



Wheldrake Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	321549
Inspection date	20 March 2006
Inspector	Rosemary Beyer
Setting Address	Wheldrake Village Hall, Broad Highway, Wheldrake, York, North Yorkshire, YO19 6BE
Telephone number	01904 448420 Playleader 01904 449190
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Registered person	Wheldrake 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?

Wheldrake Pre-School Playgroup is a committee run group and was first registered to provide sessional care in October 1992. It operates from two rooms within the village hall in Wheldrake, which is located approximately 8 miles from the City of York. The building is on one level, with access to toilet and kitchen facilities and an outdoor play area. The group serves the local community and surrounding villages.

The playgroup operates during term time only and is open on Monday, Tuesday and

Friday mornings from 09:15 to 11:45 and Monday, Wednesday and Friday afternoons from 12:45 to 15:15. The Wednesday afternoon session is available for those children starting school the following year and aims especially to prepare children for that experience. They offer care to a maximum of 30 children, aged between 2 and 5 years at each session. There are currently 50 children on roll including 27 three- and four-year-olds in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend a variety of sessions each week. Children with special needs or who use English as an additional language attend, with systems in place to support these needs.

Seven staff work with the children overall. Two hold a recognised childcare qualification and two staff members are working towards achieving qualified status. Three members of staff are unqualified but have many years experience of working with children. Parents also attend sessions to assist as volunteer helpers.

The group receives support from the Local Authority and the Pre School Learning Alliance (PLA).

The group is also part of the Wheldrake Early Years Partnership with the primary school, the Out of School Club, Derwent Ducklings and village childminders.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean and hygienically managed premises. They are learning about personal hygiene to help protect themselves from infection. Posters are displayed to remind them how to wash their hands, however, they do not have independent access to warm water.

The sick child policy in place reminds parents of the need to keep children at home when they are ill. A user friendly leaflet has been produced with information for parents about illness, and the conditions which preclude their children from attendance. Information about infectious diseases is also available. Prior written permission is obtained for medication and it is recorded appropriately after administration. Staff have also acquired guidance from the Department for Education and Skills about medication in settings.

Information is displayed on the notice board about bird flu as concerns were raised when the possible visit by chickens to the setting was mentioned. This has now been deferred. All staff have first aid and Basic Food Hygiene certificates. They check the first aid box regularly and have the accident book available.

Children enjoy fresh air most days, either when playing on the fenced off car park or the field. They also go for walks in the village when sufficient staff are available. If the weather is bad they do exercises inside, where they move around safely and with good control. They are developing excellent balancing skills through the use of the beams and bowls, which also encourage them to take turns and have patience.

The children eat very healthily at snack time from a range of foods, including fruit, toast and cheese and know they need to eat well to stay fit. They also try different foods as part of topic work such as the fruit and vegetables discussed during the session, or during the celebration of festivals. They thoroughly enjoy baking activities. Children can have water at any time and can choose milk or water at snack time. Staff sit with the children while they eat which makes it a very social time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are unable to leave the premises unsupervised. The outside doors are locked so no other users have access to the building during sessions. Children have supervised access to a fenced area of the car park and in the dry weather, the playing field. A daily safety check list is completed for the premises to ensure they are safe and clean. The health and safety officer is consulted if there are concerns and risk assessments completed for the premises or activities, with dangerous toys removed for repair or disposal, however, the water in the cloakrooms is too hot for the children to use unsupervised.

Children participate in fire drills each half term and the visit from the fire brigade helped them learn about the danger of fire. The photographs of the visit encourage them to talk about the danger of fire and how it can harm them. The drills are recorded and evaluated, with the evacuation procedure posted on the notice board. All staff have experience of the procedure.

When going for walks in the village children are well supervised and are developing a good awareness of road safety. They enjoyed visit from the Community Police Officer and the discussion about the photographs show the children remembered what he said.

The group is very well equipped with a good range of resources available to meet the needs of the children, who use toys and equipment safely and with care. They know they must not throw things around, nor leave them all over the floor and are very helpful at tidy up time, putting toys in the correct place for staff to put them in the cupboard. Staff check for safety when bringing out or putting away toys, removing for repair or disposal anything which is unsafe.

Staff protect children through their knowledge of child protection. They have a good understanding of the local referral procedure and the contact details are readily available should they have concerns. They have all undertaken training to keep their knowledge of legislation and procedure up to date. The named person ensures they are all aware of any changes. No persons are allowed unsupervised access to the children unless they are police checked.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage and are starting to implement Birth to three matters framework to ensure the needs of younger children are met. All three and four year olds enjoy the same activities whether or not they have funded places.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have regular planning, recording and evaluation meetings to monitor the children's progress and learning. Activities are provided to cover all the areas of learning, some adult led to focus on particular stepping stones and others for free choice. All staff take responsibility for observing children, with Key Workers completing the recording from shared information to support children's progress. Staff are currently reviewing the recording methods used for the Foundation Stage to ensure they meet the children's needs.

All the children enter excitedly and are keen to learn, and enthusiastically try new things. They settle happily, greeting friends and staff. Children concentrate well and persevere to complete tasks, asking for help if they need to do so. Staff support the children through open ended questions to develop their vocabulary and thinking. The setting has a very positive encouraging atmosphere where staff provide a wide variety of learning opportunities and children develop their knowledge and skills.

Progress in all the areas of learning is good, with children developing their excellent social skills to enable them to share, take turns and co-operate while playing. Their communication skills, vocabulary and their appreciation of stories and books are growing and they confidently discuss the activities they undertake and the topic of the week. Books are used appropriately and much enjoyed. Children sit quietly to listen, anticipating what will happen and are able to discuss why. The display of photographs of activities in the past provides children with the opportunity to talk about what they have done, with the visits of the fire brigade and community policeman very popular events.

All children are able to participate in group time, when items brought into the session are discussed. During the vegetable and fruit topic the children were able to talk about what they had brought, from the plastic fruit salad to the tin of vegetable soup, the carrot seeds and Sharon fruit. They willingly tried different fruits at snack time, although not all were popular. The millinery topic and the subsequent hat making provided an unusual but interesting learning opportunity. Staff are keen to widen children's knowledge of people's skills and interests.

The children are interested in the living world, enjoy growing plants and searching for mini beasts. They are looking forward to the annual visit of frogs to the bowling green and can talk about their development from frog spawn. They also like growing seeds such as sunflowers and enjoy planting out the pots.

Very imaginative art work is created with fruit printing, with children mixing their own colours. They also help themselves to materials for craft activities, whether adult led or free choice. The children develop their role play enthusiastically, with the fruit and vegetable shop helping their confidence in using the till and mobile phone. They also use mark making to write shopping lists and bills. The children play imaginatively with

the construction and table top toys, whether individually or with their friends.

The children's mathematical language and counting skills are developing well, with even the younger ones successfully sorting and counting while playing with the bears. The older children can count well and use appropriate language in their craft and play activities to discuss position and simple shapes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children behave very well, sharing, taking turns and co-operating in their play. They have a good understanding of acceptable behaviour and offer advice to children less familiar with what is appropriate. At snack time the children clear tables, give out beakers and help each other by passing the food around. Most of them pour their drinks independently but others are confident to ask for help if needed.

Partnership with parents is good. They are welcome to become involved in the group with a thriving, very supportive committee in place. The children benefit from the opportunity to bring things from home for topics, with imaginative items sent for the fruit and vegetable topic such as the Sharon fruit, carrot seeds, tin of vegetable soup as well as a casserole of plastic vegetables. Parents are interested and supportive of the learning opportunities provided for their children, discussing what they have done when they collect their children. Their positive attitude and willingness to participate in the group encourages children to learn.

Information is provided for parents from their first involvement in the group by the Welcome Pack and initial interview with staff, then regular newsletters and notices on the board as well as daily verbal feedback. They can also see the programme of activities to be provided during the coming week. Information about children's development, at home and in the setting, is also shared on a regular basis. A rota of parents provides support to the staff during the sessions, and some bring items of special interest to develop themes, such as the hat topic with examples of millinery provided.

The parents express great satisfaction with the care and support provided by the staff, and the information they receive. When children leave the group, parents receive a record, including photographs, of the child's time in the setting. They feel able to contact staff should they have any concerns, and the complaints procedure is made available to them.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered well by the group with clear guidelines for behaviour in place, and children give advice to others about the appropriate way to behave. They are learning the difference between right and wrong, by example, and good manners are a high priority. Staff are very conscious of the need to widen children's awareness of diversity and have an excellent range of resources. They provide learning opportunities through topics and celebrations of festivals. The children are developing a good knowledge of their local community and know other people have different lives and needs.

Children with special needs are welcome in the group and staff undertake training to ensure their needs can be met in line with the Code of Practice. The Special Needs Co-ordinator has created a substantial body of information and guidance which can be used or adapted for activities for all the children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management are good. Staff know they have shared responsibility for the care and education of the children, and they work very well as a team. They are managed well, with each staff member being valued for their individual contribution to the smooth running of the setting. The manager ensures staff are able to use their skills and interests to support children's learning, such as the resources obtained to care for children with special needs or to develop children's awareness of diversity. She also monitors the recording of development records for the children and the key worker system to ensure achievements are recorded and any concerns are highlighted.

The group has comprehensive policies and procedures in place which ensure the children are cared for in a safe and efficiently managed setting. Staff and committee review the paperwork on a regular basis and keep parents informed of any changes. Personal details are stored securely and confidentiality is respected.

Robust systems are in place for the employment of staff, most whom are appropriately qualified or working towards qualifications, some of the unqualified staff are very experienced childcare workers. A clear induction procedure is available to new staff. They all have annual appraisals and are encouraged to undertake training to widen their knowledge and further improve their practice. Staff are very well organised, know what needs to be done and keep each other informed. Overall the setting meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection a procedure for outings has been developed, and the parents have started to sign to acknowledge administration of medication.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- provide thermostatically controlled warm water for children in the cloakroom
- continue to develop the implementation of Birth to three matters to meet the needs of younger children

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):

- continue to develop the recording of Foundation Stage achievements to ensure all children's needs are met.

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