

# Grove Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	257936
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 January 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Anne Walker
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Grove House Nursery and Infant Community School, Littlefields, Dereham, Norfolk, NR19 1BJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	01362 694379
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Grove Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Grove Playgroup opened in 1982 . It operates from a spacious room in Grove House Nursery and Infant Community School in Dereham, Norfolk. A maximum of 14 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09:00 to 11:30, during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 16 children from two to under five years on roll. Of these, three receive funding for early education. The playgroup serves the local community and children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting employs two staff. Of these one holds an appropriate early years qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are looked after in a clean environment where daily routines promote their health. Tables are cleaned before and after children eat and there is a cleaning rota for toys. Effective procedures for changing children's nappies and managing children who become unwell, help minimise the spread of germs and infections. Children understand the importance of washing their hands after using the toilet and staff support them with this. There are less effective routines for children to clean their hands before eating their snack so that sometimes this is overlooked and could impact on their health. Any accidents can be managed appropriately as both staff hold current first aid certificates and there is a well stocked first aid kit readily to hand.

The playgroup provides children with a healthy snack of fruit each morning. Children happily eat a variety of pears, apples and bananas and talk about their favourites with the staff. They are provided with water or milk to drink and most children drink these, although some parents send in other drinks for their children. The playgroups health eating policy has not been shared with parents so that they can make more informed choices for their children. Dietary needs are recorded when children start and are taken account of when planning snacks.

The children enjoyed a walk to the local library as part of their morning. There is an enclosed outdoor area with space for them to run around freely which is used daily in good weather but less often in the winter months. A satisfactory selection of equipment promotes their physical skills and they also have use of the school playground when their grass is too muddy.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

The playroom is bright, spacious and well maintained. Space is organised into zones that allow active and quiet play areas. This means that children play safely when they want to stretch out on the floor to look at books or play with the dolls house. The staff work well as a team, deploying themselves effectively so that all areas of the room remain observed. Checks are carried out each morning to ensure that children are received into a safe and warm environment and they are vigilant at dealing with spills or hazards that may cause accidents. There are clear procedures for receiving children in the morning and for their collection at the end of the session. Doors are locked during the sessions so that any visitors are monitored and children cannot leave unsupervised, ensuring their safety. Procedures for taking children on outings are followed. Parents support staff so that minimum ratios are exceeded and children are safely escorted. Children begin to learn about road safety as the adults talk with them and show them how to cross roads safely as part of their outing.

The playgroup has a good selection of play materials that support all aspects of children's play and learning. They are of good quality and maintained in a safe condition so that children's health and safety are not put at risk. There is sufficient furniture to enable children to access table top activities or sit quietly on cushions to read a book.

Children's welfare is promoted as the staff caring for them understand their child protection responsibilities. Information is displayed on the notice board to inform parents so that they

are able to work cooperatively with the setting to ensure children's well-being. Relevant records are maintained and details of who to contact if advice is needed, are readily to hand.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well on arrival because of the suitable attention paid to making them feel welcome and acknowledged. They leave their parents and choose an activity either with an adult or independently. The youngest children show some confidence in their environment because the session routines and staffing are consistent so that they know what will happen next and are happy to take part in what is available. The room is bright with displays of children's work. However, the available space is not fully utilised to offer children a wide range of play materials and activities at each session. Some tables are not used and often similar, or the same activities are put in a set place each day. Toy storage is at child level and well labelled to help children see what is contained in a box but children do not access these and are not encouraged to do so. Their confidence as learners, well established in the initial settling procedures, is not fully built on.

The activities are generally appropriate for the two-year-old children attending. They enjoy playing imaginatively with the train set, building the track, painting and learning simple rhymes. Adults interact sufficiently with them, talking with them at snack time or as they build the train track, to support their language development. Some craft activity is available each day. The planning does not always have enough regard to the youngest children's needs to investigate using various textures and materials or acknowledge the importance to the creative process of using different tools such as glue spreaders, brushes or their hands. Often the activity is adult-led and focused on helping them produce a finished product.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Both staff working with children have an awareness of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and use this to plan activities that cover most aspects of the six areas of learning. The session is generally well organised and flows smoothly so that children remain content and happy. There is sufficient time for them to play independently or with their friends as well as short group times where they enjoy stories or singing. Children behave well and have positive relationships with their carers and each other. At snack time they are beginning to be able to take part in talking, as well as listening to others in the group as they discuss their favourite fruits.

The children show some curiosity about the world around them. They talk with the adults about the weather and road safety on a walk to the library. In the playgroup they observe a magnifying box on the side and want to know what this is and are helped to find a variety of items to observe under the glass. Overall, the presentation of the environment is not as interesting as possible to build on their curiosity. For example, some floor and table areas are not used, jigsaws put out at the same table and the equipment to use with the sand is not varied. The children do not independently investigate the good range of play materials readily available in boxes and drawers and are not encouraged to do such as building on the experience of the magnifying boxes by being enabled to return to these independently.

Children are interested in the painting, collage and sand activities and readily take part. The range of materials for them to use across a period of time is adequate but not sufficiently diverse to enable them to fully develop their skills and creativity. Sometimes adult-led activities

are too directive and hamper children's own ideas. The children enjoy books and have favourite stories. During the regular outings to the local library they keenly select books for the playgroup and on their return settle to look at them, treating them carefully. They take part in simple number rhymes, show interest in counting and have an awareness of simple shapes.

Activities are planned regularly and observations made to track children's progress towards the early learning goals. However, they do not make use of what they learn about each child to inform the planning, to build on what a child can do and what interests them, in order to help them progress.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

There is a suitable range of information collated when children start at the setting so that the adults looking after them are able to meet their individual needs. Children settle well because information is shared between parents and the adults looking after children so that they feel secure and able to enjoy what the group can offer. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities. A selection of play materials encourages children's awareness of the wider world and helps them learn about people's similarities and differences.

Children have attention from adults so that they remain involved in activities throughout the session. Young children understand the boundaries because they are consistently applied and adults generally provide suitable explanations so that they understand what is expected of them. Information shared verbally with parents means that staff are sensitive to current events in children's lives and take account of these when managing behaviour. Children look forward to seeing friends and have opportunities to play cooperatively together. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents and the staff develop trusting working relationships that benefit the children by valuing them as individuals. The information on the notice board is helpful but does not cover all aspects of the settings procedures, including helping parents understand how children learn through play, and the settings policies. Information is shared verbally at the outset. A prospectus has not been completed for parents to have a document to refer to about how the setting operates. This limits their ability to make informed choices for their child.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents feel able to share information about their children. They are able to contribute to the setting by becoming a committee member or helping at the sessions, which provides an opportunity for them to observe how their children spend their morning. The play plans are displayed but are not as helpful to parents as they could be because they do not receive any guidance about the curriculum that the children follow. This makes it harder for them to understand the value of activities, or guide them in extending the learning at home if they wish. Children's development records go with them when they leave the setting and general information is shared at intervals with parents about their progress.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The staff have worked at the setting a number of years and provide a consistent team looking after children. Although the manager completed pre-school training a number of years ago,

this is not a Level 3 qualification required for the post. Some short courses have been attended by both staff such as first aid and child protection, ensuring that they have current knowledge to manage these events.

Satisfactory procedures are in place to ensure that staff working with children are suitable to do so and the new committee members are undergoing the necessary checks appropriate to their involvement with the group. There are sufficient staff each day to look after children and records of attendance kept to demonstrate that they maintain their registration conditions. Required records, consents and procedures are in place, well organised and readily available at inspection. They are used to manage the day-to-day running of the group and ensure children's safety. Documents are stored appropriately to protect the privacy and confidentiality of children and their families. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The small staff team work well together to support one another in delivering the curriculum. The manager has attended some relevant short courses in relation to the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage in the last few years. Although the committee has changes of personnel yearly, the manager and committee strive to work cooperatively. They hold formal meetings at regular intervals so that issues are discussed. A member of the committee has childcare experience and has sufficient knowledge to monitor the nursery education provision. The committee and staff work together to identify and fund raise for any new resources children need.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to ensure the vetting process was completed for new committee members, improve the written information provided for parents and details on some of the policies, apply behaviour management consistently at group times and increase children's independence at snack time.

Recent changes to the committee have been notified to Ofsted and forms are currently in the process of being completed to enable relevant checks to be undertaken to determine their suitability. There is some written information about the setting displayed on a notice board for parents to view but a prospectus for parents to use as a reference, has not been completed. This means that parents may not have a clear idea how the setting is run which could impact on the quality of the partnership with parents. This has been raised again as recommendation for an area of improvement. The child protection statement has been improved so that it complies with the current government guidance and Ofsted contact details are included on the complaints policy but require further updating as they have changed since the previous inspection. This however was updated accordingly. Behaviour management is applied consistently at group times and children are well behaved during these sessions and enjoy taking part in singing and stories. Older children have the opportunity to pour their drinks at snack time.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting agreed to develop planning, including a review of resources, to encourage independent access to books, to provide activities for linking sounds with letters and to explore adding and subtracting in everyday activities. Also to implement a system to monitor the quality of teaching and assessment.

Relevant play planning is in place that has regard to the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. The setting is well resourced with play materials to support children's play and learning. Many materials are stored at child height and clearly labelled so that children can recognise where things are. However, children do not often go to these play materials as the routines

and adult support does not effectively encourage this, limiting their independent learning opportunities. The current children in the setting are not ready to link sounds to letters. Adequate preparatory work is done to support their progress towards this such as rhyming songs and stories. They are also not ready to begin exploring adding and subtracting in everyday activities but other counting and number work is part of their daily routine.

Staff are happy to seek and follow advice from the local authority advisors to help them monitor the quality of their teaching and assessment. Since the last inspection they have amended and adapted planning to help teaching and to meet children's learning needs. However, this remains an area for improvement.

### **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.

## **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):

- update the managers training so that it equates to a Level 3 qualification appropriate to the post
- promote children's health by encouraging them to wash their hands before eating and provide parents with information about ways that healthy eating is promoted in the setting
- develop the information about the setting so that policies, procedures and how play supports children's learning and development are more accessible to parents. [this applies to care and 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):

- improve the presentation of activities and encourage children's access to other resources to foster their curiosity as learners and to help them make increased independent choices in their play and learning [this applies to care and education]

- evaluate the planning to increase the focus on children's interests as a starting point in their learning
- extend the creative activities at each session and use these to enable children to more freely express their creativity [this applies to care and education].

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)