

Abbey Road Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 205312

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Inspector Sally Wride

Setting Address Abbey Park First & Nursery School, Abbey Road, Pershore,
Worcestershire, WR10 1DF

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Registered person Abbey Road Playgroup

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 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?

Abbey Road Playgroup opened in 1984 and is supported by a management committee. The group operates from a classroom in the main building of Abbey Park First and Nursery School in Pershore. There is a fully enclosed play area available for outdoor play.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. There are currently 16 children from 2 to 3-years-old on roll. This includes four funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting has procedures to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and who speak English as an additional language.

The group is open on a Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 09:00 until 12:00 during school term times only.

There are three members of staff who work with the children. The manager holds an appropriate early years qualification to National Vocational Qualification Level 4 and two other members of staff are working towards a Level 3 qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because they are cared for in premises that are warm and clean. Toys and equipment are regularly cleaned, ensuring that they remain hygienic for children to use. All of the required health documentation is in place and a suitably stocked first aid box is easily accessible. Children develop an understanding of good hygiene practice as they wash their hands at appropriate times, using suitable hand washing resources and facilities. They take exercise in the outdoor area each day, developing and extending their physical control using a range of age-appropriate equipment.

Children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks each day that offer variety and choice. Snack time is a sociable occasion where children sit together with their peers. Children's independence is not effectively supported at this time, however, as staff take the lead in the preparation and serving of snacks. Drinks are offered throughout the session and fresh drinking water is easily accessible, ensuring that children are well hydrated during their time at the setting. Children's individual dietary needs and preferences are well known by staff, who work in consultation with parents. Children develop an understanding of the importance of eating a healthy diet through discussions about healthy and less healthy foods.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children use premises that are suitable, welcoming, clean and well maintained. The environment is bright and cheerful, with children's art work widely displayed. Children use a good range of toys and equipment that are well maintained and attractively displayed. As a result, children confidently make decisions about what they would like to play with from the selection available.

Children's care environment is safe and secure. Written risk assessments are in place and have recently been updated. Staff are proactive in conducting visual risk assessment checks both prior to children arriving and also throughout the session. This ensures that all perceived risks to children are identified and minimised. The outdoor area is safe and secure and children are well supervised at all times. Children develop an understanding of how to keep themselves safe through regular fire evacuation practice and by using the 'Green Cross Code' when out for a walk nearby. Effective child protection policies and procedures are in place which ensures that children's welfare is safeguarded. Staff understand the policies and procedures and have a sound understanding of the known indicators of child abuse and the action that they should take in the event of a concern about a child in their care. This procedure has not, however, been shared with parents to ensure that they are fully informed. Children are safe because the group has appropriate arrival and collection procedures that ensure children only leave with authorised adults.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy coming to the playgroup. They are confident and self-assured to work and play independently or in groups. Children are interested and involved in a range of play opportunities both inside and outdoors, which promote their emotional, physical, social and intellectual development. They are forming positive relationships with other

children and staff, who help them to develop their confidence through sensitive interactions and regular encouragement. Children begin to understand their own needs, and with adult support, become aware of the needs of others. They behave well, for example they take turns and share resources. Although younger children participate in the activities and learning opportunities of their older peers, their individual learning needs are not effectively considered in planning. This means that learning intentions are not relevant to their ages and stages of development.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage curriculum and organise a range of activities throughout the week. Although planning documents identify activities that will be provided, they do not show the expected learning outcomes or how activities can be adapted to meet individual children's learning needs. This does not provide information required by staff to deliver activities to ensure that all children are extending their learning in all areas of the curriculum, along the stepping stones, towards the early learning goals. Evaluations of topics and activities do not identify the impact of the activity on children's learning, how individual children have responded and the progress that they have made. As a result, such information is not available to inform future planning. Although observations of children are conducted, information gained from these is not assessed to inform future planning to ensure that all children make progress in all six areas of learning, in line with their individual learning needs. Children play independently as well as in small and larger groups. Staff interact well with children and are interested in what they say and do. They ask them questions to encourage their thinking and openly praise children's suggestions, which positively promotes their self-esteem. Staff sustain children's interest in group activities such as circle and story time. The daily routine is flexibly applied to ensure that children are given time and the opportunity to complete tasks in an unhurried way.

Children show confidence and are happy and settled in their learning environment. They play well individually and also as part of a group, readily sharing and taking turns. Children's independence is developed as they dress themselves in their outdoor clothes and manage their own toileting needs. However, there are missed opportunities for children's independence to be developed at snack time. Children are confident to talk in a familiar group and readily engage in circle time activities each day. They make suggestions during singing activities and benefit from staff who quickly respond to their requests as to which song they would like to sing. Children receive personal greetings from staff upon their arrival each day and enjoy warm praise and encouragement, which positively fosters their self-esteem. Children readily sit with staff to enjoy a story, both as a small or larger group activity. They also enjoy sitting quietly alone to read through books, which are easily accessible. Children have daily opportunities to practise mark-making. Some of the older children are beginning to form recognisable letters and link letters to sounds. They enjoy singing sessions and confidently join in. They openly chat to the staff and their peers throughout the session and as they play. They benefit from staff who introduce new vocabulary such as 'sweet' and 'sour' when tasting different fruits.

Children use their senses to explore the feel of water, sand and textured dough. They engage in construction activities and create tracks for cars and trains. They plant seeds such as cress, and tend to them as they grow, observing growth and making comparisons. They develop an understanding of space, flights, rockets and the sky through planned themes and activities and often refer to their developing knowledge as they play, for example, using a toy car to represent a rocket flying to the moon. They develop an appreciation of the wider world as they take part in events throughout the year that help them to gain an understanding of their own and other

cultures, for example, Chinese New Year, Easter and Christmas. Children count in natural contexts, for example, counting how many children are present at circle time and also as they build a tower with blocks. Their awareness of shape is fostered during games such as board games that require counters slotting into different animal shaped holes. They explore length as they thread cotton reels onto lengths of string and compare the length of their own to those of their peers. They take part in matching and sorting card games and develop an understanding of volume and capacity as they play with sand and water.

Children experience outdoor activities each day in the playground. During this time they often mix with the reception class of the school, which aids their transition to school as they develop relationships with the class teacher and older peers. Outdoors, children successfully pedal bikes and trikes and take dolls for walks in pushchairs, avoiding their peers as they manoeuvre. They dig with tools in the sand tray and build sandcastles. They enjoy chalking on the chalk board and painting with water to explore how they can make the colour of bricks and slabs darker. They use their small muscle skills to use tools such as rollers and cutters when using play dough and as they use pens and pencils to develop their pencil control as they make marks. They use a range of musical instruments to explore the different sounds that they can make and engage in singing and action rhyme activities. Children enjoy imaginative play, for example, cooking in the role play kitchen and going shopping. Staff encourage children to think about the foods that they buy and of their nutritional value. As a result, children openly talk about their favourite fruits and vegetables and what they like to eat at home. They use their imaginations as they use small world toys such as farmers, tractors and farm buildings. They explore the different sounds that they can make as they vocalise animal sounds and that of farm machinery. Children have access to drawing and colouring resources at all times and often use these for their own purpose in their play, for example, to make a shopping list. They enjoy painting and creative activities, although these are often adult-led. They use play dough and explore the difference in texture when glitter is added.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a variety of activities and resources which promote a positive view of the wider world. This increases their awareness of diversity and their understanding of others. Children learn about their local community through walks in the town. They are valued and respected as individuals by staff, who work in partnership with parents to ensure that they are fully informed of children's changing needs. They are learning to share, take turns and consider others. Children receive regular reassurance, praise and encouragement which promotes their confidence and self-esteem. Effective procedures are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and English as an additional language. Staff are aware of the advice and support that can be accessed from external agencies and health professionals. Parents receive a written prospectus which details how the care of their children is organised. In addition to communication with staff at the start and end of each session, communication books are used between the setting and the child's home to ensure an effective two-way flow of information for the benefit of the child. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive outline information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and six areas of learning. Their children's observation and assessment records are available to them at any time. Parents are not, however, provided with information about the learning intentions of planned activities or information relating to how they can extend their children's learning from home. Children are able to take books home to

share with their families at home. Staff are available to parents at the start and end of each session to discuss children's learning needs and report on any progress that they have made. An open morning is held once a term for parents to visit with their children to play together within the setting and to provide an opportunity for more formal discussions with staff.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Effective recruitment and induction procedures are in place, ensuring that staff are suitably qualified and knowledgeable about their roles. The committee and staff team are suitably vetted, ensuring that children are cared for by safe and suitable adults. Informal appraisals of staff progress and their working practice with children are conducted, identifying training needs as required. Children receive effective support from staff in their play as adult to child ratios are maintained.

The operational plan has recently been expanded to include the settings full range of policies and procedures. However, the plan does not include important information regarding the management and staffing structure or how staff are deployed in the setting. The majority of policies and procedures are openly shared with parents, ensuring that they are suitably informed of how the care of their children is organised. All other documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place, carefully stored, suitably organised and effectively maintained. They are regularly reviewed and are only accessed by staff, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The committee, manager and staff team are enthusiastic and have implemented many changes since the last inspection. However, the manager is new in post and is still developing an understanding of the extent of her role and the improvements that are required within the group. A good start has been made to implementing a self-evaluation document which identifies current strengths and those for further development. However, some aspects of both the care and educational opportunities for children have not yet been fully considered and many improvements have only recently been implemented. As a result, they have not been in place for sufficient time for them to have had a full impact on the care and education that children receive.

The committee, manager and staff team work in partnership towards their aim of providing a stimulating, caring and enriched environment in which each child can thrive and achieve their full potential. They provide a safe and welcoming environment for children from all areas of the community and strive to work in partnership with parents to ensure children's well-being, and parents as active partners of the setting. The staff receive good support from the committee, who are involved at the setting and guide staff in their day to day work with children. The manager communicates well with staff and involves them in decision making processes and the implementation of planned changes. As a result, staff feel valued and have an understanding of their roles and responsibilities at the group. The manager liaises with external agencies and seeks their advice and support to ensure that they are developing an understanding of changes in the early years field. All staff work together to develop curriculum plans and to evaluate the learning opportunities provided to children. However, evaluations and information gained from children's assessments is not fed back into future planning to ensure that all children are helped to progress in line with their individual learning needs. The committee are supportive of staff training needs and encourage them to update and extend their professional knowledge and childcare qualifications. 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 provider was asked to improve health documentation and resources for children. Since then, written parental permission from parents for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment has been secured for all children on roll and a new system for recording accidents has been implemented. Parents now see any entries in the accident record that relate to their children and sign to acknowledge the entry. A new first aid box has been provided, which is checked regularly, with resources replaced as required. The provider was asked update child protection policies and procedures. The child protection policy now complies with Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures and includes the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. Staff have improved their knowledge of this procedure and now have a sound understanding of the known indicators of child abuse and of the action that they should take in the event of a concern about a child in their care. This procedure has not, however, been shared with parents to ensure that they are fully informed.

The provider was asked to provide parents with a written procedure to be followed in the event of a complaint. This has now been devised and implemented and includes Ofsted's contact details. The policy is shared with parents, along with an Ofsted poster that details how parents can make contact with Ofsted, should they wish to do so. The provider was asked to make the operational plan, and other written information about the setting such as policies and procedures, available to parents. Parents have been informed that they can access the settings policies and procedures at any time and are displayed in a file for their attention. In addition, the updated parent pack contains information relating to operational details of the group and outline information about the policies and procedures that are available.

The provider was asked to improve arrangements for the storage of documentation. All documentation relating to day care is now securely stored and is maintained on the premises. They are only accessed by staff, ensuring that confidentiality is maintained. The provider was asked to improve knowledge and understanding of the requirements set out in regulations to ensure the group's operational plan and policies reflect the National Standards. The operational plan has now been expanded to include the full range of policies and procedures relating to the care of children. However, information such as staffing structure and deployment has not yet been developed and remains an area for further improvement. The registered person has a clear understanding that Ofsted should be informed of all significant changes and events and has procedures in place to ensure that appropriate action is taken.

The provider agreed to make improvements to the nursery education provision for funded children. Although changes have taken place, the committee and staff team have not yet fully implemented all of the recommendations, with the majority remaining as areas for further improvement.

The provider agreed to develop consistent assessment procedures so that children's progress is effectively monitored and their individual learning needs are reflected in future plans. Although observation and assessment systems are in place, information gained is not used to inform future planning to ensure that children's individual learning needs are considered. The provider agreed to improve short term planning. Although a new planning system has been implemented, activity plans do not detail the learning intentions of these activities in line with the stepping stones and do not detail how children's individual learning needs will be met .

The provider agreed to improve the information given to parents about the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning, and to develop ways for them to contribute to their children's

progress records and learning. Parents now receive outline information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and six areas of learning and observation and assessment records are available to them at any time. They are not, however, provided with information about the learning intentions of planned activities and how they can extend their children's learning from home. The provider agreed to improve monitoring and evaluation of the nursery education provision. A self-evaluation document has recently been devised and the committee, manager and staff team are working together to identify the settings strengths and areas for further improvement. However, evaluations of topics and activities do not identify the impact of the activity on children's learning, how individual children have responded and the progress that they have made. As a result, such information is not available to inform future planning.

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 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 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):

- encourage children's independence at snack time (also applies to nursery education)
- develop planning to ensure that daily activities reflect the individual learning needs of children aged under three-years-old
- develop further the operational plan.

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 planning and evaluation of activities to show the expected learning outcomes and to ensure that all children are extending their learning in all areas of the curriculum
- develop further procedures for undertaking formal evaluations of topics and activities, and for incorporating the outcomes of these and the information from assessments of children's progress into future planning

- provide parents with information about the learning intentions of planned activities and how they can extend their children's learning from home
- develop further systems of self-evaluation (also applies to care).

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