

All Saints Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251397
Inspection date	03 December 2007
Inspector	Christine Ann London
Setting Address	All Saints Hall, Park Road, Bury St. Edmunds, Suffolk, IP33 3QL
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Registered person	Deborah Harris
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 outstanding. 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?

All Saints Playgroup is a privately owned group. It opened in 1991 and operates from a community church hall in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. The playgroup is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday mornings from 09:15 - 11:45 and Mon and Thurs afternoons from 12.30 to 15:00 during term time.

All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 56 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 31 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and /or disabilities. Children and families attend playgroup from the surrounding area.

The playgroup supports a small number of children with special educational needs.

The playgroup employs six staff. Five of the staff, including the manager hold an appropriate early years level 3 qualification. The other member of staff is currently training for this qualification. The group has completed the Suffolk Quality Assurance accreditation scheme.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children's health is promoted very well. The pre-school takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection. Children have independent access to the toilet and hand washing facilities. They willingly take responsibility for meeting their own personal care needs. They confidently use the toilet and thoroughly wash their hands afterwards and before eating snacks. Children help themselves to tissues to wipe their own noses. Staff use anti-bacterial spray to clean the tables. Effective routines are in place to make sure the premises and play equipment are clean and excellent standards of hygiene are maintained.

Children's health details and medical requirements are clearly recorded to maintain their good health. Staff follow effective systems which enable children who are unwell to be cared for appropriately. All staff have current first aid knowledge to ensure children's well-being in the event of an accident.

Children are extremely well nourished. They eat snacks of fresh, organic fruit and vegetables. Snack times are made interesting for the children. For example, the children make rice cake faces using carrot slices, tomatoes and raisins, which help them to learn about healthy eating. Reference books on the snack table inform children about healthy fruit and vegetables and how they help the children to grow. Children with special dietary requirements have their needs met well because the parents have provided the setting with detailed information and a list is available on a daily basis for staff reference. Children help themselves to water throughout the sessions. They have further drinks of milk or water at snack time to ensure they drink sufficient amounts to keep themselves healthy.

Children are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They have a positive attitude to exercise and enjoy going outside to play. They are confident to climb and use the slide safely. They move their bodies well, for example, when moving to different musical rhythms in a group activity. They practise avoiding obstacles when using pedal bikes and ride-on toys. They use malleable materials such as jelly, clay and play dough with and without tools. They are developing competent manipulative skills by using scissors and glue spreaders. Children are able to fulfil their own needs with regard to rest and relaxation and use comfortable cushions on the floor in the quiet area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children benefit from being cared for in premises that are extremely secure and suitable to meet their needs. They are helped to feel comfortable and at ease by seeing colourful displays of their work on the walls. Staff make creative use of the space available by separating areas for different activities. For example, carpet pieces by the book corner and on the floor for children to take part in small scale imaginative play and use musical instruments in comfort. Children have spontaneous access to an outside area which has impact absorbing surface to promote their safety and comfort.

Children use a very wide range of developmentally-appropriate resources. These are stored in low-level units positioned next to the tables and in containers on the floor which encourage self-selection. Children use suitably sized tables and chairs which enable them to sit comfortably

to undertake activities and eat together. The toilet area has been recently renewed, the pre-school are the sole users of these. The low-level facilities help children to be independent.

Children are kept safe because staff are vigilant. They ask children safety questions to raise their awareness. For example, 'How do we climb the ladder to the slide?' and wait for the children to reply. The pre-school uses extremely detailed risk assessments for indoors and outside to reduce potential hazards and minimise risks. Procedures for fire safety are simple and clear and staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities and roles in the event of a fire. Fire drills are practised regularly to keep children safe. The staff have all undertaken training in using fire extinguishers to ensure they know how and where to use them.

Children are well protected because the staff have a sound working knowledge of their child protection policy. They understand their roles and responsibilities regarding child protection and would be able to put appropriate procedures into practice if they suspect that a child is being abused or neglected. Relevant documentation and referral details are available. All staff have attended appropriate training to ensure they are aware of local procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children's welfare is promoted successfully because they undertake an extensive range of activities and play opportunities that develop their emotional, social and intellectual capabilities. They choose from craft activities, puzzles, musical instruments, construction, sand, water, books, dressing-up clothes and construction. They are happy and well settled. They enjoy taking part in singing and join in enthusiastically with action rhymes. The staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to promote, effectively, the development of younger children attending. Children have good opportunities to play freely and extend their own ideas. For example, children have access to treasure baskets and mirrors on a soft play area. Children respond positively to adults who are interested in what they do and say. The staff talk and listen to them and maintain good eye contact. They position themselves at the child's level and involve themselves in their play situations, for example, when pretending to go on a car journey. They sit at the tables to support them with their craft activities and lay on the floor to read them stories.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff are enthusiastic about learning and make the activities fun for the children. They have secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and deliver a broad, balanced curriculum that fully covers all areas of learning. They give sufficient time and opportunities for speaking, listening, reading and writing. They use language and questioning effectively to further children's thinking. Planning makes sure all the early learning goals are fully covered. It is used in response to children's needs and interests. For example, when developing the African theme with a market and trying fruits associated with Africa. Ongoing observations are made of the children and the information transferred to their scrapbooks. Examples of children's work and photographs of them taking part in activities are also kept for parents to see. Children's next steps are clearly identified. The teaching helps children to focus and persist for some time, for example, when undertaking craft activities, engaged in 'small world' play. Staff make good use of resources and accommodation.

Children are developing a positive sense of themselves. They have regular opportunities to talk about their home and families. Children are forming good relationships. They sit and look at

books together, cooperate when playing circle games, happily take turns using the slide. Children interact readily with others. They use language well in imaginative play, for example, when going on a car journey they suddenly say, 'I need to get home quickly or my food will melt'. They are becoming aware of sounds in words, for example, 'C' is for Christmas. They pretend to read stories, for example, they confidently read stories to the whole group using the illustrations and their memory of the story. They recognise familiar words, for example, their own names for self-registration. They repeat movements, for example, lines and circles and enjoy the movement of the pens as they draw and the brushes as they paint.

Children undertake a wide variety of enjoyable, practical activities which promote their mathematical development. They take part in number rhymes which involves them counting up and back down. They count very well and find the numeral to match the amount. Staff ask them, 'how many cushions will we need today'? Children are using mathematical language spontaneously, for example, when measuring ingredients for the Christmas pudding play dough and talk about halves and quarters when cutting up fruit for snack time.

Children work and play in an interesting environment and the outdoor activities enable children to explore the natural world. They record as they observe change over time, for example, planting and growing flowers and vegetables. They experience cutting, joining and building using screws, string and glue. They use everyday technology, for example, tills and computers. They make a sleigh from construction materials for their Christmas party and create their own small world environments by using the train, track and buildings. Children learn through using their senses. They feel the sand and different collage materials, smell the mixed spice and feel the raisins in the play dough, taste dates and listen to music. They explore colour when painting and enjoy mixing colours together during printing activities. They discuss with staff the difference between the two different colours of play dough. Children use their imagination very well when using 'small world' toys, two layer puzzles and when taking part in role play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children have high self-esteem and confidence because the staff give them lots of appropriate praise. For example, for their lovely pictures, for washing their hands and they tell them that they are 'a good boy' for taking turns. The pre-school liaises well with parents to ensure that children's records contain sufficient information to enable appropriate care to be given, for example, their medical needs. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very warmly welcomed into the setting and given suitable support to promote their welfare and development. They are able to take part in activities alongside their peers. Children are helped effectively to develop a positive attitude to others by using play equipment which reflects positive images of race and culture and celebrating festivals. For example, by using authentic artefacts such as the sari's from India. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children is fostered. They play together co-operatively, share the play equipment and are well mannered. They have planned opportunities to learn about themselves and the local community, for example, they have visitors from the village talk to them about their work, hobbies and travel experiences.

Children's well-being is promoted because of the positive relationships which have developed between staff and their parents. There is a useful exchange of information at the beginning and end of each session, for example, collection details, return of books. Parents are welcome to stay until they feel their child is settled. There is an informative notice board and table in the hall which gives details of the provision and points of interest. Laminated cards inform

parents of forthcoming events and how they can participate. For example, the children's Christmas party. Parents have clear information about the procedures for making complaints and the process for resolving them. They receive regular newsletters to share news and information.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Parents gain knowledge of the early learning goals through photographs and displays of children's work. They receive good written information about the Foundation Stage and the different areas of learning in the prospectus. However, parents are not encouraged to share with their key worker what they know about their children, to be used as starting points for teaching for learning. They are well informed about their child's progress and regularly contribute to their child's assessment record. They are involved in their child's learning by taking home story books and bringing in items for the nature table. This helps them to feel they are equal partners in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The organisation of the setting ensures that children are extremely well cared for by competent staff who are very well qualified and suitable to meet their needs. The staff, parents and manager work consistently together to promote children's welfare and learning. Appraisals are regularly undertaken for all staff to make sure they are given sufficient opportunities to improve their skills and identify their training and development needs. The staff are supported to attend regular training. Therefore they are able to carry out their responsibilities effectively and have the necessary skills and experience for their roles.

The pre-school's policies and procedures protect children and are implemented effectively to promote all outcomes. There is a key worker system in operation which aids communication with parents and ensures continuity of care for the children. The registration system remains accurate and up to date to keep children safe. Staff are aware of their role and responsibilities. There is a weekly staff rota available detailing their duties, for example, greeting children and registration, craft and circle time. The role of the parent helper is displayed in the kitchen parent's folder, kept on the notice table to assist them in making good use of their time.

The leadership and management is good. The supervisor and manager are very committed to the improvement of care and education for all children. They meet together regularly. The setting has an effective system for monitoring and evaluating their provision. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there was one recommendation raised :

provide further opportunities for children to develop their independence at snack time.

Children now prepare and choose their snack foods and pour their own drinks which has assisted their independence and freedom of choice.

There was one consideration for nursery education:

improve the continuing development of children's self esteem by giving them responsibility for routine tasks.

This is continuously being addressed throughout the session by ensuring children have freedom of choice for all activities. The children prepare and cut their own snacks. They independently use the toilet and hand washing facilities. They put on their own shoes and coats to go outside and help to clear away at the end of the sessions.

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

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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):

- encourage all parents to share with their key worker what they know about their children, to be used as starting points for teaching for learning.

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