



Ashwick and Oakhill Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142969
Inspection date	14 November 2005
Inspector	Beverly Anne Self
Setting Address	Village Hall, Oakhill, Somerset
Telephone number	07870 672996
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Registered person	Ashwick and Oakhill 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 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?

Ashwick and Oakhill Playgroup opened in 1972. It operates from the village hall in Oakhill, Somerset. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday mornings from 09.30 until 12.00 during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and regularly use the playing field outside the village hall.

There are currently 28 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 20

children receive funding for nursery education. Children who attend are from the local area and surrounding villages.

The playgroup is run by a committee, who employ five members of staff. Three of whom work full time and two work part time. Two members of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a stimulating and fun range of activities that help contribute to their healthy growth and development. The children are familiar with the hand washing routines, explaining that "we wash our hands so they are nice and clean". This helps them to learn about good personal care and the spread of infection.

The daily routine allows the children to experience regular walks around the playing field or physical play. They take part in physical activities such as, balancing, running, climbing and parachute games to help them develop large muscle skills and co-ordination. The children are learning about their bodies and health through planned activities and visits from professionals such as, the doctor and health visitor. They are beginning to show responsibility for their own health needs, knowing that you "have to eat good foods to help you grow". They are also learning how their bodies feel after exercise, when they come inside after running around the field they tell you " I'm out of breath and my legs are tired".

Staff have a good knowledge of first aid, ensuring medical emergencies can be dealt with effectively. All necessary records and documentation regarding children's health are in place, this means that their individual health care needs can be consistently met and respected.

The children are offered a drink and snack each day. They are discovering what foods they like and dislike and about different tastes. They are able to distinguish the difference between a sweet and savoury biscuit, telling you which tastes of cheese and which tastes of chocolate. The children enjoy the social occasion of snack time, however their independence in pouring their own drinks and handing out snacks is not fully encouraged.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and secure environment. Potential risks to children are minimised because staff use regular risk assessments to reduce potential hazards, this ensures the children can enjoy a variety of play opportunities in safe surroundings. However, a record of visitors who attend the playgroup is not available. The children are aware of safety within the group, knowing that they must "line up before going outside and wait by the door" and that "if you run inside you

might trip over something". This helps them to learn that there are consequences to actions and a sense of danger.

The children use a wide range of toys and resources which conform to safety standards. They can choose from the toys and activities which are set out each day, helping them to make some choices about their own play and learning. The staff are well deployed within the setting and activities are closely supervised, ensuring activities are appropriate to the children's age and stage of development.

Children are well protected by staff, who have a good awareness of child protection policies and procedures. The supervisor has a clear understanding of her role in the protection of children, making sure the children's welfare is always a priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the playgroup and benefit from a well resourced environment. The children arrive happily and are eager to participate in the activities set out. They follow the daily routine with ease and familiarity, showing confidence and increasing independence. The children take part in all the activities with enthusiasm and a sense of enjoyment, they attempt new experiences and are willing to learn.

Staff use good questioning skills, encouraging the children to share what they know and asking questions that make them think. This helps the children to improve their language skills and extend their vocabulary and knowledge. Planned activities and topics help to develop children's learning, and they are currently looking at musical instruments. The children are enjoying making their own instruments when junk modelling and have been visited by a musician who played the violin. They are also talking about different instruments and the sounds they make, enthusiastically playing percussion instruments, beating them in time to songs.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are interested and enthusiastic to take part in a wide range of activities to help them make good progress towards the early learning goals.

The children sit well at circle time, listening carefully and contributing to group discussions. They move around freely and independently taking part in the activities available to them. They are sensitive to each others needs and help each other, for example, one child finds a train for a younger peer who does not have a train to play with. The children persist at chosen activities and mostly finish a task before moving on to something else.

Children talk and communicate confidently in both small and large groups. The children are encouraged to find their names on cards at snack time and at the end of the morning. Some of the older children are able to write their own names and most children know what sound their name begins with. They are confident to initiate

conversation and ask questions, asking "what's your name? what are you doing?", demonstrating good communication skills.

The children show an interest in counting and numbers, confidently counting objects during play. They count without prompting, saying "I have made one, two, three, four fish". They spontaneously use mathematical language whilst playing in the sand, one child stating "I've made a huge mountain, it's not big it's huge!". During play, staff talk about long and short, top, middle and bottom introducing the children to position and furthering mathematical language.

Children are beginning to understand the sense of time, talking about past and future events, telling you, "I went to the carnival on Friday" and "I'm going to Nanny's house later". They are introduced to the wider world through planned activities about other countries, and one child knows that "to go to France you have to go on a ferry". Children have regular access to a computer and use everyday technology in the home corner such as, a kettle, iron, cooker and washing machine. The children are learning about technology and tools. When asked what binoculars are for a child answers, "if things are tiny and you look through the binoculars they will look bigger".

The children enjoy many creative activities such as, play dough, painting, junk modelling and sticking. A good balance of adult led activities for topics, and child led activities for free expression, help the children to develop their own ideas and creativity. Following the current topic of musical instruments the children are drawing and making instruments of their own. One child used different coloured pieces of paper to recreate a piano keyboard which is easily recognisable, he is very proud of his achievement and shows everybody what he has made.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage, they plan activities and play opportunities to encourage children's development. However, the children's progress records do not give clear evidence of how the children have progressed and reached the stepping stones. Overall, the children are making good progress in all areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are encouraged to learn about the local community and wider world through planned activities, talking about where they live and other countries in the world. Local people have also visited the playgroup such as, the health visitor, doctor, policeman and shopkeeper. Seeing and talking to these visitors helps the children to learn how they fit into their community and surroundings.

The children behave very well, they are aware of the realistic boundaries that have been set and respond effectively to staff direction. Staff use lots of praise and encouragement and are positive role models for the children. The children show respect and kindness for each other and staff, they are caring and sensitive to each others needs and show a good sense of belonging.

Children communicate and socialise with ease, they help each other and work

together to build train tracks and make games. The children demonstrate good manners and are polite, saying 'please' and 'thank you' when appropriate. They also remind each other to do so. Children are familiar with the daily routine as they help to tidy away the toys and line up at the door before going outside. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

A good partnership with parents contributes to consistency in the children's care and well-being in the playgroup. When children begin their placement, parents are asked to complete a registration form to share what they know about their child. Information about the provision is regularly shared with parents through newsletters, a notice board, the prospectus and talking to staff at the end of each session. Individual 'home link books' devised by the staff, show parents what activities their children have participated in whilst at playgroup and what they have achieved. The children benefit from the regular involvement of their parents in helping at the playgroup, which contributes to their development and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is well supported by the efficient organisation and good leadership and management of nursery education. The premises and daily routine are well organised to allow the children access to a wide variety of different play opportunities, to support development and learning. All necessary documentation which helps contribute to children's health, safety and well being is available. Weekly activity plans and an effective operational plan shows how staff are deployed within the setting, ensuring the children receive good support to encourage learning and progress. However, a system to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education, care and the outcomes for children is not in place.

Staff at the playgroup have many years experience in child care, half of them hold early years qualifications and all have a good understanding of child development. They continue to attend ongoing training courses and workshops to update and improve their knowledge of child care and education. Staff training and progression is well monitored using an annual appraisal system. The staff team work well together, they are enthusiastic in their roles and committed to working with the children. Overall, the playgroup meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous care and nursery education inspections recommended that the playgroup devise a procedure for lost or uncollected children and ensure that child protection records were accurate and up to date. It was also recommended that opportunities for physical activities were developed, that the educational programme was developed for more able children and that planning and assessment gave more details of children's learning.

The playgroup now have a procedure for lost or uncollected children and all child protection records are completed appropriately and entries dated. The daily routine

allows the children to experience outside play or physical activities and the planning shows how this is achieved. Planning also shows how activities are extended for more able children, and assessment and planning demonstrate how children have reached or are working towards the stepping stones. As a result, necessary procedures and records are now in place, physical activities are provided daily and planning shows how the children will learn. Therefore, children's safety and learning opportunities have been improved.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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):

- maintain a record of all visitors to the provision
- provide opportunities for children to develop their independence and be more involved during snack time

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):

- further develop children's progress records to give more evidence of achievements
- develop a system to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education, care and the outcomes for children (also applies to care)

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