

Salterlee Under Fives Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	303799
Inspection date	27 June 2007
Inspector	Rasmik Parmar
Setting Address	Salterlee J&I School, Kell Lane, Halifax, West Yorkshire, HX3 7AY
Telephone number	01422 365464
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Registered person	Salterlee Under Fives 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?

Salterlee Under Fives Playgroup was registered in 1980 and is a voluntary organisation that is managed by a committee. The playgroup operates within the dining room of Salterlee Junior and Infant School, Halifax. Children have access to facilities from the school, such as the information and communication technology suite. The nature garden and an outdoor play area is shared with the school.

The playgroup is registered for a maximum of 17 children from two years to under five years at any one time. It is open on Monday to Friday from 08.45 to 11.15 for children receiving funded nursery education. It is also open Tuesday and Wednesday from 13.10 to 15.40 for children under three years. There are currently 32 children on roll and of these 24 children receive funding for nursery education.

The playgroup serves the local community and supports children with learning difficulties or disabilities. There are five members on the staff team, of whom four are appropriately qualified in childcare to level three. The playgroup receives support from the Pre-school Learning Alliance and the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well organised routines. Children systematically wash their hands after visiting the toilet and after messy play activities using soap and warm water. They dry their hands using paper towels to prevent cross contamination. Staff use anti-bacterial sprays to clean tables and work surfaces to maintain good standards of hygiene.

Children's welfare and well-being are closely protected through the proper maintenance of the required documentation, such as the procedures for administering medication, to monitor their health and through policies which promote their well-being. For example, children who are contagious do not attend. This helps to prevent the spread of communicable diseases and acts in the best interest of all children to protect all those being cared for. Children's welfare is continually maintained because a significant number of staff hold current first aid certificates. This means that staff have the relevant knowledge to administer first aid promptly in the event of an accident.

Children are well nourished and are provided with a balanced diet of healthy foods, including fresh fruit and vegetables for snack. Children have the opportunity to participate in a 'café style' snack. Children confidently and independently approach the snack table on their own and help themselves to cut pieces of fruit, vegetables, rice cake and milk. Children sit and talk to one another, supervised by a member of staff, for a social occasion before moving on to other activities. Other children then come forward and take their place appropriately without crowding the table, showing that they are sensitive to others and are well mannered. Children are encouraged to drink plenty of water as part of being healthy. They have access to a water dispenser within the playroom and individual, named bottles are stored on a wire rack so that children can help themselves to water independently. For example, older children fill empty water bottles from the water dispenser before playing outdoors, ready for drinking when needed.

Children are encouraged to be active through regular play outdoors on physical play equipment. Children have access to an excellent, fully enclosed playground with a soft tarmac surface. They have access to a modern physical play apparatus to encourage a variety of skills, such as climbing and balancing. There is an open-door policy whereby the door from the playroom is open most of the time so that children can freely play either indoors or outdoors. On the day of the inspection, children played inside the large sandpit when it was raining, wearing their coats and using umbrellas. Children were thoroughly enjoying themselves playing with water from the 'water shoot' or filling buckets of water from the outside tap. In addition, children have access to a nature garden and they are taken for walks in the surrounding countryside to broaden their appreciation for fresh air and nature. Furthermore, children are frequently taken on outings to places, such as the local farms on the school minibus.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wide range of stimulating activities in a safe environment. They use furniture and equipment that is safe and suitable for its purpose. Space is used well to promote children's independence and to promote their all-round development. Age-appropriate resources are freely available and children are able to choose activities that are easily accessible to them.

All equipment used conforms to safety standards. Children's welfare is well promoted through the proper maintenance of the required documentation to ensure their safety. Risk assessments are carried out for all areas of play, both indoors and outdoors. Staff are vigilant throughout the day and carry out safety checks to ensure continued safety of all children.

Children are well protected from abuse through staff knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures. Staff are knowledgeable about the potential signs and symptoms and are familiar with the reporting procedures. They retain the guidelines for the Local Safeguarding Children Board and have the relevant contact numbers for reporting. This means that they can act quickly in the best interest of children to safeguard their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled and play together in small groups of friends. They are friendly and interested in the activities available for them. They remain well stimulated through good play opportunities that help to foster their imagination and consolidate their skills. They are confident and make decisions for themselves. Children explore independently and develop new skills at their own pace. They respond to positive adult interest as they participate in various activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit greatly from staff knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals. Key workers are involved in the planning process. This helps them to understand how to make useful observational notes and to see the impact of their planning and delivery of the early years curriculum on children's progress. However, the system for assessing children's development does not provide a clear picture of the overall progress made by a child.

Children of all ages are well challenged and resources are used effectively in all areas. Children learn through first-hand experiences and benefit from good behaviour management strategies, which help them to develop good relationships with each other. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are well supported as staff liaise with parents and outside agencies to effectively meet the specific needs of the child.

Children are developing skills in the use of a wide range of equipment, such as scissors, pencils and stencils. Their balance, coordination and strength is promoted effectively through the use of a wide range of large equipment, which includes a climbing frame. Children are gaining an awareness of the effect of exercise on their bodies as they participate in physical activities, such as running and skipping. Their understanding of technology is good as they use the laptop computer, together with a printer, to play educational games. Topics on celebrating festivals around the world help children to broaden their horizon by learning about different cultures and ways of life. Children are developing knowledge of living creatures by having regular access to the nature garden and by going on walks in the local countryside.

Staff allow children to learn and develop through daily routines, and by becoming familiar with the areas of learning. Children are allowed to discover and have fun which helps to promote confidence and self-esteem. Older children listen and concentrate appropriately during story time and play with activities which interest them. They are encouraged to learn about mathematics through everyday routines, such as counting, number recognition, shapes, addition

and subtraction. Children are learning to solve problems through table top jigsaws and are choosing suitable components for construction and junk modelling.

Children are encouraged to express themselves artistically through a variety of methods, including dressing up and role play, singing songs and making music. They experiment with a wide range of tactile materials, such as play dough, hand printing and junk modelling to express themselves creatively. Their artwork is displayed on the walls as a celebration of their achievements and helps to build self-esteem. Children benefit from encouragement to foster writing for different purposes. Children speak well and contribute to group discussions effectively. They learn to write for different purposes, learn name recognition and learn to increase their vocabulary when reading.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the good equal opportunities policy, which is effectively promoted throughout the setting. Children are valued and made to feel welcome by staff who actively show an interest in their development. Older children are given more responsibility which increases their self-esteem and independence. Children play with resources which promote a multicultural society in a positive way, such as dolls, books and dressing-up clothes. Local cultural festivals are celebrated, such as the Chinese New Year, as part of broadening an understanding of the wider world.

There are good systems in place to support children who have learning difficulties or disabilities. Staff liaise with parents and outside specialist agencies and produce individual plans in order to meet the specific needs of children. However, the resources to positively portray learning difficulties or disabilities is limited.

Children are well behaved and good behaviour is positively encouraged by praise and an interest in the children. There are plenty of stimulating activities available for children to channel their energies in a positive direction. Older children are involved in writing their own rules which are displayed as part of empowering them to manage their own behaviour with their peers. In addition, there is a reward system whereby good behaviour results in children receiving a choice of 'goodies', such as a bottle of bubbles. This has helped to efficiently manage children's behaviour.

Partnership with parents and carers is good as staff welcome them and share information about their child on a daily basis. Parents are provided with good information which includes all policies and procedures as part of an effective partnership for the welfare of children. Parents are made aware of any complaints they may wish to make through the complaints procedure provided to them. However, the complaints procedure does not have the up to date details of the regulator. Parents are kept informed about activities through regular newsletters, which includes information about funded nursery education detailing the types of activities children will be participating in, for the six areas of learning. Parents show their commitment to the well-being of children by actively participating in the playgroup on a rota basis. Hence, children have input from a variety of adults who bring with them their wealth of experience for the benefit of all children. Parents further show interest in children by taking an active role on the governing committee of the playgroup and by getting to know staff on a social level.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for because the adults who care for them are suitable to do so, are well trained and experienced. Children play in safety in a warm, welcoming environment in which resources are arranged invitingly so that children are well stimulated and become highly involved in the activities provided.

The person in charge ensures that appropriate procedures are in place to ensure that all staff are suitable to work with the children. Most are well deployed, each knowing their roles and responsibilities, so that the children's daily routines are well-organised and their needs are met.

Children's welfare is promoted well through good record keeping. Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the setting are well maintained. All relevant documentation is shared effectively with parents so that children benefit from a good working relationship between staff and parents.

Leadership and management of the provision is good. The person in charge ensures that staff providing funded nursery education have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Regular appraisals are carried out to identify individual training needs effectively and allow for staff development. All of this contributes to continued improvement of the care and provision of education for children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was recommended to have procedures for administering medication, recording details for registration and have child protection procedures in line with the National Standards.

The playgroup has now ensured that there are procedures to be followed in case children require to be administered medication for their well-being. Appropriate systems are in place for recording details of children upon registration so that children's individual needs can be met. Child protection procedures are in line with the current legislations in order to ensure children are suitably protected.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required 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):

- update the complaints procedure to contain up to date details of the regulator
- improve resources to promote learning difficulties or disabilities.

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):

- improve the system for assessing children's development to provide a clear picture of the overall progress made by a child.

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