

Swallow Risers Playgroup and Out Of School Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	103855
Inspection date	30 November 2007
Inspector	Janette Mary White
Setting Address	Maundene School, Swallow Rise, Chatham, Kent, ME5 7QB
Telephone number	01634 671450
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Registered person	Swallow Risers Playgroup And Out Of School Club
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Swallow Risers Playgroup and out of school club opened in 1993 and operates from one room in a mobile building. It is situated in Walderslade, Chatham, Kent. This group is managed by a committee. A maximum of 30 children may attend the playgroup and out of school at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.00 to 15.30 and for the out of school from 15.45 to 18.00 for 38 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 84 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 50 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The playgroup and out of school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup and out of school employs 10 staff, of these nine of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

All children enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables. They are offered opportunities to choose their snack or drink. However, children do not have frequent opportunities to freely access drinking water through out the session. Some children talk about 'good' and 'bad' foods, for example, they know fruit and vegetables are good and sweets and crisps are bad. Regular discussions on healthy foods successfully helps to contribute to children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle. Staff follow effective procedures, such as wearing aprons when preparing food. They ensure their practices meet the children's nutritional, physical and health needs. Children are becoming aware of hygiene practices through the daily routine and planned activities, for example, they know they must use soap and water to wash their hands. The use of individual paper towels reduces the risk of cross infection. Children are beginning to understand the need to use tissues to wipe their noses and dispose of these in the bin. Children explore and develop physical control in stimulating daily indoor and outdoor experiences. They have a real desire to become independent in their personal care, such as dressing themselves for outdoor play. Staff have a secure knowledge of each child's stage of development. Their competent understanding means all the children are confident to ask for help when needed or to try out new skills within the safe environment; for example, in the garden children excitedly playing with pushchairs and bikes. There are systems in place to record medication, accidents and existing injuries. Parents are given written details of any accident or injury. There is written permission to seek emergency treatment or advice on the child's behalf.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The emergency evacuation procedure has been recently discussed and practised with the children. However, not all fire drills are recorded, for example, for the out of school children. All children know and describe what to do in an emergency. Children's welfare is supported through developing child protection policies, based on the Local Safeguarding Children Boards. The provider and staff know the possible signs of abuse or neglect and what action on the child's behalf. However, the child protection policy does not provide sufficient details of all the relevant agencies, such as Ofsted. Some staff are not fully familiar with some aspects of this procedure, such as allegations of abuse made against them. Children play within safe boundaries and physical boundaries have been designed to ensure the safety of children; for example, the gate in the garden is padlocked when children use this area. Staffing ratios ensure good levels of supervision. Consistent security procedures are in place, for example, visitors are required to record their details. Children's safety is promoted through the use of risk assessments, which includes the resources and activities. Children are beginning to learn about taking responsibility for their own safety and the group rules are discussed at circle time; for example, staff encourage safe practices by reminding children not to run inside and to use their walking feet. This promotes their understanding of how to keep safe. Child height furniture encourages independence and they benefit from a range of safe and developmentally appropriate resources.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are secure with the staff and are beginning to develop a good sense of self esteem. They are beginning to gain confidence in initiating their own learning. They enjoy being independent as they help themselves to the resources they wish to play with. Children of all ages and stages of development enjoy their time at the group and they are stimulated by the activities they are offered; for example, the out of school children play enthusiastically with the monkey game on the play station. The setting uses the Birth to three matters framework to support younger children's learning and development. Children are interested and staff ask questions and encourage them to participate in activities which appeal to them. However, sometimes resources for the out of school children are stored in the main room, but are not clearly labelled with pictures and words. This does not always promote opportunities for younger children to freely choose. Children have good relationships with staff and are not afraid to ask for help or support. They participate in a balanced range of activities that include quiet and active play, such as reading stories, action songs and rhymes, and playing in the garden. Some are adult initiated, such as making Christmas decorations and some offer free choice, such as imaginative play and physical outdoor activities. This encourages all children to make progress in areas of learning. Children's communication skills and their imaginations are consistently developed through the easily accessible books and resources. Staff have strong understanding of the range of experience required to aid children's progress using their senses and creative activities. Children have opportunities through investigation and resources including sand, cooking and drawing. They are beginning to represent their ideas and make connections as they play. All of the children are excited when they use the outside area to play or join in with familiar songs at circle time.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the stepping stones and early learning goals. They are developing hand eye co-ordination. However, there are limited opportunities for children to use information communication technology through free play activities. Staff have an secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. Observations help to build an accurate picture of each child's development and stepping stones are used to chart their progress. Activities are regularly evaluated in order to consider their success. Children are provided with differing challenges through the variety of equipment available each day. This develops appropriate physical skills and confidence in their abilities. Children respond well to challenges and show a sense of belonging as they learn and play together. They are friendly and their confidence is growing as they share their ideas and experiences; for example, as they decorate the Christmas ornament or acting out scenarios in the role play area. Children are gaining confidence with numbers and counting, for example, as they count the number of adults and children. They use a variety of resources to make marks and some are beginning to using correctly formed letters. They are developing a sense of time and begin to differentiate between past and present experiences, such as what they did at nursery yesterday. Children enthusiastically take part in circle games and action songs as they predict what comes next.

Children are beginning to show an awareness of change. They know wearing coats and shoes in winter keeps them warm. Children are beginning to use mathematical terms, such as 'more' and can identify some mathematical shapes. Some children are developing hand eye co-ordination and easily use scissors. Overall the provision plans and provides activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

There is a behaviour management policy. However, this does not include details of the bullying procedures for the out of school children. Group rules are listed in words for older children and with pictures for younger children. Staff encourage them to negotiate with others and to take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children's behaviour is good and staff effectively support younger children in sharing and turn taking. For example, when using bikes in the garden. Children have good relationships with other children and show a sense of belonging. This is because they are regularly acknowledged and affirmed by staff. There is a policy on equality which promotes anti-discriminatory practice for all children. Staff gather information regarding children's background needs, such as, their religion and language at home. Parents support the staff in labelling some resources in the child's home language. They are provided with information on Birth to three matters framework. All children are welcomed because staff value and respect their individuality and the family context for each child. They have access to varied resources, toys and equipment to stimulate their individual development. Children have frequent opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned activities and visitors to the nursery. Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are recognised and supported in the setting. The staff are aware of their needs and they receive individual attention. Staff enable individual progress for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Observations are made and used to encourage children to become involved in play and to develop relationships with other children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good and contributes successfully to children's wellbeing in the nursery. Parents are offered a range of information on the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Parents are pleased with the service they receive and are able to verbally communicate with their children's key worker. However, there are not sufficient opportunities for them to contribute to children's starting points or to their assessment and progress. Staff ensure that parents know how their child is progressing and developing. Children use a 'learning story' to record achievements and examples of the their work can be taken home or is displayed. Effective information is shared and parents feel their children are included.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Most staff, including the managers, are appropriately qualified. All staff are vetted and children are never left alone with unvetted persons. Staff appraisals are completed each year and identify future training. These appraisals consider the staffs skills and impact on future practice. This means children's safety, wellbeing, care and learning are effectively promoted. However, some staff are unfamiliar with aspects of the policy and procedure for lost or uncollected children. The registration certificate is displayed for parents. Staff now enter their arrival and departure times throughout the nursery day. There is now an accurate picture of the number of staff caring for children at lunchtime. Staffing ratios meet with requirements and children make choices in their play. The records of attendance for children and visitors show clear arrival and departure times. Children have opportunities to easily access toys and resources as these are organised to encourage self selection. Policies and procedures contribute to the efficient and safe management of the provision and help to promote children's welfare, care and learning. Records about individual children are shared with their parents.

Leadership and management are good. Staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage is secure. Staff have clear aims for the personal development and achievements of all children. Staff are committed to the integration of care and nursery education. This promotes children's development and learning. They continue to assess themselves by reviewing and work towards improvements in their practice and the provision. Staff influence the planning of activities to ensure they meet the individual needs of the children. They effectively record children's next steps and clearly differentiate activities for more able and less able children. The vetting procedures are in line with changes in regulations. There is a system in place to retain relevant checks. Although, the retention of staff's Criminal Records Bureau information does not meet the data protection procedures. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The previous inspection highlighted two recommendations to; ensure staff apply behaviour management strategies consistently and review snack time procedures.

Since the last inspection the provider has updated the behaviour management policy and appointed a nominated person to consider behaviour management strategies and introduced a new system at snack times.

As a result, children are supported by staff who have a consistent approach to support positive behaviour. In addition, the system at snack time offers children choices and develops their independence.

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):

- ensure children have frequent opportunities to freely access drinking water.
- ensure the behaviour management policy includes an anti-bullying procedure for older 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):

- provide further opportunities for children to freely access information communication technology through free play activities.
- ensure parents are given opportunities to contribute to children's starting points and to their child's assessment and progress. (also applies to care).

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