

Playaways Neighbourhood Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142809
Inspection date	05 January 2008
Inspector	Mary Daniel
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Registered person	Playaways Neighbourhood Nursery Ltd
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

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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?

Playaways Neighbourhood Nursery opened in September 2003. It forms part of Glastonbury Children's Centre and operates from rooms at the rear of the United Reform Church situated in the town of Glastonbury, in Somerset. Children have use of a large nursery playroom with adjoining baby unit, integral toilets and nappy changing rooms and an enclosed outside play area with safety surfacing. The nursery is registered to provide full day care for a maximum of 30 children aged under five years, at any one time, and there are currently 57 children on roll. The nursery is in receipt of Government funding to provide nursery education and there are currently 27 funded children on register.

This privately owned nursery opens Monday to Friday, from 08:00 to 18:00, for 49 weeks of the year. There are currently 15 members of staff employed, which includes two overall co-owners/managers. A domestic aid and nursery administrator are also employed. All staff working directly with the children hold, or are working towards relevant child care qualifications. The nursery receive support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is clearly monitored through use of detailed records, for instance, for any accidents or the administration of medication. Clear systems are in place to ensure necessary details, written parental permissions and acknowledgements, are obtained and recorded. Consequently, continuity in children's care and well being is effectively promoted. Staff ensure children have sun cream and hats on when outside in the warmer weather. A gazebo is put up to give some shade and children only go out during the cooler parts of the day. This means children are well protected from the dangers of the sun. Children enjoy their physical play times. For example, they stretch and shake their arms and legs in a warm up activity and push their scooters and bikes around the playground. They wear suitable clothing for poor weather and use some paint brushes to paint the fence and outdoor play equipment. This encourages their mark making skill and enables them to be outside in less clement weather too. Children go for local walks and visit nearby play parks. They climb and crawl along the climbing equipment and bounce around on the 'kangaroo hoppers'. As a result, children have regular opportunities to be outside and benefit from lots of exercise and fresh air play. This effectively supports their approach to developing a healthy lifestyle, although large muscle skill development is not always given sufficient focus within the overall planning of daily activities. Suitable procedures are in place to help children develop a clear idea of necessary personal hygiene routines. For instance, liquid soap and paper towels are provided for children to use when washing their hands, which helps to prevent the spread of infection. A visual time line for washing hands is displayed in the bathroom and children know they need to 'get rid of the germs' before sitting down to have their snack. This supports them in suitable hygiene practices, although these are not always reinforced after children go to the toilet. Clear nappy changing procedures are consistently followed by staff. They wear disposable gloves and aprons and changing beds are wiped after each use. Individual bedding is provided for children's cots and kept in named bags. This effectively contributes to reducing the risk of cross contamination.

Children's understanding of healthy eating is suitably promoted. They are eager to sit and have their drink and snack. They are provided with nutritious foods, such as pieces of tomato, banana, apples, dried fruit or rice cakes to eat. The nursery have an arrangement with a local greengrocer to provide a range of fresh fruit and vegetables. This means children are offered good quality foods for their snack. Wholesome teas of wholemeal pitta bread or toast with spreads are provided. Parents are sent information on healthy foods for lunchboxes and children are encouraged to eat up their savoury foods first. As a result, children start to learn about foods that are good for them. Babies bottles are heated appropriately and any foods that need to be warmed through are checked with a food probe and temperatures are recorded for parents information. Children can easily access a water dispenser and are offered drinks of juice, milk or water at snack time. This means they are well encouraged to have frequent drinks, which helps to maintain appropriate fluid levels and prevent dehydration.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is appropriately supported through the prevention in place. For instance, stairways are gated securely. Heaters have cool wall covers and are thermostatically controlled. An entry system is fitted to enable staff to effectively monitor any access to the nursery. The main entrance doors are alarmed and clear security procedures are followed, which include

parents providing passwords for any alternative carer collecting their child. This helps to protect children and maintain their well being. Detailed policies are formed to support staff in monitoring children's safety and regular risk assessments are completed. However, children are not always sufficiently supervised during water play and spillages are not effectively cleared. Children can easily access the toilets in the nursery unit, which helps to encourage their independence. However, this area is not checked regularly enough to ensure floors are kept clear, and that these facilities are made safe. There is a suitable policy in place for managing outings and children and staff wear reflective coats on their walks. Staff discuss safety issues with children who know they need to hold hands and be careful, for instance, when there are cars around. Staff set safe perimeters for children, who know where to stop and wait, such as when running around an enclosed park area. This effectively helps children in learning how to keep themselves safe. However, some outings are not sufficiently assessed to account for the needs of all children, for example, to ensure pushchairs are taken to support younger ones who become tired.

The nursery provides suitable play areas for children, which are well laid out to provide for different areas of learning. For example, children have great fun making their models in the design and technology area. They sit on a sturdy bench to play on the computer and snuggle into a large sofa to look through some books with their friends. Nappy changing rooms are provided and younger children rest quietly in the separate sleep room. Staff are able to easily monitor sleeping children through use of a baby alarm, vision window from the play area and physical checks, which they record. Children play in an outside play area, which has safety surfacing fitted and is enclosed. Clear fire evacuation procedures are displayed by all exits, and drills are regularly practised and evaluated. This helps the management of emergency situations, although access to some fire exits is not always kept effectively clear. Children's welfare is appropriately supported through the clear safeguarding procedures in place. Staff complete relevant training courses and have a sound knowledge of child protection issues. Policies formed support staff in identifying and monitoring any concerns arising. There is a wide variety of toys and equipment that are regularly cleaned and checked to ensure any broken parts are removed. Play resources are age appropriate and support their developmental needs. For example, babies are strapped securely in their high chairs and comfortable cots are available for them to sleep. Toddlers use sturdy stools to help them reach the sinks in the bathroom. Pre-school children use colourful plates and cutlery for their snack time and are eager to play with the child sized, realistic pots, pans and colanders in the home corner area. This effectively helps to encourage their independence and involvement in play.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the nursery eager to play and chat with their friends. They happily get involved in a good range of age appropriate and exciting activities. For the younger children, play activities are based on the components of the Birth to three matters framework. This clearly supports their development through the provision of age appropriate play experiences. For example, their imagination is supported effectively as they play with the chunky farm animals and tractors. They push, pull and prod the buttons and levers on the cause and effect activity toys and laugh as lights flash and music starts playing. This supports them in becoming competent learners and encourages them to explore and test out their new skills. They become absorbed in feeling the oats and flour mixture, which they try to pick up and smile as it runs through their fingers. They discover more new textures in the treasure baskets of shells, feathers, pine cones, string and wooden objects. Toddlers and babies start to 'represent' as they mark

make with crayons. They push their fingers through the shaving foam activity. Younger ones join with the pre-school children for some activities and are well supported within the larger numbers. For example, staff sit with them as they join in playing with the stickle bricks or play dough activity. Older children stay with the little ones to talk to them and help them in their play. This helps all children in being together and developing their social, listening and responding skills. Staff provide a friendly, reassuring approach, which children respond positively too. They relate easily to their key workers, who get to know children's individual routines very well. Babies needs are effectively monitored and they settle to sleep easily. Staff know when toddlers need their 'cuddly blankets' with them to give reassurance. This helps children to feel at ease within the nursery.

Nursery Education

Teaching and learning is good. Staff give a positive approach to helping children learn through play. An experienced and dedicated nursery teacher supports staff in their roles and together they plan an exciting and interesting variety of activities. Consequently, children are motivated to 'find out and discover' and the play experiences provided effectively support their overall developmental skills. For example, children develop their creative expression in the 'design and technology' area, where they stick junk modelling and collage materials together, and paint them to make their 'fireworks' or 'cake' models. They explore colour with great interest as they mix red and yellow together to make orange as they paint a 'colour circle'. They trace shapes through the shaving foam, which supports their early mark making skills and enjoyment of different textures. Children's hand eye co-ordination is promoted very well as they balance bricks to build their castles or fit jig saw pieces together to make a picture. They push, prod and squeeze the play dough into cake cases and put these into tins to 'cook'. As a result, they start to build up their small muscle and fine motor skills.

Children enjoy using numbers in their play and start to match objects to numbers on a computer program. They play lots of number related games and see the written number shape displayed around the room. They begin to do some early 'calculating' as they sing counting songs, such as 'Five currant buns', although some opportunities to maximise their mathematical awareness are missed within some everyday routines, such as snack time. Children use their imagination through a variety of role play experiences. For example, they play at being 'hairdressers' or 'doctors'. They sort through their 'letters', answer the 'telephone' and 'type' on the keyboard in the 'Playaways office'. This effectively helps children to act out 'real life' experiences and encourages them in 'working together' and learning to share in their play. Children have great fun on an outing to visit the local abbey gardens. They look in the shop windows and talk about what they see on the way. They enjoy the smells that come from the bakers shop and see an artist painting on the street. this helps them learn about their community and see the jobs people do. Children look at the trees around the abbey and see the leaves just starting to come through after the winter. They spot some bulbs growing in the grass and know these will grow into lovely flowers. They play hide and seek around a tree with their friends and help to count until they go to find them. Children are fascinated watching the ducks splashing on the pond and laugh as they quack for something to eat. As a result, children begin to learn about their natural world and enjoy being in different environments within their locality. Children become absorbed playing at the water or sand tray. They 'pour and empty' the water and feel for the toy animals 'swimming' underneath. They dig and pat the sand down into their pots and start to develop the concept of 'full' and 'empty' and 'heavy' and 'light'. As a result, they start to develop an understanding of 'mathematical' language

Children see signs, such as 'push' and 'pull' at the abbey entrance and talk about what these say. They find their name cards at snack time. This supports them in starting to recognise familiar words around them and learn that print has meaning. Children enjoy sitting with their friends on the sofa to look for the 'duck' hidden in the farm picture book. This encourages their concentration and observation skills and also helps them learn positional language, such as 'above, under, behind and beside. Children are very well supported in developing their pencil control. They sit quietly in the dedicated mark making area and trace or copy the letters and shapes they see displayed. They make a simple map of their walk to the abbey, showing the pond, bakers and a cross seen on route. Long term plans cover each aspect of the six areas of learning, which helps staff to plan well balanced play experiences. Weekly plans include child initiated activities, which encourages children's involvement well and helps them to further develop their existing abilities. However, clear aims for some everyday routine activities, such as snack time and some physical play sessions, are not fully considered. Therefore, some learning opportunities are not maximised within all aspects of the day. Staff make frequent observations on children's development and know how to support them in planned activities. A new system of tracking children's progress is in place, although this is still being established to effectively support the planning of activities, which are fully based on children's existing skills. Children are keen to play and many concentrate well in activities. They use staplers and hole punchers in their creative activities. They play with colourful, chunky magnets and experiment to see which end 'repels' or 'attracts'. Consequently, they start to develop an idea of simple technology within their play. Children enjoy a rhyming story about a robot. They know which is the tiny robot and which is the giant one. Some correctly join in with the rhyming word at the end of each sentence, such as 'walk' and 'talk'. This supports them in linking sounds with letters, which effectively helps in developing their early reading skills.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are very much welcomed and valued within the group. They see their names on their coat hooks as they arrive and also as they find their name card before snack time. This helps children to develop a sense of identity within the group. Positive behaviour management strategies are used and children are encouraged in learning about making 'good and not so good' choices. Staff provide a consistent approach and give clear explanations, using careful, positive language with children. As a result, children are supported very well in starting to resolve situations themselves and most start to develop a sense of self-discipline. Staff use lots of praise and encouragement and use suitable tactics to gain children's attention, although within some group situations, some become restless. Children's specific developmental needs are very well monitored through regular assessments and liaison with parents and other professionals involved. All children learn how to communicate through use of a simple sign language, for instance, in group songs and discussion. This promotes effective integration, helping children to accept the needs of others. Equality is firmly promoted through use of clear policies and recruitment procedures. Staff use appropriate language and give a positive approach to ensuring all children are included within activities. Suitable procedures are in place to support families with English as an additional language, such as using an interpreter and providing translations of policies and records. This helps all families to feel welcomed and included. Children play with a range of resources that reflect some differences within their world and parents are encouraged to keep staff informed of any particular festivals they may recognise. This means children start to learn about the variety of celebrations around their world, but other aspects of diversity, such as within their own community, are not so actively reflected. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They sing a 'Welcome

song' to their friends in circle time and visit a local church for the 'crib service' at Christmas. Children paint their faces red to help raise money for 'Children in need' day, and grow daffodils to raise money for Marie Curie nurses. This supports them in learning to help others.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parental involvement is encouraged through the 'book share' scheme in place, where children take a book home to look at with their families. Parents provide items for specific events, such as teddy bears for the 'bear hunt' activity. Information on the forthcoming Early Years Foundation Stage framework is shared with parents at open evenings. Weekly planning is displayed for parents information, but is not clearly showing the aims of all activities to fully support their involvement. Parents are offered some opportunities to discuss their child's developmental record with staff. However, overall these are limited and the assessment system does not clearly evidence how children achieve their developmental stages. This impacts on how parents can share in their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children's attendance is clearly marked and accurate times of their arrival and departure are recorded. Overall, required records and documentation are in place and used with regard to confidentiality. Most parental permissions are obtained, such as for taking photos or going on outings. Paperwork is stored securely in lockable filing cabinets in an office, which is also locked overnight. This helps in protecting children's personal data. Daily routines are organised appropriately to provide a variety of suitable play experiences. Children have time to explore and create their own games and ideas, and they sit quietly to do their mark making or painting. They have daily opportunities for physical activity and to join with their friends for group songs and stories. This helps to keep children satisfactorily occupied and supports their play and learning skills. However, the organisation of some parts of the session does not fully meet the needs of all children, for example, in some large group activities and at tidy up time, when some children's concentration levels are limited and behaviour issues arise. The organisation of some aspects of safety prevention is not effective in ensuring risks are fully minimised at all times. This impacts on areas of children's well being. Toys and resources are well organised in low level storage units and drawers. This encourages children of all ages in making their own choices in play. Required ratios are maintained and children's routines are followed. This helps them in settling easily.

Leadership and management is good. Very clear operational procedures are in place, which help to support the smooth running of the nursery. Policies are reviewed regularly and all staff are involved in this process. Overall, this helps to ensure consistency in approach. Staff recruitment is effectively managed through clearly laid out employment systems. All necessary checks and references are completed and a detailed medical declaration is used. Job descriptions have been formed for the different roles of staff. Consequently, procedures followed clearly promote the employment of staff who are suitable for their role. This helps to support children's welfare. An ongoing induction, appraisal and supervision system is implemented, which helps to support staff in further training and development. Regular staff meetings are held and issues arising are discussed and action plans set. This helps in monitoring most aspects of the provision offered.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of care, recommendations were set relating to the management of administration of any necessary medication, and recording children's attendance. There are

now clear systems in place for recording any administration of medication, which include obtaining prior written parental permission. This effectively supports children's continuity in care. Children's attendance is now recorded as they arrive and as they leave on daily register sheets. This gives an accurate record of their daily attendance and supports the management of any emergency situation.

At the last inspection of the funded nursery education provision, key issues were set relating to planning and children's physical and creative development. Staff form long term plans, which show how aspects of the six areas of learning are given specific focus throughout the year. This helps to provide suitable adult led and child initiated activities relating to each area of learning. Physical play activities are provided each day and a variety of toys and equipment are used, for instance, with the large wooden climbing frame. This gives the more able children some further challenges in developing their gross motor skills.

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 any complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain some complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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 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):

- further develop the risk assessment systems to ensure children's safety, with particular regard to water play activities, toilet flush cords, outings, premises checks and clear access to fire exits
- review the organisation of some parts of the session to ensure children are effectively monitored and supported, with particular regard to tidy up, and large group times

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):

- further develop the planning systems to give more focus to the use of everyday routines, to maximise children's learning opportunities
- further develop the assessment system to clearly reflect how children achieve their stages of development to fully support parents in contributing and sharing in their child's progress.

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