



Uxbridge Centre Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	139164
Inspection date	17 October 2006
Inspector	Jennifer Devine
Setting Address	Uxbridge Centre Playgroup, The Greenway, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB8 2PJ
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Registered person	The Committee of the Uxbridge Centre
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?

Uxbridge Centre Playgroup is run by the committee of the Uxbridge Centre. It opened in 1984 and operates from a large church hall in Uxbridge in the London Borough of Hillingdon. A maximum of 20 children may attend at any one time. The playgroup is open each week day from 09:15 to 11:45, term time only, with access to toilets and a kitchen directly off the hall.

There are currently 32 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 10 children receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup currently supports children with learning difficulties, and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs five staff, of these three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted as staff implement satisfactory procedures within the playgroup. Children understand about the importance of washing their hands after using the toilet and before eating their snack. However, children's health is compromised as they share bowls of soapy water to wash their hands, which increases the risk of cross contamination. Staff are fully aware of the importance of accident recording, medication administration and two staff hold first aid certificates, which all ensure the children's well being.

Children learn about the importance of healthy eating and are offered a choice of fruits or bread sticks each day. They help themselves to drinking water when required and are offered a choice of milk or water with their snack. Children's individual dietary needs are well known by staff.

Children understand about the benefits of vigorous exercise and enjoy daily opportunities to be active indoors when climbing, balancing and sliding on the climbing frame and when riding tricycles around. The outdoor play area is not used effectively, which prevents the opportunity for children to get regular fresh air and experience the outdoors. Children also participate in activities to develop their coordination and skills such as regular music and movement sessions. There are many worthwhile opportunities for children to develop their fine motor skills such as when drawing, using small constructional Lego and when using rolling pins or cutters with the play dough.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff provide a warm welcome to the children and parents in the mornings. Parents bring their child into the playgroup to settle them and make sure they feel secure. The setting is clean and attractively decorated with children's artwork and posters.

Children move freely around the environment because staff pay high attention to ensuring risks and hazards are minimised. Risk assessments are carried out by staff to ensure all areas used by children are safe. The climbing frame in particular, is well protected by the use of good quality safety mats to prevent serious injury if children fall. The main entrance to the centre is not locked during playgroup sessions and although safety gates prevent the children being able to leave, it does not prevent strangers entering the building. This compromises the children's overall safety.

The playgroup is generally well equipped with appropriate furniture and resources that are safe, clean and well maintained. Children move confidently around the setting making choices about their play from the available resources. Space is well organised to allow children to be active such as when playing on the climbing frame and to engage in floor or table top activities. Children also enjoy time to relax and share books in a comfortable area with cushions.

Children's safety is well protected as staff have a good knowledge of child abuse and understand the reporting procedures to follow for child protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at nursery. They arrive happy and confident and quickly settle into the playgroups routine of group time where the register is taken and everyone is made to feel welcome. Staff know children well and have built up secure relationships with them and their families. Children play well choosing from the available planned toys and activities. Staff are close by to offer support and encourage learning further. Younger children are well supported in their play and development due to the staff having an understanding of the Birth to three matters framework to guide their planning.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from a generally well planned curriculum because staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and early learning goals. Staff are skilled at posing challenging questions to make children think and encourage their language and vocabulary further. Staff observe children's development and record progress on children's individual files. However, staff lack understanding of how to use these observations to identify the next steps of learning.

Children have developed good relationships with each other and familiar adults. They show kindness and consideration to each other as they play together, sharing and taking turns. Children are gently reminded of the rules at the beginning of the day and are encouraged to seek adult help if they are hurt or feeling upset. They have generally good opportunities to develop their independence when pouring their own drinks or when selecting from the available toys.

Children are becoming confident speakers and are developing their vocabulary well. Children thoroughly enjoy sitting in the book corner and listen intently to an adult reading a story. They understand how to look after books, carefully turning pages one at a time. Children enjoy using a variety of pens, pencils and papers to practise their mark making/writing skills and particularly enjoy making lists when in the home corner.

Children show an interest in counting and are beginning to use numbers confidently such as when singing number rhymes. There are good opportunities for children to solve problems with many practical experiences such as counting how many children there are and predicting how much fruit is needed at snack time.

Children are involved in exploratory play and look closely at the outdoor environment such as using magnifiers to study conkers. They learn about past and present events in their lives when covering topics on ourselves, studying differences and similarities in each other. Children have some opportunities to learn about information and communication technology when playing with toy cash tills or calculators.

Children develop their creativity and imagination through a range of resources such as when playing in the well equipped home corner and when painting or sticking using various materials. Children enjoy regular singing sessions often using musical instruments and actively take part in music and movement sessions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in an emotionally warm and child friendly environment where staff are aware of children's individual needs. Children's confidence develops through having choices available for them and through the care and respect the staff provide.

Children are given clear, consistent boundaries and staff praise and celebrate their achievements which helps build up their self esteem. Children know what is expected of them and confidently talk about the group rules. Children learn about themselves and the wider world through planned activities to acknowledge various festivals over the year, such as making sweets for Diwali. This positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

The playgroup has effective strategies in place to support children with learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language. Staff work closely with parents and any outside agencies who may be involved in the child's care.

Children benefit from generally good relationships staff have with their parents, which contributes to their well being. Staff are friendly, approachable and available daily to keep parents informed on their child's day. Regular newsletters keep parents informed of the playgroup's activities and parents help out on a rota basis.

Partnership with parents whose children receive nursery education funding is satisfactory. Leaflets on the curriculum are given out to parents and information on the six areas of learning is displayed on the notice board for parents to read. Although parents can ask the staff at any time about their child's progress there are no formal meetings held to discuss progress and not all children's records of achievements are shared with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is good. Children's care and learning is enhanced by the good deployment of staff and the good management of the nursery education. Staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage and the Birth to three matters framework and this impacts on the achievements of the children. Staff work well as a team, they are motivated and well organised. Regular staff meetings are held to discuss the curriculum plans. The managers are committed to further development for staff and encourages them to attend training to enhance their knowledge.

Children share good relationships with staff who have all been suitably vetted to work with young children. The policies and procedures are all in place as required, which means that the health and welfare of the children attending the playgroup is generally well promoted.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the playgroup has made improvements of the care and education the children receive. Children now have good opportunities to develop their independence when selecting from the available resources and are able to help themselves to a drink when required. There are good resources available for children to practise writing for a purpose such as when making lists in the home corner.

Registers of children's attendance are now clearly maintained, good staff induction processes are in place and all staff have updated their knowledge of child protection, which all ensures children's overall safety. Staff have developed their assessments methods and now record children's achievements regularly. However, they still do not have effective systems in place for ensuring children's progress reports are regularly shared with parents.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 staff are informed and aware of the importance of good hygiene procedures in order to prevent the spread of infection
- improve the security of the premises

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 parents are kept well informed by sharing children's records of achievements on a regular basis.(applies to care also)
- improve the assessment methods to include identifying the next steps of learning for children
- improve the opportunities for children to experience the outdoor environment more frequently (applies to care also)

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk