



Stone with Woodford Playgroup (Village Hall)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101705
Inspection date	21 November 2005
Inspector	Kay Roberts
Setting Address	The Village Hall, Stone, Nr Berkeley, Gloucestershire, GL13 9LE
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Registered person	Stone with Woodford Playgroup (Village Hall)
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Stone with Woodford Playgroup is a voluntary committee run group which serves the neighbouring village communities of Stone and Woodford. The playgroup operates Monday and Thursday from the village hall and on Fridays from the local school premises, when available.

On Monday and Thursday the playgroup has use of the large hall, toilet, kitchen and storage facilities. An area outside is secured to give children access to outdoor play.

The playgroup is open term-time only from 09.15 to 11.45 hours.

Registration at the hall is for 24 children aged from 2 years 9 months to 5 years. There are currently 12 children on roll and of these there are 6 funded 3-year-olds and 1 funded 4-year-old. Children with English as an additional language and special educational needs are welcomed into the group.

At present there is one permanent member of staff who is acting up into the position of leader. She is undertaking National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 3 in childcare and early years. A play assistant is temporarily working at the group until Christmas. Other parents provide support by assisting at the setting on a rota basis. The group are a member of Gloucestershire's Parent and Toddler Association. Advice on the educational programme is provided by the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment. The risk of them becoming ill is minimised through hygienic procedures and the exclusion of children who are ill. Staff ensure that children are appropriately dressed so they do not get cold in winter and are protected from the sun in summer. Children wash their hands before snack and after using the toilet. Independence is encouraged as they use the sink in the toilet with wheelchair access area because they can reach it easily. They know to wear aprons in order to protect their clothing when painting. Their welfare is promoted as all staff are qualified to administer first aid and follow appropriate procedures.

Snack time is a social occasion when staff and children sit together. Children chat, for example, about the colour of their beakers and spoons. On other occasions staff engage children in discussions on what foods are healthy. Children assist by ensuring everyone present has a beaker and at the end gather up the dirty dishes. Children eat a variety of healthy snacks, including cheese and grapes, fruit and toasted sandwiches, which they help to make. A snack menu is displayed for parents.

When the weather permits children play outdoors with bikes and balls. Sometimes children walk to the local play area where they are able to extend their skills as they use the swings and a large climbing frame. When the weather is inclement children develop large muscle skills as they practise stretching, running on the spot and slithering across the floor. On other occasions the climbing frame and slide are set up in the hall.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children feel welcome. The hall is organised before children arrive. They have a sense of ownership as they hang up their coats on low level hooks in the committee room. A large screen is used to display children's work on the current theme.

Children move around freely as they have a large space in which to play and activities are well organised in clearly defined areas. This also allows children to play uninterrupted by those involved in other activities. Children confidently help themselves to toys which cover all areas of learning. However, presentation of some resources does not allow children to extend their learning to the full. For example the craft trolley is only stocked with crayons and paper. There is sufficient child-sized furniture so that all children can sit together.

Children play in a safe, secure environment. The detailed risk assessment is regularly reviewed and staff are vigilant. The risk of accidents is minimised through effective procedures, such as only allowing a few children at a time to wash their hands in preparation for snack. Prior to using the climbing frame children listen to a short story which reinforces the reasons for safety and so when staff explain the rules that they should follow, they understand why. Both staff and children know the emergency evacuation procedure as this was calmly practised on the day of the inspection. It was later followed up with the story 'How Sparky got his wings', which reinforced how children can protect themselves in the event of a fire including making contact with the emergency services. Children are further protected as all staff have undertaken child protection training and have a good understanding of the local procedures.

Children learn to protect themselves. The road safety officer visits 3 times a year. At the last visit children learnt the importance of holding hands near a road and using zebra crossings. This is reinforced on outings when children are protected through good procedures, such as ensuring a ratio of 1 adult to every 2 children. The simple 'Never, Never' book is used to educate children about the danger of going off with strangers so that children are better placed to protect themselves.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enter the premises and separate from parents with confidence. Most children answer their name when the register is called, younger children wave to show their presence. In a large group children also listen to stories, talk about the toy they have brought in from home, count the number of children and sing songs. Some children sing solos, such as 'Ba, Ba, Black Sheep' and 'Twinkle, Twinkle Little Star', for which they receive a cuddle. More able children sing very clearly and are word perfect. Children are fully aware of what activities are available to them on a daily basis as the leader explains what they can do in each area of the room. They create pictures using stencils by colouring in the holes with crayons. More able children are able to hold the stencil well and their pictures are clear. When a member of staff shows children how they can draw around the stencil, but the lines are faint, one child confidently commented "you should do it again". They are curious about the paper they use and want to know why the computer paper has holes in the side and carefully tear off the perforated edges. A member of staff drew around children in turn as they lay on a roll of paper so they could create life sized pictures of themselves. As they lay still they remain interested as the member of staff chats to them about getting taller and life at home. Children cut out some of the shape and more able

children are show good scissor control as they keep close to the lines. They then paint some of the life size picture and one child in particular enjoyed mixing colours and commented that yellow and red make orange. Children are aware of their senses they enjoy exploring the shaving foam; running their fingers through it and as they squeeze it in their hands comment that it is 'squiggy'. Later they smell the shaving foam.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Although staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and extend learning through events which are not planned, for example encouraging children to count the number of legs on a spider, other learning opportunities are missed. The continual change in staffing over recent times means that the new leader is not confident in the information contained in children's assessment records, as there is no supporting material such as observations or samples of work. There has been no discussion with parents about children's achievements and no observations were undertaken between September and the end of October as it was considered more important for children to settle first. Consequently planning is not based on children's current stage of development, but is focussed on the first stepping stones. Children are enthusiastic about the activities as staff follow their interests, for example to create life size pictures of themselves. Staff provide a relaxed, unhurried atmosphere where children are actively occupied throughout the session. For much of the time children are well supported by staff, but occasionally learning is not supported as there are no adults near by, for example to explain the purpose of weighing scales. Waiting times create an opportunity for discussion and singing rhymes such as 'Incy, Wincy, Spider'. Visits from people such as the road safety officer reinforce learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children new to the group feel secure and settle quickly as they have their favourite blanket from home and parents remain with children until they are confident. If at a later stage a child becomes upset parents return to the playgroup. Children feel special as they are each have a name card and at the end of the session sing good bye to each child in turn. They feel extra special on their birthday as all present sing 'happy birthday' before the child blows out the candles. Although most activities are made accessible to all children, a few are not, for example children who have English as an additional language do not participate in 'show and tell' or singing in front of the group. In addition children with English as an additional language are less likely to feel welcome as there are no resources or images within the setting which reflect their culture. These children do however participate in activities during free play and staff gently encourage them to speak in English. Children's special needs are met through discussion with parents and where appropriate, with the consent of parents, seeking assistance from other agencies.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are generally well behaved, able to take turns and, show care and consideration for each

other. One child fetched a pair of scissors for another child. When one child was upset she was comforted by two friends. Children do not however say thank you to their peers when they are given beakers and plates at snack time, although they are courteous at other times. Respect is shown for the environment as children help to tidy away toys. In the summer they help to plant the borders for the village hall. They learn about the local community as they walk around the village and visit the llamas near the church.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents comment positively about the provision. They are aware of practices within the setting from the information pack provided to all prospective parents, newsletters once a term and assisting at the setting on a rota basis. When on duty parents feel very involved because they are able to sit and enjoy snack with the children. Parents are encouraged to be involved in their child's learning through participation in group sessions and the library book system. However parents are not encouraged to share what they know about their children's stage of development and as progress records have not been maintained, they are not shared with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the children for whom it provides. Since the end of the summer there have been considerable number of staff changes. As a consequence there has been instability for children. However the committee are following rigorous recruitment procedures to appoint a permanent leader. The deputy, who is currently undertaking NVQ level 3 training in child care is temporarily acting as the leader. The comprehensive induction ensures that staff are clear about their roles and ongoing suitability is assessed through annual appraisal. One member of the committee is also responsible for identifying and monitoring training requirements. Parents on duty are also provided with clear information about their roles and responsibilities. Staff provide a calm, well organised environment where children are encouraged to develop self-esteem and good communication skills. Children's health, safety and wellbeing are promoted as paperwork is very well organised, confidentially maintained and where appropriate shared with parents. Documentation complies fully with the requirements of the National Standards.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. There is a well established, supportive committee who are clear about their role. Although the leader has only been in post since the beginning of November she is aware of changes which need to be implemented, for example developing a fuller understanding of caring for children with special needs and is scheduled to attend training in the near future. She is aware that steps need to be taken in order to monitor children's progress and has introduced a key worker system as the first step in this process. The leader is also aware that opportunities to develop children's imagination and creativity need to be extended by providing additional resource in the craft area. Since one parent commented that her child was disappointed if there was not sufficient time for 'show and tell' the routine has been changed to ensure this activity is always included in each session. However, because the leader is new, systems are still in their infancy

and need to be developed more fully.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group agreed to meet one recommendation. Children's welfare is now promoted as they would receive appropriate treatment if they were involved in a serious accident because parents have given consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment.

There was also a point for consideration which required staff to further increase children's freedom to develop their own ideas. Children do have opportunities to express themselves through some activities such as painting and dough. However children would be more creative if the range of resources available on the craft trolley was extended.

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 of Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- ensure that all children are included in all activities and where necessary adapting the activity to meet individual needs

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):

- regularly monitor children's progress and develop an effective planning cycle based on each child's current stage of development across all areas of learning
- provide further opportunities for children to develop their creativity and independence in the craft area
- improve the partnership with parents by encouraging them to share what they know about their children and regularly updating parents about their child's progress

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