

# Chalke Valley Playschool

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY345859
<b>Inspection date</b>	01 July 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Carole Argles
<b>Setting Address</b>	Broad Chalke Primary School, Newtown, Broad Chalke, Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP5 5DS
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<b>Registered person</b>	Chalke Valley Playschool
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Chalke Valley Playschool is run by a voluntary parent management committee. It operates from purpose built self-contained premises in the grounds of Broad Chalke Primary School, near Salisbury in Wiltshire. The playgroup was registered at its present site in 2007 but has been operating for many years from a nearby village hall.

The playschool is registered to provide care for 20 children aged between two and five years. It is open during school term times from 09.00 to 15.00 on Tuesdays and Fridays and from 09.00 to 11.45 on Wednesdays. There are currently 32 children on roll of whom 21 receive funding for nursery education. At present, there are no children who have learning difficulties or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language.

There are six staff who work with the children, of whom four hold an appropriate early years qualification. Another member of staff is currently undertaking training.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

The children's good health is well supported by the staff. Sound measures are in place to reduce the risk of infection spreading between them and children are excluded from the playgroup if they are ill or infectious. The premises and equipment are kept clean and hygienic and paper towels are provided for hand drying. Sun safety is promoted effectively. The staff erected awnings to provide shade and ensure that children always wear sun cream and hats when playing outside in sunny weather. All staff have recently undertaken first aid training and appropriate procedures are in place to promote children's welfare in the event of them sustaining an accident. Suitable medication and accident records are maintained. The children learn good hygiene routines and know that they must wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet.

Drinking water is always available for the children to take when they are thirsty. They receive healthy mid-session snacks, sometimes sitting down together in a large group and at other times, deciding when they would like to eat at a café style arrangement. The children learn to be independent and pour their own drinks and make decisions about what they eat. A range of nutritious foods are provided for their snacks which include fresh fruit and vegetables such as mange tout peas, carrot sticks or apple. The children are encouraged to sample a wide variety of foods and a snack reflecting food from a different country or culture is offered each week. There are many activities to help the children find out about the importance of healthy eating and they are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They grow vegetables in the garden and were harvesting and sampling their crop of radishes. Recently they have been talking about 'food pyramids' so that they understand which foods are good for them to eat and what they should have in moderation.

The children are active and have exercise daily, freely accessing the outside play area throughout the day. Here they enjoy using a wide range of age-appropriate equipment including wheeled toys, balls and a slide. The children are developing good control and coordination of their movements, hopping, jumping and skipping in group games. The staff help them learn new skills, for instance, throwing balls for them to hit with bats. The children work collaboratively together and show an awareness of space, for example, when carrying a large mat across the hall and during parachute games.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in new, light and welcoming premises where they feel at ease. Staff create a stimulating environment for them with many displays their artwork and posters as well as informative notice boards for their parents. They greet each family on arrival and each child has a named place for their belongings. Effective use is made of space including the outside areas and staff are flexible, changing the layout of the rooms to allow them to provide a wide variety of activities. There is a good range of age-appropriate furniture and equipment. Many toys and activities are stored in labelled boxes where the children can select them independently and make choices about what they do. Resources are of good quality and staff are vigilant, frequently checking toys and equipment to ensure that they are safe and suitable for the children to use.

There are sound measures in place to promote the children's safety and minimise the likelihood of accidents. Staff carry out regular risk assessments and take action to reduce any identified hazards. They check the premises each day before the children arrive, paying particular attention to the outside areas. The children are well supervised at all times. They are kept safe on outings and staff ensure that there is always a high ratio of adults to children when they are away from the premises. Suitable fire safety precautions are in place and regular drills are carried out so that all understand how to act in the event of an emergency. The children are taught to think about their own and others' safety, for example, where they can kick balls so they do not hit other children and how they must be careful when walking near cars.

The staff have a sound understanding of how to safeguard the children from harm. They know the signs that may indicate that a child is being abused or neglected and what they must do if they have concerns about the welfare of a child in their care. The premises are kept secure and the outside area is well fenced and gated. Entry to the premises is supervised by the staff who ensure that anyone who has not been vetted is never alone with the children. There are robust procedures to ensure that children are only collected by people authorised by their parents. These procedures contribute effectively towards keeping the children safe.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

The children are settled and enjoy their time at the playgroup. Most come in happily, separating readily from their parents and quickly becoming involved in self-chosen activities. Those who are less confident receive sensitive support from the staff who give them extra attention. The children have a warm and relaxed relationship with the staff who are interested in them and encourage them to talk about themselves and what they are doing. They develop good communication skills responding readily to questions and learning a wide vocabulary. They enjoy stories and often choose to sit and share books with a member of staff. The children are encouraged to be independent and they pour their own drinks and manage their own personal care. They play cooperatively together showing consideration for others and receive encouragement and praise for all they achieve.

The children's development is well supported by the staff who plan and provide a wide range of activities and experiences for them which often incorporate their ideas and reflect their interests. By chance, an exciting creative activities day was in full swing during this inspection. The children were offered an imaginative variety of materials to explore and investigate and use for their own purposes, including brightly coloured sand, mark making and collage resources and the opportunity to dye fabrics with natural materials. The children are not grouped by age or ability and the staff skilfully adapt activities so that all can take part and are offered appropriate challenges. They make activities fun, for example, by using puppets to capture the children's attention and songs to let them know when it is circle time. The children are excited by what is provided for them and keen to join in, often showing sustained involvement in both adult-led and self-chosen activities.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of the teaching and learning is good and the children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They are enthusiastic about what they do taking their lead from the staff who are motivated and well-prepared. The staff routinely observe the children, noting their achievements. They use this information to help monitor their progress towards the early learning goals and to decide on the next steps in their learning. At present, these

systems are under review and not fully established. Many activities are planned around a theme that links across the areas of children's learning. Recently, one has been based around the topic of homes, developing from play with large cardboard boxes and stories such as 'The Gruffalo', to creative projects and pretend play. All activities are well planned and resourced and the premises used flexibly to maximise children's enjoyment and learning.

The children play harmoniously together. They take part in activities that encourage them to cooperate and help others, for example, by playing a 'shark' game where there is a decreasing number of 'island' mats for them to sit on. Most children speak confidently, talking about real and imaginary ideas, and asking questions. They readily offer their ideas at circle times and talk about what they are doing. The staff encourage them to think and solve problems, predicting what might happen next. The children are surrounded by many examples of writing and numerals in the environment including labels on pictures, friezes and resources such as menus in the pretend play area. They are beginning to recognise familiar words and readily select their names for self-registration when they arrive. There are many activities which help children develop the control and coordination needed for fine muscle movements such as pencil control. They thread beads and use scissors and other simple tools. They work cooperatively together on big pictures using large crayons, sponges, rollers and brushes. They understand that their marks can have meaning and talk about what they have drawn. They make tally charts and help to label the playgroup's photographic diary.

There are many opportunities for the children to explore materials, observe change and find out how things work. They have free access to musical instruments from different cultures which they investigate to discover what sounds they can make. They learn about their community and have visitors to the playgroup. Recently they have been to a local supermarket where they took part in a cooking activity. They use their imaginations well, pretending that one object represents another, for example, that the cooked pasta shapes are fish or the dragon puppet is eating noodles made of wool. The children are encouraged to think and to reason, solving practical problems, for example, comparing and ordering objects according to their size. They are interested in numbers and are beginning to count correctly and to link numbers to numerals. Enjoyable activities including games, puzzles, stories and songs are used effectively to promote these skills.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The children are valued as individuals by the staff who are careful to ensure that their personal needs are respected and met. They develop good self-esteem because staff recognise their achievements, praise them and celebrate their work in displays on the walls. There are suitable procedures in place to identify and support any children who have additional needs, learning difficulties or disabilities. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to ensure that their specific needs are understood and addressed. The premises are designed so that they are accessible to all. There are effective processes to help new children settle quickly at the playschool and staff work closely with their parents, establishing a good rapport from the outset, and ensuring that they have detailed information about each child. Comprehensive information is available for parents so they understand what will be provided for their child. Many parents join the playgroup's management committee and all are encouraged to become involved with their child's learning and to help in the sessions.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are interested in the world around them and motivated to learn, eagerly taking part in the activities provided.

They behave well and play cooperatively together. They show respect for others, spontaneously saying please and thank you, and usually listening quietly to the person speaking at circle times. They readily share and take turns with others, waiting patiently for their opportunity to pull up a radish or to use a toy. Staff have a good understanding of positive ways to manage children's behaviour. They have age-appropriate expectations for them and work with parents to develop a consistent approach. They have involved the children in drawing up the rules of the playschool so that they understand why they are in place. The staff recognise the value of good role models and praise children who are behaving well, explaining to others why they are doing this. This approach helps the children learn to manage their own behaviour effectively.

The children find out about their community and the wider world. Good links are being established with the adjacent school. At times, the children use their hall or other facilities, or join with them for activities. This helps to ensure a smooth transition for the playgroup children. The staff arrange outings for the children and recent trips have included going to a local farm to see the lambing and a visit to a nearby stately home. The children are helped to develop an accepting attitude towards others. There are many resources including books, posters and pretend play resources in use which reflect positive images of diversity. The children learn about different cultures and traditions through age-appropriate activities. For example, the staff were talking with them about the forthcoming Olympics in China and linking this to discussions about dragon dances and the noodles they had eaten for their snack.

The partnership with parents and carers is good and this supports the children's learning and progress effectively. Parents are kept up to date with what their child will be doing through regular newsletters and plans and other information displayed in the playgroup entrance. The staff and parents talk about the children daily. More detailed information about their child's progress and the opportunity to look at their development records is offered during planned meetings. Regular written reports give them a clear picture of how their child learns, their personality and what they have achieved. The staff are keen to encourage parental involvement with their child's learning. They hold open days for new and existing parents and welcome parents to take part in activities, for instance, by helping at the creative activities day.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The children benefit from the good organisation of the playschool. All the required policies and procedures necessary to support their welfare, safety and learning are in place and implemented effectively by the staff. Copies of these documents are readily available for parents to read. Appropriate checks are carried out to ensure that new staff are suitable to work with children. Most of the required records are maintained and information is kept secure and confidential. However, at present the register of staff attendance is not always completed accurately.

The qualification requirements are met. Staff undertake training to keep them up to date with new developments in childcare and extend their skills and knowledge. The children receive plenty of support and attention because a good ratio of adults to children is maintained. Parent helpers often give assistance with routine tasks such as preparing snacks and this allows the staff to work directly with the children. The staff know their roles and responsibilities so the sessions run smoothly for children, who are well supervised and supported at all times. Each child has a named key-person who liaises with their parents and is responsible for overseeing their welfare and development. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management is good and this supports the children's progress effectively. There is a newly established staff team who are enthusiastic and committed and have clear aims for the future of the nursery. Their professional development is managed through appraisals to identify their strengths and any areas for improvement which they address through in-house and external training. There are effective procedures in place to evaluate the quality of the nursery provision. Action plans are drawn up, monitored and updated frequently to ensure there is continual improvement. The staff link with external agencies for support and have recently introduced new systems for monitoring and recording children's progress which they are continuing to review.

### **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.

## **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 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 there is a daily record of the times of staff attendance

#### **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 the systems for monitoring and recording children's development and identifying the next steps in their learning

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)