



Bandley Hill Playscheme

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	146456
Inspection date	09 August 2005
Inspector	Diane Mary O'Neill
Setting Address	Featherstone Road , Stevenage, Hertfordshire, SG2 9PP
Telephone number	01438 218848
E-mail	
Registered person	Stevenage Borough Council
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Out of School 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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Bandley Hill Play Scheme has been open for several years. It is part of the Stevenage Borough Council play schemes and play-centres. The provision is an open access play scheme which operates from a local council purpose built play-centre in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. It is situated in a large residential area near to a junior, middle and infant school.

A maximum of 40 children from age 5 years to under 8 years may attend the play scheme at any one time. The play scheme is open each weekday from 09.00 to 12.30 and from 13.30 to 17.00 for 13 weeks. It runs term time only for an after school

club Tuesday to Friday 15.30 to 18.00 and Saturdays from 10.00 to 12.30 and 13.30 to 16.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 367 children aged from 5 to 14 years on roll. Children can attend either morning or afternoon sessions, or both. Children under five may attend as long as an adult accompanies them. Children come from the local catchment area. The play scheme currently supports a small number of children who have special educational needs; there are none who speak English as an additional language.

The play scheme employs 11 staff, of these four of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are able to stay healthy and are well nourished. They are offered a variety of fruits within their tuck, which is provided at snack times during the morning and afternoon sessions of the play scheme. Staff have devised a system of handing out the tuck, using tongs, so that the children do not touch the food available. This reduces the risk of cross infection by the children, if they have not washed their hands appropriately. Staff have a sound awareness that children require more drinks during hot weather or after physical activities and encourage them to access these accordingly.

Children play in a clean and safe environment due to the staff's vigilance in regularly checking the premises and facilities and daily use of contract cleaners. Equipment is checked regularly to ensure it is safe for the children to use.

Children's health and hygiene is well maintained through clear procedures of exclusion for certain forms of illness. Children can easily access tissues to wipe their noses and dispose of accordingly. The play scheme has a rule of not administering medication and posters outline this to parents and children. First aid and emergency procedures are well documented in the appropriate forms, which are signed where possible by the parents. Children's accidents are confidently dealt with as all the staff have completed first aid training and have a good awareness of the practice and procedures to follow.

Children enjoy an extensive range of energetic physical activities that contributes to a healthy lifestyle. They develop self confidence in their physical skills as they join in with a wide range of activities both inside and outside. Children form teams to play football and dodge ball; they encourage one another when playing these games. Children also develop their dexterity and hand and eye coordination skills as they play pool and table tennis. Staff are on hand to guide and assist the children giving support when required, such as when sewing or creating a piece of artwork. Children make choices about playing inside and outside and if it becomes too hot they are able to come inside and play with quieter activities in a cooler atmosphere.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming, safe and secure environment. Children's risks of accidental injury are minimised because staff are generally vigilant and use thorough risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. These are completed daily to ensure that the premises are suitable for children to use. Evacuation procedures are practised regularly and fire notices are on display for everyone to see. The security of the premises is well maintained through staff being watchful at all times both inside and outside to ensure children's safety and well-being.

Children are able to relax and play happily in the spacious, bright and well organised play facilities. They are able to access the fully enclosed area, which allows them the freedom to come and go as they wish. This allows them to choose activities independently with staff support available if they require it. The walls have some of the children's artwork displayed, so they feel a sense of belonging and achievement. Outside the children have excellent availability of space for a variety of outdoor play experiences such as, football, dodge ball, swing ball, climbing and being adventurous in a safe environment. Staff have a good checking system that ensures all equipment and play areas are safe for the children.

Children are very well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give priority to children's welfare. Staff are confident in their knowledge of child protection, reporting concerns appropriately to senior staff and documentation is in place to support them in the event of any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are involved with a wide and varied range of well planned activities. The children attending are stimulated and occupied throughout the session. They have developed a strong sense of belonging into the group and are secure and confident. The children have built a valuable rapport with the adults and are respectful of their input. They take part in activities relating to their own interest. Some children enjoy the physical nature of activities while others enjoy being creative and using their imagination, such as in the home corner, playing with cars. Younger children benefit from having older children attending as they imitate and extend their own play experiences. The older children involve the younger ones in their play, teaching them the rules and coaxing them to participate. Children make their own choices and decisions about their play and move happily and freely between activities. Some children need time to warm up to joining in when they arrive and staff know the children well enough to give them time and space to settle in before taking part.

Staff value the children and have developed secure relationships with them. Their listening skills are admirable as they take time to engage children in conversation and involve themselves in the children's play and discussions. Staff have created an

adept balance between adult and child led play and know when to step back to allow children to use their independence and take responsibility for organising their own activity. For example, when playing in the home corner, changing how they wanted to do the poetry session.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children attend from a variety of backgrounds and all children are warmly welcomed into the play scheme. All children are treated with equal care, concern and respect. Staff ensure that resources positively represent the children who attend as well as the wider community. Children freely access books, role play and creative activities without stereotyping or discrimination. This impacts on the very positive attitude the children show to each other and the staff.

Children understand that they are responsible for their behaviour. They know the boundaries that are in place and the expectations of staff that they behave in a caring manner. Some children have been attending for many years and are very familiar with the rules and boundaries of the play scheme. Children make their own behaviour choices and understand the consequences of their actions. There is an excellent team spirit throughout the play scheme with children helping each other, playing happily together, being respectful of each other and sharing resources.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are warmly welcomed into the play scheme where staff are on hand to discuss any issues and share information. The availability of good documentation and the notice board helps to keep parents very well informed. The staff's friendly and open attitude promotes good relationships which impact on the children's sense of well-being and security within the setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Policies and procedures and thorough induction training are in place and generally implemented to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Staff have a good level of experience of working with children in play schemes and play-centres. Staff have an ongoing commitment to attend further childcare training, which helps them to develop their knowledge and enhance the good quality care provided for children.

The premises are very well organised. Indoor and outdoor space is set out to ensure children obtain the maximum enjoyment and play opportunities that will enhance all areas of their development and learning.

All required documentation is very well organised and in place to support the management and running of the setting. There is concise and clear information throughout the play scheme for parents, visitors and staff. Overall the provision meets the needs of all the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure the premises are adequately ventilated. All the vents are not covered; extractor fans in place, doors can be opened to allow fresh air in.

The provider has met these recommendations by ensuring the ventilation in the premises ensures fresh air into the building, and the main doors to the garden are opened when weather permits, again ensuring good ventilation.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

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 staff deployed effectively within the table sports area.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk