



Parkway Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	319266
Inspection date	01 November 2005
Inspector	Jean Wilson
Setting Address	Knoplaw 1st School, Chapel House Estate, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE5 1LH
Telephone number	0191 2674453
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Registered person	Parkway 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?

Parkway Playgroup is managed by a committee. It was established in the 1970s and provides sessional care and education for pre-school children from local residential areas. The accommodation is a self-contained mobile unit within the grounds of Knoplaw First School, situated within a residential estate in the west of Newcastle. The unit consists of a playroom, with separate toilets and a screened-off kitchen area. The playgroup has access to a playground with fixed play equipment and soft

surface for outdoor activities.

The playgroup operates on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday of each week, term-time only. Sessions run from 09.00 until 11.30.

The playgroup is registered for 20 children aged from 3 years to 5 years, but only takes a maximum of 18 children at any one time. There are currently 18 children on the register. Nursery education funding is received for all the children attending.

There are five staff members. Three staff, including the managers hold appropriate qualifications. The playgroup is a member of the Playgroup Network and is supported by local authority Early Years Advisors.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enter the nursery confidently and are warmly greeted by the staff. Their good health is promoted well because staff follow effective procedures and practices which support their physical and nutritional needs. They learn about the importance of good personal hygiene through consistent daily routines. Children have good self-care skills and understand that hand washing kills germs. They are kept safe from cross infection as staff are active in promoting good personal hygiene and all areas and resources are clean and well maintained.

Children benefit from range of healthy nutritional snacks and regularly have the opportunity to try a range of tastes and textures. Children confidently ask for drinks when they are thirsty, as well as having fresh water and milk offered regularly. Their understanding of healthy eating and keeping themselves safe is reinforced through topic work, such as 'myself' and 'road safety'.

A range of age appropriate, indoor and outdoor activities to develop their physical skills are provided. Children regularly play outside in a secure playground using suitably challenging adventure play equipment. They develop good control of their bodies as they play freely and run, climb and slide showing a good awareness of space. They learn new skills and gain in confidence as they succeed, for example children delight in crossing the rope tunnel unaided.

Children are suitably cared for if they are unwell and are protected through the staff's good knowledge of first aid, medication routines and procedures to follow if a child has an accident.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe from harm because staff are vigilant with regard to security

and children are closely supervised at all times. They are cared for in a safe environment where staff effectively use risk assessments to identify and minimise potential hazards. This is supplemented by all safety equipment being in place, reducing the risk of accidents. Consequently children move confidently and independently around the play room and outside play area.

Children learn about safety as staff are good at encouraging and supporting them to take appropriate risks, such as climbing and jumping when they are protected by the safety surface. Staff give gentle reminders so that children begin to understand why they must be aware of others during play and that tidying up helps prevent them tripping over toys. Children use good quality resources and equipment that is age appropriate, clean and well maintained. Toys and activities are clearly labelled and stored at child height.

Appropriate documentation, procedures and regular communication with parents contribute well to children's safety. This is supplemented by all safety equipment being in place, reducing the risk of accidents. Fire drills are carried out on a regular basis and staff ensure children are familiar with the evacuation procedures. Children are protected and their welfare is safeguarded as child protection procedures are well understood and followed consistently by all staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happy and eager to try new activities and experiences. They are friendly and speak readily to both adults and children. Staff know the children well and are skilled at making them feel welcome and comfortable. Relationships are very good and this increases their sense of security and well-being. Children's independence is fostered by the environment which is laid out to provide choice and allow children easy access to activities. They settle well in the good social atmosphere within the group and develop very good conversational skills.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. They plan a broad range of developmentally appropriate indoor and outdoor activities which provide appropriate levels of challenge. Children are enthusiastic and eager to participate and all are encouraged to take part. Staff link assessment to planning well, using their knowledge of children's previous learning suitably when planning future activities.

Children gain an enjoyment of reading and most can follow the sequences of stories well. They enjoy and respond to songs and rhymes, and talk confidently about their families and events. Children learn to recognise their names on coat pegs and use name cards to self register each session. They are beginning to recognise familiar words and captions displayed around the room. They are keen to look at books and listen to adults attentively on a one to one basis. They are less good at listening in the large group times. Children gain confidence in recognising and using numbers in

their play. Most count to ten with confidence and a few count much higher than this. They are given regular opportunities to reinforce their skills in this area. For example, children count out with the staff, the number in the group at registration time. They are developing most mathematical skills and concepts suitably in practical activities and daily routines. They use numbers in puzzles and when playing games and can recognise some written numerals.

Children's progress in knowledge and understanding of the world is good. They confidently talk about people and events in their lives. Their sense of time develops well as they follow a routine of observing the weather and the seasons. Children gain awareness and knowledge of the wider world and other cultures through stories and discussion. Their senses are well stimulated; they have opportunities to explore the smell, taste and feel of materials, objects and food. For example, all children thoroughly enjoyed sampling a range of Indian foods when learning about the festival of Diwali. However, opportunities to explore and investigate using natural materials are not promoted regularly through play with natural materials, such as sand and water. Children explore colour, mixing colours as they paint and during adult directed activities such as marbling and printing. They play imaginatively, assign each other roles and develop stories when playing outside in the play house and train. Staff support their play well and vary the role play activities throughout the year. The suitable balance between adult and child-led activities allows children to learn at their own pace. Overall children make good progress towards the early learning goals

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have good levels of confidence and self-esteem, as their photographs and work is valued and displayed around the setting. They help each other and cooperate to complete tasks, for example, two children helped another to fasten her coat when going outside. As the group is small they all know each other and interact well. Staff are good role models through the care and concern they show the children and their realistically high expectations of them. As a result, children learn to consider others and co-operate well. Staff are fair and consistent in managing children's behaviour. Children respond well as they are listened to, valued and regularly praised for their efforts. Staff adhere to a strong equal opportunities policy. Children behave considerately at all times. They share resources and negotiate whose turn it is next, without adult intervention. They have a good awareness of expected codes of behaviour, such as being quiet in the book area. They are encouraged to ask questions and reflect on how others live through themes and stories from around the world. The playgroup fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents is very good. Parents are provided with a comprehensive and detailed range of written information about the playgroup organisation and the activities provided. They provide family photographs and information from home when the children start the playgroup and these are used effectively to ensure the children settle quickly and happily into the setting. Regular, verbal and written information results in parents being well informed about the achievements and

progress of their children. They are actively encouraged to become involved in activities and to share what they know about their child.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

All required policies, procedures and record keeping systems are in place, appropriately organised and well maintained. Staff hold appropriate qualifications and have access to appropriate support, such as regular staff meetings and access to training. Well thought out induction procedures for new staff aim to ensure that they are familiar with all aspects of the playgroup.

The staff work well as a team and generally organise their time and resources appropriately to meet the needs of the children. Effective use is made of the indoor accommodation to provide an inviting environment that is organised to help children to be independent. All adults talk and interact well with the children to extend their learning. However, when children are taught as one group learning opportunities are missed. For instance, during story time children became distracted and lost interest when waiting for their turn to handle artefacts. Staff are organised appropriately to reassure and supervise children at times of change. For example, all the staff sit with the children and greet the parents and carers at home time. However, staff are not routinely well deployed to identify and attend to children's individual needs, for instance as key workers, throughout the session. As a result, on occasion children requiring additional assistance are not fully supported to access activities and behave appropriately.

Leadership and management of nursery education and care are good. The playgroup managers are experienced and clear communication and good use of the foundation stage guidance allows them to provide a stimulating well balanced programme. They are aware of developments in the early years sector and have high expectations for the development of the playgroup. The enthusiasm of the staff and an interesting curriculum contribute significantly to children's enjoyment and learning. Their personal development is supported by effective levels of day to day care and a strong partnership with parents and carers.

Overall the provision meets the needs of all the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous inspection staff have extended the range of resources to appropriately reflect positive images of diversity and organised the environment to allow children more independence to select resources and to initiate learning.

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):

- make improvements as indicated in the education section below.

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):

- ensure that children are grouped and staff deployed effectively in order to take full account of each child's stage of development and support their individual needs.
- further develop the provision for children to regularly play and explore using natural materials, for example sand and water.

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