



TRIANGLE PLAYGROUP

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110090
Inspection date	02 December 2005
Inspector	Lorraine Wardlaw
Setting Address	Fromond Road, Winchester, Hampshire, SO22 6EG
Telephone number	01962 880988
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Registered person	Triangle 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?

Triangle Playgroup opened in 1973 and operates from a church hall, which is located in Weeke, Winchester. The playgroup is run by a voluntary management committee. It provides sessional care and is registered for 26 children between the ages of 2 and 5 years. The playgroup is open term-time, on a Monday and Tuesday, from 09:00 to 11:45 and from 12:30 until 15:15. On Thursday and Friday the group is open for the morning session only.

There are currently 49 children on roll and of these 36 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of a sessions and come from the local and surrounding areas. The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The management committee employ a manager and five staff, who work with the children on a part-time basis. All of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a good range of physical activities that contributes to a healthy lifestyle. They develop self confidence in their physical skills as they master using stilts unaided, throwing balls, or balance along wiggly, narrow blocks. They enjoy galloping and marching to the 'sticky tapes' music, stopping and crouching at the appropriate time. The playgroup's free flow policy means that children can regular play in the fresh air which effectively promotes their well-being. Children's fine motor skills are successfully developed as they confidently use the scissors to cut out shapes .They have a good selection of tools and materials close to hand for them to self select, such as a hole puncher and glue sticks. All the necessary health documentation is in place. Good recording in the accident and medication records by staff means that children's health is well protected. Staff are highly aware of children's special dietary requirements and ensure that the children's needs are well met, especially during cooking activities. Children have access to drinking water throughout the session and a mid-session drink of milk or water, which contributes to their good health. Children benefit from a good range of nutritious snacks. They learn healthy practices such as washing their hands before cooking activities and before snack time and make comments about the effect of exercise on their bodies. Staff pay attention to good hygiene practices to prevent cross infection such as wiping down table mats at snack time and using gloves when preparing food.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and are cared for in a well maintained, welcoming and safe environment. Staff are vigilant with regards to visitors to the group and supervise children well, especially when they need to visit the toilet. Good annual risk assessments ensure that hazards have been identified and addressed so children can play safely. Staff are confident about the fire procedure and drills are regularly undertaken and evaluated. Children are beginning to learn about how to keep safe whilst playing. For example, one child told another not wave scissors around, and the cooking group knew that they were not to go near the oven, "because it's hot." Staff have set up an inviting room in which the children can play and learn. The children's work is displayed attractively and at child level. Children enjoy playing with a good

and varied range of toys and resources which are well rotated by staff and checked for safety. Children are well protected from possible abuse or neglect because the child protection co-ordinator is confident about the procedure and staff know about their duty to report and monitor concerns. An informative child protection procedure is in place but it does not include the procedure the group would take if an allegation was made against a staff member.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Younger children enjoy similar play experiences as their older play mates and develop a good sense of belonging to the group. For example, they settle well at the beginning of the session, confidently move from outdoors to indoors to play and happily put their completed art work in their name tray. They experiment with sand and water and enjoy making their own collages from a good range of materials. Staff are caring and sympathetic to young children but are not yet secure on how to implement the birth to three matters framework into their practice.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals because the majority of practitioners have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and an effective, practical learning environment is offered. Clear, meaningful plans are implemented well by staff. They cover all six areas of learning, include the stepping stones as learning intentions and are informed by the assessment records. Children enjoy regular focus activities such as cooking. They are enthusiastic participants; they talk about the texture and feel of the mixture, learn about change and use the scales to balance ingredients. However, occasionally learning opportunities, such as the introduction of new vocabulary and the comparison of different weights, are missed. Staff know children well but this is not always reflected in the observational notes in the children's assessment records, which do not take account of the able child. Staff set up a varied and exciting learning environment with plenty of experiences on offer, which children happily and independently access. They are able to spend good lengths of time at an activity of their choosing which helps develop good levels of perseverance and concentration. Children engage easily in conversations with their peers and with adults, particularly at snack time when they all sit at a table with their key worker. Staff relate well to children and encourage them to think by asking open ended questions.

Children are developing their emergent writing skills well; in practical play such as the vet's surgery, in notebooks around the playgroup or by copy writing their names on labels for their work. Children learn to count and recognise numerals well, assisted by the good resources on offer each session, such as number games on the computer, the collaged number line completed by the children and the number hopscotch. Effective practice during snack time builds on children's counting skills and encourages them to problem solve. For example, five cups were put on the table for seven children and the adult asked is there enough for everyone? Children are confident users of the computer, matching pictures on the screen by clicking the

mouse, and enjoy technological toys such as a remote control car. Children enthusiastically hunt for mini beasts in the garden; looking at them through magnifying glasses, talking about the differences and their observations. They enjoy using wooden bricks to make elaborate models. Children experience a good range of creative opportunities; through role play situations and by exploring a good variety of media and materials, such as flour and water, play-dough, clay and a varied range of painting techniques.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals by staff and develop a positive attitude to others through the good images they see in the playgroup such as posters, books and puppets. They gain a good understanding about children living around the world through 'hands on' displays which promote discussions about differences. Children enjoy taking responsibility when they put out the place mats at snack time and all join in to tidy up the resources. They are generally well-behaved but sometimes become noisy and restless when asked to line up together before snack time. Staff give clear, consistent boundaries and explain to children when their behaviour is not appropriate. All children are keen and motivated to learn, either by moving around the room trying different things or persisting at activities independently. Some children are making firm attachments to their peers and work together in a small group. Children's personal independence is effectively promoted by staff who encourage them to put on their own coats or pour their own drinks at snack time. Children with special educational needs are suitably supported by staff who liaise with other professionals to ensure their needs are met. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is being fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents become aware of what the children learn through the informative prospectus, an information coffee morning and regular newsletters outlining themes and activities. Staff effectively link the learning to home by encouraging children to bring in items for the interest table or by a family looking after one of the playgroup's bears 'Billy or Gilly' and recording it's activities. An active, supportive parents committee underpins the running of the group. Good, regular communication between parents and staff ensures that the care is continuous and that parents know about children's progress and achievements. An informative notice board and information table with pamphlets means that parents are fully up to date with the group's policies and procedures including the complaints log.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play and learn in a well organised environment, with staff making good use of the resources and space to benefit the children. Sound policies and procedures are in place which underpin the practice, and regular reviews ensure that the group is continually evaluating how it operates. All staff and committee members are suitably checked and vetted. However, the group is unaware of new regulations regarding the

suitability of newly appointed staff and does not have a written recruitment and vetting procedure in place. High staff ratios mean that children are positively supported in their care and supervision. All staff are suitably trained and keep up to date with short courses. Good links with the local school ensures that children are well prepared when they move on.

Leadership and management is good. The setting implemented the last action plan extremely well, and continues to check on it's progress. The group monitors the educational programme offered to children including teaching practice, by observations of staff and evaluation of activities. However, these observations are not linked to the outcomes for children or effectively used to enhance staff practice. Management and staff are committed to improving practice, undertake regular appraisals and recently gained Pre-school Learning Alliance accreditation. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the playgroup was required to respond to six recommendations, all of which they have addressed successfully. A new policy has been devised should a parent fail to collect a child, which ensures that children remain safe at the end of a session. Parents are now given lots of information about the educational provision provided, which in turn strengthens the partnership between parents and the playgroup. Opportunities for children to make decisions and do things themselves have increased which in turn has a positive impact on their personal, social and emotional development. Good plans have been developed covering six areas of learning with learning intentions ensuring that children make good progress across all the stepping stones and enjoy worthwhile experiences. Assessments are used to inform planning, but are not always up to date so this remains a recommendation. The monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching has improved teaching practice, but ongoing development would enhance the teaching further, therefore this remains a recommendation.

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):

- develop a recruitment and vetting procedure in line with the new regulations regarding suitability of staff and include the procedure to be carried out should an allegation be made against a member of staff
- develop the outcomes for under three year olds further by taking guidance from the birth to three matters framework

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's assessment notes are fully up to date in all areas of learning, are supported by clear observations, cover the Early Learning Goals for the more able child and the information can be easily relayed to parents
- continue to develop the staff observation/ monitoring system and use this information to enhance teaching practices particularly when implementing focus activities and during routines such as lining up for the toilet

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