



Amberley Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101714
Inspection date	25 January 2006
Inspector	Hilary Elizabeth Tierney
Setting Address	The Parish Rooms, Amberley, Stroud,, Glos, GL5 5AA
Telephone number	01453 872571
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Registered person	Amberley 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 outstanding. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Amberley Playgroup is located in the parish rooms within the village church of Amberley, to the south of Stroud. The group have shared use of two rooms beneath the church, and an outdoor play area. The other main user of the rooms is the parent-and-toddler group. The two groups never use it at the same time. There is an enclosed playground on two levels with grassed and concrete surfaces. The local fields and countryside are used by the playgroup.

The playgroup may provide care for 24 children aged between 2 and 5 years at any one time. There are currently 20 children on roll. The group is in receipt of education funding and at present have 14, funded 3 year olds and 3, funded 4 year olds attending. Session times are 09.30 until 12.15 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday during school terms. The group currently have no children attending with special needs or English as an additional language. Children attend from the local community and surrounding areas.

The children are cared for by a team of four members of staff. All hold relevant childcare qualifications. Parent helpers assist at the group on a rota basis. The group receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership support worker, the area Special Needs Co-ordinator and has developed links with the local primary schools and church.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment, that is well organised and inviting. Children are able to learn to care for themselves and develop an increasing independence. Children have a very clear understanding about good hygiene practices. Individual hand towels are used once for each child, and clean ones provided each time a child washes their hands. Children are clear about procedures and can easily access clean hand towels from the large supply available. Staff are good role models for the children, they also wash their hands at the same time as the children. Children are free to visit the toilets independently and are confident to do so.

Children's health is well protected within the group. There are clear, detailed procedures in place to ensure minor injuries are dealt with effectively. Staff are clear about the need to exclude children who are ill and all parents emergency numbers are easily to hand should a child become ill when at the group.

Children have an excellent understanding about healthy eating and snack time is used very well by staff to help develop children's knowledge and understanding about the food they are eating. Children are able to help give out plates and cups to the others on their table. They all pour their own drinks, and select the snack food confidently. During the inspection children were seen spreading jam and fromage frais on scones they had made that morning. Grapes and raisins for snacks were discussed, staff asked children if grapes have a lot of sunshine what do they turn into. The children answer raisins. The staff praise the children for getting it right. Children take great delight in eating their snacks and staff are patient, allowing children to take their own time to finish snacks and talk together.

Children have excellent opportunities to explore and test their physical control, both during indoor and outdoor play. Music and movement is used daily, children and staff take part with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Children sing songs, bang drums and

dance around the room to the piano music. Children are beginning to learn about loud, soft and the beat in the music played, clear explanations are given to the children by staff about what they need to do. Outdoors children have superb opportunities to explore the nearby countryside with walks on the common, and around the village.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are welcomed into a warm, well organised environment where they may play safely and confidently. Children have free access from the large and varied selection of good quality resources put out by the staff at the beginning of each session. Displays of children's work around the room promote their self-esteem well.

Children's safety is of paramount importance to the staff. Thorough daily written risk assessments are completed before the children arrive in the rooms. The two rooms are used extremely well, one for organised activities and the other for physical play. Children are safe because staff are extremely vigilant in their supervision, doors are securely locked and remain so whilst children are present. Detailed procedures are followed to ensure children are safe when on outings and in the setting. Good awareness by the staff during snack time ensures the children are not at risk from spillage of their hot drinks. Children understand the emergency evacuation procedures and are clear what to do if they need to evacuate the buildings, staff have clearly explained procedures and carefully practised routines with them regularly.

Children are well protected. There is a designated person for child protection, both she and the staff are confident and fully aware of the correct procedures to follow in the event of having a concern about a child in their care. The written child protection policy is clear, detailed and includes an anti-bullying policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children settle quickly and enter the rooms happily as their parents leave. They run in confidently, greeting the staff as they do so. Staff in return greet all the children individually as they arrive. Children sit well in circle time and discuss their news, weather, toys and activities on offer that day. Children like the freedom to choose their activities for themselves, this develops their independence and helps them make choices for themselves. Children interact extremely well with each other as they play. During the inspection children imagine they are on a train, staff have provided an excellent 'ticket office' with phone, answer machine, computer, money, till, tickets, pens and paper. Children come and buy tickets and then sit on the train, they ask a member of staff to join them as they tell her they are going shopping. She joins them and they talk about what they are going to buy when they arrive in Gloucester. The children taking part in this activity were happy, confident and using their imagination extremely well as they talk with each other and the member of staff.

Children have access to a large variety of stimulating and well balanced activities provided for them by the staff. They may access sand, books, free painting, paper, crayons, imaginative play and recyclable resources each session. Children communicate effectively with staff and each other. Staff listen to what children say and respond with clear answers according to the child's understanding. Staff show warmth and care towards the children, they are patient and understanding towards children's individual needs as they play. Staff are enthusiastic and this is reflected in the way the children react when taking part in activities. Children help to tidy up with enjoyment, as they do so they talk about what is going to happen next. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework effectively to help plan the activities they provide for the children. They have a keen knowledge about the framework and how to implement it.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children concentrate exceptionally well during story time, they sit enthralled as the story is read to them, they join in confidently when they know what is coming next. Children may freely access the books at any time. During the inspection children were observed looking and discussing the books, they carefully turned the pages, looking at the pictures. Staff have produced three books with photos of previous visits, outings and activities the children have taken part in. These are also available for children to look at when they want. They look at these books with great enjoyment and excitement when they see themselves, friends and siblings. Children discuss the visits with staff and recall them well and point out themselves and friends in the photos. They are eager to learn and take part in activities with excitement and enthusiasm. Children have a wide range of experiences on offer to them during their time at the group. Excellent resources are provided which ensures they learn and develop as they play.

Children gain in confidence in developing skills with small tools, such as pastry cutters and rolling pins when making scones for snack time. Staff allow the children time to explore the textures of the food as they cook, allowing them to crumble the flour and butter, feel the coolness of egg shells before they break them into the mixture and the dough when it is mixed together. Children choose their own pastry shapes to cut the scones, place them on trays and help the member of staff put them in the oven. Staff use good open-ended questions to help children develop their knowledge for example during snack time children are asked about how they made the scones, what they put in them and how did they mix the items. Mathematical language is used appropriately during the cooking time by staff, encouraging the children to weigh, add eggs, asking how many children are there and how many scones they need so everyone can have one.

Children have excellent opportunities to express themselves during circle time, free painting, when making models from recyclable resources. Staff have a good understanding about the need to allow children time to talk, express themselves through their painting and designing, making and painting the models of their choice.

Staff know children well and are aware of their individual interests and needs. Assessments and planning is used well to monitor children's progress and plan for their next stages of development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are treated with equal care and concern by all staff, there is genuine care shown to all children during the sessions. Staff are fully aware of children's individual needs and are meeting them very well. Staff are good role models showing respect for each other, this encourages and helps children understand what they should be doing. Children are given excellent opportunities to learn about the world around them with well organised activities around festivals, cultures and outings.

Children's behaviour is exemplary. Staff use clear explanations about why they should not do something and the consequences if they do. Staff and duty parents use praise and encouragement to good effect. Children respond with excellent behaviour and are well mannered, polite as they interact with the staff and each other. Children share, take turns and interact very well as they play. Excellent detailed written behaviour policies ensure staff are consistent in their approach with the children when dealing with any of the children's minor disagreements. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is outstanding. Through discussion with parents it is evident that they are very happy with the care and information they and their children receive. Detailed newsletters, a notice board and verbal information ensure that parents are kept regularly informed about the group. Parents are encouraged to become involved with the group by sharing their knowledge about their cultures, and even taking the group mascot on holiday and writing about his and their travels. Parents feel the staff are approachable, they understand the complaints procedures and feel able to talk to the relevant person should they have any concerns.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Leadership and management are outstanding. There are excellent systems in place for recruitment and the development of staff. The committee support the staff well in their work and their roles are clearly defined. Regular staff appraisals are completed. Monthly meetings with the staff and committee ensure they all are kept informed about what is happening within the group, and ensures the policies and procedures are consistently applied and updated. Weekly planning meetings for the staff ensure they develop activities and plan for the children's next stages.

Children benefit from the highly skilled, enthusiastic, dynamic staff. Staff understand the needs of the children in their care well and there are highly effective systems in place so they may observe them and plan for their next stages of development. Both staff and committee are committed to constant improvement and evaluation of the care they are providing.

All necessary documentation is in place and readily to hand for the inspection. All necessary written parental permissions are in place. All children's attendance is recorded by parents as they leave and collect their child, visitors are requested to

sign as they arrive and leave the building.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

The provider had four recommendations from the last inspection. These were to ensure all staff were aware of child protection issues and were able to implement the policies and procedures in the absence of the designated member of staff, to ensure hand washing routines promotes good hygiene, to include the address and telephone number of the regulator in the complaints procedures for parents and keep an accurate record of visitors to the premises.

There has been good progress in achieving these recommendations, all staff have completed child protection training. They are confident in being able to implement the policies and procedures in the absence of the designated person. The hand washing routines that have been established are excellent and children are well aware about when they need to wash their hands. The complaints procedure for parents now includes details of how they may contact the regulator. The registration system now includes a detailed record of when visitors are on the premises.

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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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