



Pilton Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142986
Inspection date	04 July 2005
Inspector	Beverly Anne Self
Setting Address	Methodist Hall, Top Street, Pilton, Shepton Mallet, Somerset, BA4 4DH
Telephone number	01749 899147
E-mail	
Registered person	Pilton 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Pilton Playgroup opened in 1966. It operates from one large playroom, which is situated in the Methodist Hall in Pilton, Somerset. A maximum of 14 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday from 09.30 until 12.15, with an optional lunchtime club finishing at 13.00 during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 17 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 9 children receive funding for nursery education. Children who attend are from the local area and surrounding villages.

The playgroup is run by a committee, who employ three members of staff. One of whom works full time and two work part time. All of the staff hold or are working towards early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children participate in an exciting and fun range of activities that help contribute to their healthy growth and development. The children are familiar with the clear hand washing routines, they know that "you must wash your hands after going to the toilet to make them nice and clean". This helps them to learn about the spread of infection and their own personal health care.

The children have regular opportunities to develop their large muscle skills and enjoy the freedom of physical activity through daily outside play. They move around confidently, negotiating obstacles and using balancing and climbing equipment, demonstrating good control of body movements and co-ordination. They are able to describe how their body feels and changes after exercise, explaining that "I feel tired after running and I need a rest".

Staff have a good knowledge of first aid, ensuring medical emergencies can be dealt with immediately. All necessary records and documentation regarding children's health are in place, this means that their individual health care needs can be consistently met and respected.

Children are offered a healthy snack each day and some bring lunch boxes to the optional lunch time session. They delight in discussing the contents and talk about what they are going to eat, they identify different foods, and know where the food comes from or how it grows knowing that, "apples come from an orchard, they grow on orchard trees". The children enjoy the social occasion of mealtimes, they interact and communicate with each other and are starting to choose and pour their own drinks, helping to develop their independence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment. The staff carry out thorough risk assessments each morning to reduce potential hazards to the children. The play area is well set out to allow the children to move around safely, and enjoy a variety of play opportunities within a safe environment. Children can self select from a wide range of toys and resources. These are stored at child level, so the children can develop independence when choosing and tidying away the toys.

Planning shows how the staff are deployed within the setting, although appropriate adult:child ratios are not always maintained. This means that at certain times during the daily routine, children cannot be as closely supervised and can become boisterous. The children are encouraged to learn about safety when at pre-school, through planned activities such as, transport and traffic. This helps them to learn about road safety and begin to develop their knowledge of personal safety and their own well being.

Children are very well protected by staff, who have a good understanding of children protection policies and procedures. Staff have attended relevant training courses to support their knowledge of child protection, making sure the children's welfare is always a priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a well resourced environment, they are well occupied, generally well behaved and interested in the activities available. Staff encourage the children to talk about what they know and share home experiences. They ask questions to make the children think, which helps to extend and improve their language skills and vocabulary.

The daily routine is organised to include supervised activities, indoor and outdoor play, as well as quiet times, so the children's day has a balance of different experiences. The children are familiar with the routine and mostly follow known boundaries, they are confident and show increasing independence. Although, at certain times during the day, particularly getting ready for snack and lunch times, the children can become lively and boisterous. Planned activities and topics help to develop the children's learning, they are currently looking at 'transport and traffic'. The children are learning about different types of transport and know how they got to playgroup, telling you "I came in the car today, but I'm going to walk home". They are enjoying discovering what tracks different vehicles make by using the paint.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The children are encouraged to take part in a wide variety of play opportunities and activities to help them make sound progress towards the early learning goals.

The children arrive and settle with ease, selecting which activity or toys they want to play with. They enjoy each others company, interacting and socialising well, they are beginning to take turns and play together in small groups. Children know where resources are kept and help to tidy away the toys, they are aware of the daily routine and line up to wash their hands before snack time, but can become disruptive when preparing for large group activities.

The children are confident communicators and initiate conversations. They give lots of eye contact when talking to you and use facial expressions during a conversation to demonstrate 'being cross or sad'. The children freely access the books, looking at

pictures and describing what they see. They enjoy story time and join in enthusiastically with known stories and phrases. Most of the children are able to recognise their own names and some of the older children can write their names without help.

Children count confidently and show an interest in numbers. They have lots of opportunities to see numbers, shapes and colours on displays around the room. Children use mathematical language during play describing objects as big and little, empty and full when playing with the sand and water. Calculation is encouraged in everyday activities such as, cutting pieces of fruit for snack time. The children help to work out if enough pieces of fruit have been cut and if they need more or less. They also recognise that when an apple is cut there are "two halves, cut it again and you get four quarters".

The children have access to every day technology in the home corner such as, cash registers, kettle, iron and cooker. They also enjoy regular opportunities to use a computer, they use this confidently and mostly without adult help. They know how the programmes work and use the mouse effectively. Topics on 'mini beasts' and 'pets' help them to learn about nature and the environment around them. In the garden they have a 'digging box', where they can plant flowers, dig holes and look for insects. They enjoy telling you "we are looking for worms, because they live in the mud".

There are lots of opportunities for the children to develop 'free expression' through creative activities, they enjoy painting, sticking, modelling and play dough. They take part in role play, recreating every day situations and conversations whilst pretending to 'cook dinner or eat breakfast'. The children use musical instruments to make different sounds, learning to play loudly and quietly, beating a rhythm and moving in time to the music.

Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage, using the six areas of learning and stepping stones to devise weekly activity plans. Assessment is used effectively and children's progress and achievements are observed and monitored closely. However, at times the children can become lively and disruptive due to staff organisation and deployment. This compromises the children's ability to reach their full learning potential. Overall, children are making sound progress in all areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are encouraged to learn about the local community through planned activities and topics. They talk about the village in which they live, local festivals and community celebrations. Planning shows that children are taken on outings to the library and to explore the village and their surroundings, learning how they fit into the community.

Children generally behave well, they play together in small groups, seeking out particular friends to play with. Once settled, the children sit quietly at story time and

enjoy taking part in familiar stories and songs. They have made relationships with each other and staff, feeling part of the group and showing a sense of belonging.

The children enjoy each others company, interacting and socialising well. They take turns and show independence when choosing and taking part in activities. They feel confident to speak in front of the group and talk about their families and homes. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

A good partnership with parents contributes to consistency in the children's care and well-being whilst at the playgroup. When children begin their placement parents are asked to complete a registration form to share what they know about their child. Information about the provision is regularly shared with parents through newsletters, a notice board, the prospectus and parents are asked for their feedback by filling out an annual questionnaire. A yearly meeting with playgroup staff to talk about the children's progress and achievements ensures parents are well informed about their children's care. Also helping to contribute to the children's future development and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is adequately supported by the appropriate organisation and satisfactory leadership and management of nursery education. The premises and outdoor areas are organised to allow the children access to a variety of different play opportunities to support development and learning, although required adult:child ratios are not maintained at all times. All necessary documentation which helps contribute to children's health, safety and well being is available. An informative operational plan and activity plans show how staff work within the setting, however a formal system to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education, care and the outcomes for children is not in place.

Staff at the pre-school have a sound understanding of child development. They continue to attend ongoing training courses to improve and update their knowledge of child care and education. The effective use of planning, recording and monitoring of children's individual progress, helps children to learn and achieve. Overall, the playgroup meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous care inspection recommended that the playgroup provide hot and cold running water in the toilet area, conduct a risk assessment and devise good hygiene practises. It was also recommended that the playgroup provide toys and resources that positively reflect all diversities and ensure staff deployment met individual needs of all children.

There is now running water in the toilets and the daily routine includes hygiene routines for hand washing, which the children are familiar with. A full risk assessment of the provision is carried out regularly and safety checks of the premises are

conducted each morning. Activity plans and the operational plan show how staff are deployed within the setting and toys and resources that reflect positive images of all diversities are accessible to the children. As a result, children now practice good hygiene routines, they are supported in their play and are cared for in safe surroundings. The implementation of these recommendations have improved the health and safety of the provision.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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 required adult:child ratios are maintained at all times
- improve staff deployment to enable children to reach their full learning potential, (also applies to nursery education)

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):

- develop a system to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education, care and the outcomes for children

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk