

Abbeydale Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101739
Inspection date	06 June 2008
Inspector	Zahida Hatia
Setting Address	Abbeydale Community Centre, Glevum Way, Abbeydale, GLOUCESTER, GL4 4BL
Telephone number	01452 301492 or 07879 258285
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Registered person	Abbeydale 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?

Abbeydale Playgroup opened in 1985. It operates from Abbeydale Community Centre in the residential area of Abbeydale in Gloucester. The playgroup has sole use of the main hall and shared use of the toilets and kitchen area during operating hours. The other main users of the centre are the Rainbow, Scouts and Brownie groups and the local community. The groups never use it at the same times. There is an enclosed play area.

The playgroup is registered to care for 26 children aged between two years and six months and five years. There are currently 80 children on roll aged between three and four years. The playgroup is in receipt of education funding and at present has 75 funded three and four-year-old children attending. The playgroup supports children with special needs and can care for children for whom English is an additional language. Children attend from the Abbeydale and local area. The group is run by a voluntary committee of parents.

Abbeydale Playgroup is open during school term time only, on Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday between 09.15 and 11.45 hours, and between 12.00 and 14.30 hours on a Monday, Thursday and Friday and Tuesday mornings from 09.15 until 11.45.

A team of seven members of staff are employed. The play leader has completed the National Vocational Qualification in Childcare and Education at Level 3 and is currently completing the Early Years Foundation Stage training. Parent helpers assist at the playgroup on a rota basis.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's good health is satisfactorily maintained. Staff implement some sound hygiene procedures to help prevent the spread of infection, for example ensuring tables are cleaned prior to snack and lunch times. Routine procedures are implemented to ensure children wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. However, children's health and hygiene can be compromised because paper towels are stored in the toileting area on the floor where germs can spread easily. Staff hold a recognised first aid certificate, so are able to respond effectively in the event of a child requiring first aid treatment. Records of accidents are satisfactorily maintained.

Children are encouraged to develop healthy eating habits because staff provide a varied range of healthy snacks, such as fresh fruit and crackers with a choice of spread midway through the session. Children are able to help themselves to water and enjoy a carton of fresh milk with their snack.

Children have daily opportunities to play outside in the fresh air and sunlight, which contributes to a healthy lifestyle. Children run and move confidently, exploring a sound range of outdoor play materials, for example, soft balls, hoops and play games whilst singing songs. Children happily choose one another to accompany them when playing 'the farmer's in his den'. Children enjoy the challenge of the indoor physical play area by climbing on the apparatus, pulling themselves up onto the climbing frame and crawling through a small opening. Children are beginning to use small tools, such as paintbrushes and glue spreaders with increasing control and confidence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and their families are warmly welcomed by staff as they arrive at the child centred setting. A wide range of attractive displays, including some of the children's own work and photographs of them engaged in activities, helps to create a sense of belonging. Children enter directly into a well resourced and accessible play room and as a result they settle quickly and with adult support, select activities and toys of their choice.

Attention to safety within the main play room is good. Formal risk assessments are completed daily and staff routinely complete visual inspection on a daily basis. As a result, children are able to move around this area safely. However, systems for identifying potential risks in the outdoor play area are less rigorous. Large, heavy containers are stacked in the play area and easily accessible to children. Consequently, children's safety is compromised. Sound procedure are in place to ensure children are safely escorted to the enclosed outdoor play area, which is located at the rear of the community centre.

Children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded. Staff have a satisfactory knowledge of the possible signs and symptoms of abuse and are aware of their duty to record and report any

concerns to a senior member of the staff team. The setting have devised a detailed child protection procedure which puts children's welfare first and advises staff to take direct action if they feel appropriate action has not been taken to protect a child from possible harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are settled and enjoy their time at the setting and many have formed strong attachments with the staff team who care for them. Positive relationships are evident between the children and their peers. Staff know individual children well and are sensitive to their needs. For example, staff provide lots of reassurance and encouragement to build the confidence of children who may be reluctant to join in. Children are motivated by their surroundings and benefit from a broad range of accessible activities and resources, so they can make informed choices about how they spend their time.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sufficient knowledge of the Foundation Stage and provide a stimulating learning environment. Consequently, children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Individual areas are well resourced, so children playing with the pasta and rice have independent access to scoops, cups and other vessels. As a result, children are making progress and learning through their exploration. For example, one child selects a 'large scoop' and enjoys pouring the dry pasta and rice into a container and tipping it out when the container was full. Staff support children well and encourage them to make choices and select their own resources, so that children are becoming increasingly confident.

Some children are developing an interest in the written word. They spontaneously look at books and take their selection to a member of staff for a story. Role play areas are well used to promote children's emerging self confidence and language skills, as staff encourage children to act out and talk about familiar experiences and events. Children are learning to count by rote as they sing familiar songs and rhymes; more able children spontaneously use mathematical language in their play and are able to identify more and less.

Staff routinely complete a profile to record individual children's achievements. However, not all staff are confident in recording this aspect of individual children's records and their next steps in learning. Planning is sufficiently completed and appropriate links are made to the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is appropriately fostered. Staff are positive role models who value the children as individuals and promote an inclusive environment. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language are satisfactorily supported. Children are encouraged to participate in all activities and experiences regardless of gender and have sufficient opportunities to learn about cultural diversity.

Staff have a sound understanding of positive strategies for behaviour management. They provide clear and consistent explanations to children, who are beginning to understand the

importance of socially acceptable behaviour, such as taking turns and sharing resources. Staff are aware of individual stages of development and appropriately reward individual children for their achievements. Praise is routinely given and distraction is effectively used to avoid negative behaviour, which creates a positive environment promoting children's confidence and self-esteem.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Mutually respectful relationships are evident and parents are encouraged to share information when they drop off and collect their children. Parents are welcomed into the main play area and are able to observe many of the activities available. Information boards, which include photographs of children engaging in activities, are on display. All policies are located alongside the parents' information area. Parents receive an informative booklet which includes statements about the setting's policies, including equal opportunities, behaviour management and the exclusion of children who are unwell. It also contains some information about the Foundation Stage curriculum. However, parents are not sufficiently encouraged to be meaningfully involved in their children's learning. All policies are located alongside the parents' information area.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

A defined management structure is in place. Responsibility for staff recruitment and selection is retained by the manager and chairperson of the committee, who ensure all staff are suitably vetted and hold a relevant child care qualification. The playgroup manager has day to day responsibility for the setting and works alongside a deputy leader. All staff work cohesively together to ensure that the setting is welcoming to children and their parents.

The playgroup room is well presented and equipped with good quality resources. The daily routine is varied and ensures children have the opportunity to make sound choices, operate independently and play within small groups. The playgroup share premises with other groups in the community. This does not impact on the quality of the provision because the staff and committee work closely together to ensure that children receive positive outcomes.

The leadership and management of the educational provision is satisfactory. The manager is overall responsible for curriculum planning and is supported by the deputy and key persons within the team. Due to local flooding within the last year, the setting has invested in new equipment and resources. This has significantly improved the learning environment, which links directly to the progress children are making. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the quality of care and nursery education was judged as inadequate. Staff have subsequently re-assessed aspects of their practice and procedures in line with the specified actions.

The setting was required to provide parents with written information about the Foundation Stage and ideas of how they can become involved in their child's learning and to provide regular opportunities for parents to share information on their child's progress; actively encourage children to gain an awareness of different cultures, lifestyles and disabilities; assess the risks to children in relation to the outside patio area and take action to minimise these; ensure that Ofsted is informed of any significant changes or events; improve staff's knowledge and

understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage to include the stepping stones, planning, observations and assessments; develop planning and use observations and assessments to ensure that children are stimulated across all areas of learning and to build on what children already know.

The setting is now providing a welcome pack for parents, who are also further involved through open days and display boards. Activities and experiences that promote cultural diversity, such as the celebration of cultural festivals and different foods, are regularly provided. The setting no longer uses the patio area to the front of the building. The setting now informs the regulatory body of any significant changes or events. Staff have now been on extra training to gain knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and they regularly observe and assess children but continued improvement is needed.

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):

- ensure that suitable hygiene procedures are in place with particular regard to hand drying facilities
- ensure that outside play area is secure and that unsuitable items are inaccessible to children

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 ensure staff use observations to plan the next steps for children's play learning and development
- continue to develop the ways in which parents can be actively involved in their children's learning (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