

Bobtails Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY356010
Inspection date	25 June 2008
Inspector	Janet Marie Thouless
Setting Address	Horley Infant School, Lumley Road, Horley, Surrey, RH6 7JF
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Registered person	Bobtails Playgroup
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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Bobtails Playgroup is one of two committee run provisions under the same management and opened in 2007. It operates from a purpose built building in the grounds of Horley Infant School in Horley, Surrey. The premises consist of a large play room, toilet facilities, kitchen and office. Children have access to an enclosed out door play area, playing field and adventure trail. The playgroup can also access facilities within the school including the hall in wet weather.

The playgroup is open Monday to Friday term time only and provides full day care between 09:10 and 15:00 or sessional care from 09:10 - 11:50, 12:30 - 15:00 with an optional lunch club between 11:50 - 12:30. A maximum of 30 children may attend the playgroup at any one time and there are currently 56 children on roll of which 28 receive funding for nursery education. The group supports children who are learning English as an additional language and children with disabilities or learning difficulties.

There is a staff team of nine with six members of staff holding a recognised Early Years qualification or working towards an Early Years qualification, and all have a current first aid certificate. The playgroup is a member of the pre-school learning alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health and well-being is extremely well promoted. They are protected from the risk of cross-infection due to the very effective routines and practices followed by the staff team. Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care within their daily routines, the many worthwhile discussions they have with staff and through planned activities. For example, they take themselves to the bathroom washing their hands with liquid soap and explaining to each other the need to wash in between their fingers to wash the germs away. Children recognise when they need to wipe their noses and help themselves to tissues or moist wipes and place them in the bin after use. Staff act as very good role models and encourage children to practise good hygiene. They offer a high level of support to younger children who need assistance or guidance in completing personal tasks. When using outdoor play facilities children are fully aware of the need to apply sun creams and wear sun hats to protect themselves from the sun.

Staff discuss and record children's dietary and medical needs with parents. All staff hold valid first aid certificates, with provision in place to ensure all staff attend courses when certificates have expired. Staff are clear about the procedures to follow when recording accidents or the administration of medication. Parents countersign completed records, ensuring they are fully aware of events that happen to their child at the playgroup. The parents are made aware of the policy regarding the exclusion of children with infectious illnesses, to make sure the spread of infection is minimised. All policies are followed in practice, which safeguards children's health and well-being.

Children enjoy relaxed and sociable snack times, where staff sit around the tables and converse with them. They benefit from being provided with an interesting variety of healthy and nutritional snacks. This includes a wide range of fresh fruits and raw vegetables. Their independence is extremely well promoted as they prepare the fruit and vegetables, serve each other and pour their own drinks. In preparation for their transition from playgroup to school older children eat their fruit whole. Children are encouraged to try new tastes and express their thoughts, and through discussion, staff help them develop an understanding about healthy eating. Through planned activities children grow their own fruits and vegetables, and develop an excellent understanding of how foods grow, enhancing their awareness of healthy eating. Drinks are provided at snack time, and water is also accessible throughout the session both in the playroom and outdoor play area so children remain hydrated throughout the day. Children's dietary requirements are clearly recorded and monitored, and these are followed by staff to ensure they remain healthy.

There is excellent provision for children to benefit from fresh air and exercise. Children play outside each day and engage in fun and challenging activities to keep them fit and healthy. For example, they run around developing their physical skills on the field chasing liquid bubbles, they enjoy an extremely wide range of ball games; they participate in team games, such as the parachute game and explore the adventure trail to practise their coordination and balancing skills. In wet weather children have opportunities to participate in physical play in the school hall. To develop their fine motor skills children use a broad range of good quality resources, such as scissors, glue spatulas, pens and pencils within craft activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an attractive and colourful learning environment where they can play independently and safely. Staff minimise the risks of accidental injury to the children through ongoing risk assessments and safety checks. Staff are vigilant throughout the playgroup routine and quickly and effectively identify any potential hazards. This allows children to explore the environment they play in and enjoy the many toys, resources and activities on offer. Children also learn about safety through the many daily discussions they have with staff about playgroup rules. For example, staff gently remind children of the playgroup rules of 'walking feet' to prevent trips and falls. Staff are vigilant in completing head counts as children move from playgroup to 'Music Time' in the school hall to ensure children's safety at all times.

Children are developing a very good awareness of how to keep themselves safe through gentle but positive reminders from staff on the importance of keeping the environment safe. For example, keeping construction play items on the play mat to minimise trips or falls. Children regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure which encourages them to become familiar with the routine and safe evacuation of the premises. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that children are only collected from the playgroup by known and authorised adults. A password and photograph system is in place for staff to correctly identify any unknown adults, to ensure the safety and welfare of children.

Children move confidently around the playroom and make individual choices in their play and learning. Space is well organised and used effectively to allow children the opportunity to engage in a very wide range of activities. Children have access to an extremely good range of high quality equipment, which is appropriate to their age and stage of development. The majority of resources are presented at children's level increasing opportunities for them to make their own choices and be independent. Staff are effectively deployed to monitor children's play, behaviour and safety to ensure their well-being at all times.

Staff have an extremely secure knowledge of child protection issues and procedures, which supports them in their role of safeguarding children. The staff's knowledge is updated through on-going training and re-visiting the playgroup's policy and procedures. The management team has a very good understanding of their responsibilities, and are confident in following procedures and links with outside agencies when required to ensure children are kept safe. A comprehensive child protection policy is made available to parents to keep them informed of the group's responsibilities and a record of all visitors to the group is effectively maintained.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children eagerly participate in purposeful and exciting activities and clearly enjoy the playgroup's calm and welcoming atmosphere. They are making good progress in their learning, self-esteem and development because the staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn. Staff plan an exciting well planned curriculum following guidance from the Birth to three matters framework and use assessments of the children to inform curriculum planning.

Staff follow a set but flexible daily routine, which promotes children's feelings of security and sense of belonging. Children are extremely happy, settle quickly on arrival and relate well to their peers and the staff team. Younger children confidently make choices in their play and

learning. For example, younger children thoroughly enjoy the role play area and small world resources which provides them with many worthwhile opportunities for pretend play.

Staff are extremely positive role models, and give clear guidance and support to all children. They demonstrate a genuine affection for children and have built warm and trusting relationships with them; they respect children's feelings, value their comments and clearly enjoy their company.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are happy, settled and are developing an excellent attitude to learning, because they are purposefully engaged in extremely well planned learning and play activities. Children show extended concentration and pleasure in topic related and independent learning activities, such as 'The Very Hungry Caterpillar' topic. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how to implement it effectively as they are all involved in the planning process. The very effective planning provides a very broad and balanced range of stimulating activities and experiences across all areas of learning. Staff use children's assessment records effectively to identify children's starting points, monitor and record children's achievements and to plan experiences, which take them to the next steps in their learning. Staff are very positive role models and are enthusiastic about children's individual achievements which motivates children's learning.

Children are extremely sociable and confident within the playgroup setting. They develop excellent skills in independence confidently signing themselves in on arrival and hanging up their lunch box and school bag. They thoroughly enjoy bringing items in from home for 'Show and Tell' and confidently share their experiences with staff and peers. On arrival at playgroup two children check the progress of the caterpillars stating that they will soon turn into beautiful butterflies. They happily discuss their new playroom and outdoor play area and confidently explore their new surroundings. They enjoy looking at photographs of their new building under construction and the time capsule placed in the ground. There is a cosy, well presented book corner available and children clearly enjoy sharing books with staff and listening to stories. Children listen attentively and are praised by staff during group activities for 'good listening', encouraging them to concentrate and follow instructions correctly. There is evidence throughout the playroom of printed text, labels and signs encouraging children to develop a very clear understanding that print carries meaning. Children develop a keen interest and awareness of letters and sounds, and are becoming increasingly familiar with the alphabet and letters within their own name.

Children explore different mathematical concepts as part of topic work and planned activities. For example, they talk about money in a role play shop and play practical games to learn about sorting, ordering, size, weight, pattern and sequences. When participating in the fishing game children delight in counting how many fish they have caught and giggle when they have difficulty catching fish stating 'its floating on the top of the water' and 'that one's sunk', recognising floating and sinking within water play.

Children have excellent opportunities to learn about their local environment. They participate in regular outings to the post office to buy stamps and post cards they have written and walk to a local supermarket to buy ingredients for pancakes on Shrove Tuesday. They excitedly recall their visit to a local pet shop where they experienced holding a baby Parrot. Children have been fully involved in the construction of their new building and this was fully endorsed when children observed the arrival of a lorry delivering concrete. Photographs capture each stage of the

delivery and show excited children observing the lorry pour the concrete on to the base of their new building. Staff take every opportunity to extend their learning and on one occasion took them outside to watch workmen repair a hole in the road discussing the different tools and materials used.

There are many opportunities for children to use information and communication technology resources. For example, children use the computer and the range of educational games and use digital cameras to take photographs. Additional resources, such as CD players with headphones, encourage children to become familiar with technology and recognise how different resources work. In role play children experience a wealth of cause and effect resources.

Children have extremely good opportunities to develop their imagination and creativity. The playgroup environment is full of children's art work, reflecting their own style and using a range of different media and techniques. For example, children create their own models and collage, and make their own pictures using a very good selection of different resources. Children experiment with different textures, such as dough, sand, shaving foam and cornflour. Free painting at the easel allows children to be creative and follow their own thoughts and ideas. Music is a strong feature of the playgroup and children benefit from attending music sessions with a specialist music teacher within the school. As a result, activities are planned to encourage children to develop awareness of rhyme and rhythm, pitch and tone, and use a wide range of musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children have extremely good opportunities to make choices and take decisions in their individual play and learning. Children benefit from excellent play opportunities and the good balance of indoor and outdoor activities which increase children's levels of engagement and enthusiasm. Children show a strong sense of belonging, developing their confidence and self-esteem, because of the excellent example from the staff team and the caring and nurturing playgroup environment. Staff are experienced in identifying and providing high quality care for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Staff responsible for this area of the curriculum attends training, which is then cascaded to the rest of the group. Staff consult with parents when completing children's individual play plans and obtain key words within children's home language to support children with English as an additional language. They also obtain visual aids and specialised resources to assist them in communicating and support children's learning. All children experienced the use of the visual aids and resources on offer so they have a greater understanding of each others needs. Staff liaise effectively with external agencies involved in the care of children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and follow their advice and suggestions.

Children are becoming aware of diversity within a wider society through planned activities and as they celebrate their own and other cultural beliefs. Children celebrate festivals, such as Chinese New Year and Eid Ul-Fitr (Muslim Festivals). When celebrating Eid Ul-Fitr children experience dressing-up clothes and observe how Muslim women decorate their hands with beautiful designs using Henna. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff manage children's behaviour sensitively and effectively, increasing children's understanding of right and wrong by using simple strategies, such as being kind and helpful to each other, which children understand and comply with. Children behave

extremely well; they learn to share and take turns, to negotiate and work harmoniously together. Staff offer continuous praise to children and acknowledge children's achievements. For example, children receive a colourful sticker for 'Good Music' which they are extremely proud to wear and wear with pride.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding; the play group eases the transition from home to setting through very effective settling-in procedures. Parents are encouraged to share their expertise and knowledge of their children, which contributes considerably to their well-being as they settle into a group environment. Parents receive clear comprehensive information about the playgroup via the welcome pack, which includes the group's policies and procedures. They are kept up-to-date with changes and weekly activities through frequent newsletters, and the information displayed on the chalk board outside the main entrance. Staff have developed very positive links with parents who do not collect their children on a regular basis by providing a home link book so all parents feel fully informed. Parents are able to view and discuss with staff the excellent on-going assessment record booklet relating to the stepping stones and early learning goals. Parents value the extremely well presented scrap books which detail children's progress from their first day at the playgroup until they leave to go to school. The scrap books include a comprehensive record of children's learning and development which includes for example, a sample of children's creative work, merging handwriting and photographs that show their children at play. Regular meetings with parents ensure the playgroup is highly effective in keeping parents fully up-to-date with the provision on offer and their children's progress.

Parental questionnaires are sent out to parents and ideas are responded to by the playgroup. For example, one suggestion was to change the opening hours which the playgroup happily responded to. Parents positively support the playgroup by offering their skills and expertise. For example, parents built low level units and tiled around the sink area, another made curtains and cushions, whilst others fundraise to buy additional resources. The staff team demonstrate total commitment in building positive relationships with parents and offering the highest standards of care and education to children.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children thrive within the welcoming and extremely well organised playgroup environment as they are cared for by a team of qualified and experienced staff. The effective recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff with a secure knowledge and understanding of child development. Management has high regard for the staff and they work extremely well as a team. There is an effective staff induction programme in place, ensuring that all staff fully understand their roles and responsibilities within the framework of the playgroup's policies and procedures. Staff training needs are identified and management effectively supports staff individual training and development. The daily routine is planned extremely well to offer an excellent range of fun, practical hands on learning experiences for children. Children benefit greatly from the key worker system which helps establish warm positive relations with staff who, as a result, have got to know the children extremely well and therefore effectively plan for their individual learning.

Children's personal information is securely stored and easily accessible to support their care, such as in an emergency. Clear procedures are in place to protect children's safety, when visitors are present they are required to sign in and out of the setting and wear visitors labels so they

can be clearly identified. Policies and documentation work extremely well in practice, ensuring the efficient and safe management of the playgroup.

Leadership and management is outstanding. The effective leadership and management of the provision and the educational programme enable children to make excellent progress towards the early learning goals. The management ensure staff are motivated and well trained which provides them with an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones. The senior management team have a clear vision for the nursery education with a strong focus on the personal development and achievement of all children. They set clear directions for continual improvements in the organisation of nursery education and the outcomes for children. The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted which 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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The quality and standards of the care are outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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