

Duke of Gloucester Barracks Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	101655
Inspection date	21/06/2011
Inspector	Zahida Hatia

Setting address	Duke of Gloucester Barracks, South Cerney, Cirencester, Gloucester, GL7 5RD
Telephone number	01285 868235
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Duke of Gloucester Playgroup is situated on the army base within the village of South Cerney approximately four miles to the east of Cirencester. It is open to army families and the general public, and children attend from surrounding villages. The playgroup has its own self-contained building which is maintained by the military. There are two playrooms, a sensory room, a cloakroom and a kitchen area within the premises and they have access to their own enclosed outdoor area.

The group is registered on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children in the early years age group at any one time. There are currently 28 children on roll within the early years age range. Of these, eight children receive funding for early years education. There are six members of staff employed to work with the children; all staff have completed appropriate childcare qualifications. They support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The playgroup is a member of Gloucestershire Playgroup and Toddler Association and receives support through them. The playgroup is open on Monday, Wednesday and Thursday 9.00am to 3.00pm and on Tuesday and Friday from 9.00am to 1.00pm, during school term time only.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, inclusive environment where their uniqueness is recognised and valued. Staff are enthusiastic and caring and provide a wide range of fun activities across all areas of learning. As a result, children are making good progress in their learning and development. Their health and wellbeing are excellently promoted. Children benefit through the good partnership established with parents, however, links with other settings involved with children's learning are not yet fully established. Systems to monitor and evaluate the setting's strengths and weaknesses are beginning to evolve. Children's behaviour is excellent and is well managed by the staff, who act as good role models.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve the systems for sharing children's learning and development records with other practitioners for children who attend more than one setting
- ensure that all staff are involved in the self evaluation process so that all areas for development are identified and staff are included in the decision making process.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children's safety is well promoted within the setting as staff have a good understanding of child protection procedures and know how to implement them effectively to safeguard children. Clear recruitment and induction procedures, along with a genuine commitment to attending regular training to update their own professional development, ensures that children are well cared for by suitable and experienced staff. The well-motivated and qualified staff team work well together in caring for and safeguarding the children who attend the nursery. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out by the manager and staff for indoors, outdoors and for outings. This helps to further promote children's safety. Appropriate safety equipment, regular checks and close supervision of the children further safeguard them.

The staff and management are committed to driving improvement of the playgroup. Regular staff meetings and individual appraisals play an integral part of the provision. Recent improvements include continuing to develop opportunities for children to have daily access to fresh air and outdoor physical play. The environment, both indoors and out, is organised flexibly and creatively including lots of natural resources so children can choose to access areas offering different activities to extend their play and develop their independence. Children are cared for by qualified and experienced staff who are well deployed so that they receive good adult support at all times.

All policies and procedures reflect the Early Years Foundation Stage requirements. Whilst the committee and the management have a good understanding of strengths and areas for development within the setting, not all members of staff are included in the self evaluation process.

All recommendations raised at the previous inspection have been positively addressed. For example, all children are encouraged to follow good hygiene procedures. The setting has developed a stimulating and exciting outdoor area and children are encouraged to be critical thinkers. The playgroup is bright, colourful, with imaginative displays and organised into stimulating play areas which are well used by the children. Children's artwork and photographs are attractively displayed, giving them a sense of belonging.

Resources are well deployed and maintained to a high standard, clearly organised, and are easily accessible to children. An effective key worker system is in place. All of the staff team have gained early years qualifications and all attend regular training including paediatric first aid and safeguarding. Good systems are in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities, ensuring every child makes good individual progress.

Partnerships with parents are well established, ensuring that parent's requests and children's individual needs are met successfully. Parents' views are actively sought and valued through the use of questionnaires and consultation meetings. Feedback from parents is extremely positive; during the inspection, they spoke highly of the

care and education that their children receive. Parents are kept informed about the setting and enjoy regular opportunities to liaise with staff and discuss their child's progress. However, links with other settings involved in children's care, learning and development are less well established.

The nursery promotes equality and diversity in raising children's awareness of the wider world, through excellent practical activities and related resources. The setting celebrates the Commonwealth Day. Parents are actively invited to come in their traditional dress and cook their traditional food such as Fijian, Nigerian and Asian cuisine. This helps children to learn about cultural diversity within their local community.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage learning and development requirements and use this knowledge well to provide a stimulating and interesting learning environment for all children. Ongoing observations of the children inform planning, to ensure learning opportunities provided are appropriately challenging and personally meaningful to the children. Consistent systems to track children's continuous learning and development are clearly linked to the early learning goals. Children benefit from a balanced range of adult-led and child-initiated activities.

Children arrive confidently at the setting, engaging happily with staff, their peers and with the activities provided. Children are greeted by name. Staff interact positively with the children, they spend time sitting at their level and show an interest in what they are doing and saying. For example, staff talk to younger children, which encourages their language skills to develop. They enjoy craft activities, making flowers, bees and rainbows for their summer display using pens, glitter and tissue paper. Younger children have fun playing with the wide variety of natural resources, such as musical instruments, puzzles and wooden toys and treasure baskets. This promotes their early investigative skills. They also enjoy a wide range of sensory activities, such as exploring sand, water and soil whilst outdoors. Indoors, the children have a designated sensory room which encourages them to use their sight, smell and hearing to find out how things work. For example, the children play with toys that light up using fluorescent optic lights. Children can look and wonder at their own reflection in the different sized mirrors displayed around the room. Children engage in a range of activities, which they can access independently. They enjoy playing in the well-resourced home corner, where they use their imagination.

Children show a developing interest in books, which they select independently from the good selection in the book area in each play room. They gather around at circle time to listen to staff reading their favourite stories. Some children look at books themselves, sitting on the soft cushions. Children have good opportunities to explore technology such as using interactive toys which are at child height and are easily accessible in both play rooms. Resources are available to encourage and

enable children to begin mark making and recognising numbers, colours and shapes. Children enthusiastically join in with simple songs and rhymes before snack time. They happily sing and do the actions to 'wheels on the bus' or play musical instruments at group sessions. Children enjoy visits to the departure lounge at the military base where the play group is situated; they take their bags to be x-rayed and have their pretend passports stamped by the soldiers as they pretend to go on holiday.

Children develop an understanding of keeping themselves safe. They confidently talk about being involved in regular fire drills; this further enhances children awareness of personal safety. Children adopt very good personal health and hygiene practices. For example, they remind each other about hand washing after toileting and before eating, telling each other that hand washing helps to get rid of the germs. Parents send packed lunches with the children and staff encourage them to ensure these are nutritious. The staff work very closely with parents to ensure snacks meet children's individual requirements, ensuring children's health is effectively promoted and safeguarded. Children are extremely helpful and kind to each other and their behaviour is excellent. This is supported by staff who act as good role models. For example, staff promote positive behaviour by using excellent strategies, such as giving praise and simple explanations of why some behaviour is not acceptable. As a result, children behave well. Staff lead by example as they work well together and are respectful towards each other.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are:	Met
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