positive attitude to learning and are self-assured in their play. They confidently interact with other children, staff and visitors to the setting. For example, they talk amongst themselves at the snack table and take on different roles when 'making a house' in the quiet area. Each child has their own basket and coat peg to store their personal belongings and craft work. They are learning to identify their own name tag and hang it on a coat peg.

Most children are confident communicators and use descriptive language when explaining what they are making when junk modelling or painting. They regularly visit the quiet area to look at books and listen to a member of staff telling a story. At group time they come together to enjoy singing familiar songs and mimic the actions demonstrated by staff. When playing with various containers at the water tray children are beginning to understand mathematical concepts

such as size and volume. Staff also use opportunities within the daily routine to encourage children's counting skills.

Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by exploring through first hand experiences in an interesting environment. They make good use of their imagination in role play situations. For example, when they make a house from a low partition and assign roles to each other or when they explore the role play area which is set up as a tool bench. Children explore their creativity while experimenting with a range of media and materials when making junk models or running a corn flour mixture through their hands. Physical play opportunities are mainly provided indoors. For example, children eagerly ride around in cars and on tractors. However, children have limited opportunity to explore the outdoor environment and enjoy the fresh air. Overall, children make satisfactory progress in their learning given their capability and starting points.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed into the setting. The staff value their individual personalities and ensure all children are able to play with toys, resources and equipment which meet their individual needs. As a result, children become confident and independent. There are attractive displays of children's craft work and photographs. They also have a basket and coat peg to store their personal belongings and enjoy searching for their name tag upon arrival. Consequently they begin to develop a sound sense of belonging. The setting has effective arrangements in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff consider how to adapt the environment and work in partnership with parents to ensure children's specific needs are met.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Their behaviour is good and staff are a positive role model. They use discussion and distraction to manage children's behaviour and place greater emphasis on praising positive behaviour. Children are learning right from wrong and have a sound understanding of the ground rules such as not running indoors or rocking back on their chairs in case they injure themselves. Children have meaningful opportunities to learn about the wider world and other cultures. For example, they can dress up in various ethnic clothes, read books and look at pictures showing positive images of diversity and play with small world figures with varying skin tones.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. All the required documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are cared for according to their parent's wishes. Parents are invited to view the setting's policies and procedures, including the child protection and complaints procedures, to inform them about the running of the setting. They also have a copy of the prospectus and are sent regular newsletters to keep them up to date on activities provided and fund-raising events. Consequently, children are well settled and benefit from the sound relationships fostered with parents. Parents and staff have daily opportunities to exchange information and discuss children's progress to ensure continuity of care. Attractive and informative displays are used to provide further information to parents about the Foundation Stage and what the children are learning. Parents contribute to their children's development records before they start at the setting so that children's starting points for learning are identified. When asked, parents are complimentary about the care and education provided and the progress their children are making. The setting makes parents aware of how they can make a complaint and are aware of their duty to log complaints, should they ever receive any.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are relaxed and happy in the setting. They are safeguarded as the recruitment and vetting procedures for staff ensure children are well-protected. The well-organised environment and effective deployment of staff enhances children's enjoyment and ability to take part in the setting. Sessions are well-organised with a clear routine that the children know. Consequently, they are settled and confident. Staff work together as an effective team to support children and demonstrate a sound commitment to improving their knowledge regarding child development. The manager has just completed a relevant Level 3 qualification. However, other staff are yet to gain a Level 2 qualification as outlined in their training action plan.

Operational policies and procedures are well written and evident within the satisfactory practice, they promote children's good health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. All the required documentation such as attendance records, accident and medication forms are in place to promote the welfare of children attending. Children's personal records are protected and confidentiality is respected.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The sound leadership provided by senior staff is helping to build a dedicated team. At regular meetings and through out each session staff discuss and evaluate their practice. They show a sound commitment to improving the quality of care and the provision of nursery education. The setting also works closely with other professionals and takes on board any advice given.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 hygiene procedures to ensure that children consistently follow good hygiene practice
- ensure staff are aware of their responsibilities with regard to the reporting of suspected child abuse or neglect in accordance with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance
- continue implementing the training action plan to ensure at least half of all childcare staff hold a relevant level 2 qualification.

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):

- continue to develop staff knowledge and understanding of child development so that children's learning is challenged and extended
- ensure evaluation of assessment is effectively used to identify and plan for children's next steps in learning
- improve children's opportunities for physical play and access to outdoor learning.

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