



St Johns Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY285690
Inspection date	28 November 2005
Inspector	Glenda Sinclair

Setting Address	St Johns Cricket Club, Forest Vale Road, Cinderford, Gloucestershire, GL14 2PH
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Telephone number

E-mail

Registered person	St John's Playgroup
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Sessional care
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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?

St John's playgroup moved to new premises in April 2004. It operates from two rooms in a single storey building. This is situated in an industrial park on the outskirts of Cinderford. The playgroup serves the local area.

There are currently 15 children on roll including 13 funded 3 and 4 year-olds. The setting can support children with special needs. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The committee run playgroup opens 3 days a week during term times.

Sessions are from 09:15 until 11.45. There are five staff members who work with the children. They all hold a recognised early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about personal hygiene as they are encouraged to wash their hands before snack time. However, there is a risk of cross infection as children use the same bowl of water and the same towel to clean up after messy activities. Children learn about general hygiene as they are reminded to dispose of soiled tissues after blowing their nose. All staff have first-aid training so that they can respond quickly to help a child in an emergency. First aid equipment is readily available.

Children have daily opportunities for physical exercise. They climb, slide, pedal and take part in various other physical activities in their large hall. They also go for walks in the forest or run around on a cricket pitch as the weather allows.

Children learn about healthy nutritious food as they eat the snacks prepared for them. There is usually a choice of fruits for example slices of apple, segments of orange and raisins plus a plain biscuit. Children have a choice of milk or water to drink, which they pour themselves. Water is available at other times to prevent dehydration.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and secure environment. The hall is a little isolated but good security is maintained as there is an alarm on the door to indicate when the door is opened. There are grills over the windows. The building is split level with a few steps in various places. Safety gates prevent the children wandering into areas where they might be at some risk. All the equipment is clean and well-maintained. It poses no danger to children.

A thorough risk assessment is completed twice a year and a committee member takes responsibility for ensuring any necessary safety work is completed. Children learn about the dangers of using equipment such as the climbing frame and slide. They are able to repeat the simple rules such as 'Sit on your bottom' and 'One at a time'. Security is maintained on children's departure as they are released into the care of their parent or another authorised adult.

All staff have undergone child protection training. They are confident in their knowledge of the procedures to follow if they have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages enjoy their play and they are making good progress in all areas of learning. They have the choice of a wide range of activities to stimulate their development. They develop trust in the adults which enables them to separate happily from their parent or carers. They learn to be independent as they try to put on their own coats, pour their own drink or make their own choice of activity.

They talk confidently, quite happy to discuss what happened at home or what they are doing after playgroup. They listen well to stories and join in with familiar nursery rhymes. They are beginning to recognise sounds and many are able to write their name. A lack of pencils at the art tables prevents children gaining more experience by naming their completed work. They are beginning to problem solve and do simple calculation such as taking two away. They count well and recognise when an adult is trying to trick them by missing numbers out. They are making size comparisons and using size language naturally in their play. In a rural area, they have many opportunities to learn about the natural world around them but they also learn about different sorts of lives in other places. They have access to a range of materials from sand and water, to gloop and porridge. They use re-cycled material to make three dimension models and have frequent access to musical instruments. They play percussion instruments with good rhythm, recognising when they need to play quietly and when they can play with gusto.

Teaching and learning is good. Planning is closely linked to the early learning goals and stepping stones. The staff assess progress and this feeds into the planning. Staff ask questions to confirm and extend knowledge. Children's work is valued and adults use praise and encouragement to good effect.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have access to a good range of resources and activities which promote positive images of other cultures and disabilities. Staff get to know the children very well and respond to their individual needs. The playgroup accepts children with special needs and have all the necessary systems in place to offer them appropriate help. Behaviour is good. Children are encouraged to be polite as they are reminded to say please and thank you. One child apologised to another as he accidentally bumped into him. Most children willingly help to tidy up. The staff present good role models to the children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is appropriately fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents speak highly of the playgroup and are aware that they can approach the play leader or key worker for information about their child. A very good display of photographs informs parents about the Foundation Stage and the committee give out parent packs initially to make parents aware of the group's policies and procedures. The complaints procedure does not include mention of Ofsted or its contact details.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The staff organise the premises and resources to give children the best opportunity to learn through play, safely and securely. Leadership and management is good. There is a high degree of commitment to keeping up-to-date with training and new frameworks such as Birth to Three Matters. All of the staff have been in post for some time and work well together as a team, planning together and filling key worker roles to support children and their families.

The register, accident and medication records are filled in appropriately and all the necessary paperwork and permissions are in place to safeguard children. Policies are regularly reviewed and the committee strive constantly to improve the arrangements for children and staff.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

There has been no inspection under the Children Act since registration.

At the last nursery education inspection, staff were asked provide regular opportunities for children to link sounds and letters and to encourage children to practise writing their names. Planning and observation show that children are linking sounds and letters and staff are providing activities to encourage this. Many children can write their own name. However, staff do not regularly provide pencils on the art table for children to add their name to their completed work.

They were also asked to link assessment with the early learning goals. A simple system is in place to facilitate this. They were asked to make children's records readily accessible to parents so that they could be better informed about their child's progress. Systems have been put in place to cover this and parents are aware that they can discuss their child's progress with the play leader or key worker.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report since registration.

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):

- ensure that suitable hand washing facilities are in place
- ensure that the complaints procedure includes Ofsted and the necessary contact details

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 have the resources available to encourage them to write their names on finished work
- develop a book corner which attracts children to sit and look at books

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