

Community Kids Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY236403
Inspection date	14 May 2008
Inspector	Susan June Stone
Setting Address	Higher Backway, Bruton, Somerset, BA10 0DP
Telephone number	01749 813933
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Registered person	Community Kids
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Community Kids Playgroup has been registered for approximately 30 years. It operates from a purpose-built building situated next to Bruton Primary School, in the town of Bruton. Children have use of a main playroom, kitchen and toilet facilities. There is an enclosed area available for outdoor play at the side of the premises. This community run group is registered to care for a maximum of 26 children aged from two to under eight years at any one time. There are currently 38 pre-school children and 37 after-school children on roll. The playgroup are in receipt of Government funding to provide nursery education and there are currently 27 funded children on register.

The group is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 09:00 - 12:00 and on Tuesday and Thursday from 09:00 to 15:00, term time only. After school care is also provided from 15:30 to 17:30. The group operate under a board of trustees and a committee. At present there are three staff members who are employed who have all completed appropriate training in childcare and early years education. The group is looking to recruit additional staff in the near future. Students who are studying for early years qualifications are supported by the setting.

The group actively seeks support and guidance from the local authority advisors.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's understanding of personal care is being suitably developed during the daily routine. They know that they must wash their hands before snack and after using the toilet and some children do this without being reminded. Staff provide a step so the children can reach the sink, but often the children use water that has been used by other children. The children use paper towels to dry their hands. Staff encourage children to use tissues to wipe their noses and to shield their mouths when they cough, which helps to prevent the spread of infection.

The children are offered a healthy balanced snack each day. The setting has introduced a café style system, where the children can decide for themselves when they would like their snack. They sit at the table and choose what they would like to eat from the healthy choices available, which include a variety of fresh fruits, like apple and grapes, and vegetables, like carrots and cucumber. Their independence is being further developed as they spread their own crackers with soft butter, and pour their own drinks. When they have finished their snack, they wash their plate and cup in the bowl of water provided. This helps children to start to develop their personal independence and to take some responsibility for their own health care needs.

Most staff have a current first aid certificate. Their knowledge of first aid is appropriate to ensure medical emergencies can be dealt with effectively. Records and documentation regarding children's health are in place, which means that children's individual health care needs can be met and respected. Suitable procedures are in place for the administration of medication or creams. Written consent is gained from parents and an accurate record kept of when the medication was administered or cream applied.

The daily routine allows the children to experience regular physical play outdoors. They freely access the outdoor area where they run, jump, pedal bikes and use hoops and skipping ropes. These activities help the children to develop large muscle skills and coordination. The children enjoy the freedom of space and benefit from the fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are provided with a range of experiences and activities within a generally safe and welcoming environment. They have sufficient space to move about and enjoy the activities safely. There is sufficient furniture and equipment available to meet the care needs of all children attending. Children enjoy using the toys available to them, which are clean, safe and suitable to use.

The staff are suitably deployed within the setting and appropriate adult to child ratios are maintained. Good security of the premises ensures no unauthorised access and the children remain safe from strangers. Staff make general visual safety checks on the areas used by the children and address any obvious potential hazards. This helps to ensure that the children can enjoy a variety of play opportunities in generally safe surroundings. However, a general focused risk assessment of the premises and outdoor area is not conducted and recorded to identify any potential risks and action to be taken as necessary. Emergency evacuation procedures have

been practised but not at a time when the after school children are present. This means the safety of these children is compromised if a real emergency arises.

Children are protected by the staff, who have a suitable understanding in their role of safeguarding children's welfare. Staff ensure that children's welfare is always a priority.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time in the playgroup. They arrive happily and are eager to participate in the activities set out. They feel settled and secure in the welcoming environment created by staff. Resources and space are used suitably well to provide an appropriate environment for the children to play and to support the children's play and learning. However, there are no effective systems to monitor children's participation in activities. At times, due to the free flow nature of the setting, some children are not suitably challenged or focused in their play and activities. Some children will remain at one activity with little input from staff, such as riding bikes for most of the session, or staying at the play dough and craft table for extended periods of time. This leads to the behaviour of some children deteriorating due to lack of stimulation or focused structured learning.

Children attending the after school club are able to relax and unwind after their school day. They are aware of what is available to them and are free to choose their own activities and games. Staff consult with them as to future activities they would like to do and try to accommodate children's wishes, such as sourcing resources for making jewellery that some of the girls attending have requested. Some use the computer to play card games, some create their own games, using the large cardboard boxes to pretend to be tortoises with shells on their back. The children socialise well together and chat together as they have their afternoon snack and drinks. Children feel relaxed and comfortable in their surroundings.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a suitable knowledge and understanding of how children learn. They plan and organise a range of activities and play opportunities that are fun for the children and cover the six areas of learning, but children's participation in these is not effectively monitored to identify if learning and development needs are being met, and to identify that children are being offered sufficient challenge. It is not clear what children are expected to learn from the experiences offered. Planned activities are not linked to specific stepping stones to encourage learning and development to ensure children make suitable Foundation Stage progress. Staff are beginning to work together to observe and make notes to report on the children's achievements to inform their progress folders, but children's folders still lack sufficient details of progress made. The manager is new to the post and is seeking support and guidance from the local authority advisors to help evaluate practice to ensure effective delivery of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

Children are developing their independence. They choose what they wish to do from the activities set out. The café style snack system allows the children to take responsibility for their own health care needs as they choose when to have their drinks and snacks. They pour their own drinks and spread their crackers. Children are sensitive to each others needs and showed concern when a child grazed their knee when playing outside.

Most children can recognise their name and some can recognise the names of others. They enjoy finding their name cards that are hidden around the setting. They write their names by copying from their name cards. However children are not encouraged to hold a pencil in the correct manner to help with their pencil control. Most children enjoy listening to stories and sit quietly at large group story time. Some children choose to look at books during their independent play and share books with their peers, looking at the pictures and telling each other what is happening. Children are confident to initiate conversations and ask 'Why are you here?' Another child explains that they are making a 'snow picture' with bubble wrap and glue.

Children recognise numbers in their digit form, such as when completing number puzzles and when doing a number activity at the computer. They can name basic shapes and use their understanding of shape and size when completing puzzles. Some children can count to ten and beyond when making towers with blocks. Children talk of the compare bears as being big, middle and little.

Through topic work and themes, children are learning about different festivals, cultures and beliefs. They are learning to value and respect others views and beliefs. They have also looked at nature and have planted seeds and plants to watch them grow. They have planted their own container herb garden. The children know this needs watering regularly to keep the plants alive. Children are developing their computer skills and many of the children use the mouse to navigate their way around the computer program.

Children enjoy many creative activities like role play, painting, craft and play dough. They use their imagination well in role play and games, re-creating familiar scenarios, such as taking the dog for a walk, with one of the children pretending to be the dog. They also pretend to be in the police force saying 'you're arrested for being naughty'. They create their own designs during painting and craft activities. They choose which colours they would like to use for the 'rolling marbles' painting activity and patiently wait for their turn. The children enjoy music and singing. Most children are able to match movements and actions to songs and rhymes, but are not so coordinated to keep a beat to the music when using the musical instruments.

Children use tools and equipment with increasing control and dexterity, such as the play dough cutters and shapes during play dough activities, and glue spreaders and scissors during craft activities. They experience daily opportunities for physical play as they freely access the outdoor area. Children confidently pedal and manoeuvre ride-on toys and bikes. They balance the hoops and roll them to each other. They jump from hoop to hoop, sometimes with feet together, sometimes hopping on one leg. Overall, they are making satisfactory progress in all areas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are building good relationships with staff and peers. They play well individually or together in small groups and some early friendships are being formed. Most children know the levels of expected behaviour and are generally well behaved and most of the time staff do remind children how to behave. However, at times during the sessions, some of the children are not suitably stimulated and lose focus and their behaviour deteriorates. This is especially apparent at large group times such as story time. Staff are not always proactive in re-focusing the children or dealing with the inappropriate behaviour. Therefore children are not developing a full understanding that some behaviour is not always acceptable.

The setting's Special Educational Needs Coordinator is newly appointed. She has attended some relevant training with regards to the role. Discussions indicate that suitable support would be provided for any children attending with learning difficulties or disabilities, and their needs would be addressed. Through planned activities the children are offered opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the wider world around them. They celebrate a variety of festivals, like Diwali and Chinese New Year, and have access to resources which help promote positive attitudes to diversity. Overall, the children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Good relationships are developing between parents and staff, and parents are happy with the care their children receive. Staff are available to talk with parents each day, which helps to contribute to the consistency in the children's care and well-being. Parents are now encouraged to help during the daily sessions and a rota is available for them to sign their name against. Information about the provision is shared through newsletters, notice boards, and the group prospectus. Parents are able to access their children's details and progress folders at any time, which supports parents in sharing their children's learning. The progress folders have not, however, been suitably developed and there is limited information in them to share with parents. This means that parents are not adequately informed of their children's progress through the stepping stones in the Foundation Stage or their progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is adequately supported by the appropriate organisation. The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The playgroup is managed by a committee of parent volunteers. Daily sessions are organised and managed by the playgroup manager and staff. All are new to the role but are working well together to develop effective working partnerships. The committee and staff are aware of their responsibilities to the group. They work well together to provide a welcoming environment for children and parents. The staff have appropriate experience and knowledge of childcare. They work well together to meet the needs of the children to ensure sessions run smoothly. They are mostly deployed effectively throughout the sessions to support learning and development of all children but at times some children are not suitably occupied.

The staff work together and discuss issues daily to help identify areas for improvement. They are working together, with the committee to develop systems to monitor and evaluate the provision and have taken advice from the advisors within the local authority, but there are still no effective systems in place as yet. There is no effective written operational plan to support the day to day running of the setting. Policies are in the process of being reviewed and updated though to ensure they meet the requirements of the National Standards.

Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting was set one action to address for care which was to: ensure that effective recruitment procedures are implemented, and that Ofsted is kept informed of any significant events and changes within the group. The setting has now informed Ofsted of all committee changes. The welfare of the children is now suitably protected, as all committee members have completed the relevant forms and appropriate checks are completed to ensure

they are fit persons to be responsible for the running of the setting. A suitable recruitment procedure has been introduced. This has been effectively implemented as the setting has recently appointed a new manager to the setting.

There were three recommendations from the nursery education part of the inspection which were: firstly, to continue to develop the links between planning and assessment systems to support staff in providing suitably challenging activities, which are based on children's existing skills and abilities; secondly, to make more use of everyday routine opportunities, such as snack time, to support and extend children's development in each area of their learning; and thirdly, to develop clear systems of reviewing and monitoring the provision, with particular regard to recording observations, to clearly evidence children's achievements and effectively show their progress across the stepping stones.

A new manager has been recently appointed to the setting who is seeking advice from the local authority with regards to different systems for planning and recording children's development. Staff are now working together and record observations of children's development and achievements as they play. They are looking at ways that they can adapt their practice to ensure the needs of all children are met but there are no completely effective systems in place as yet. As a result, the first and third recommendations will remain as recommendations from this inspection. With regards to making better use of everyday routine opportunities to support and extend children's development, the setting has reviewed the snack time routine. They have now introduced a café style system, where children are able to decide for themselves when they would like to have their snack. They are reminded by staff to wash their hands and come to the table where they spread toppings on their crackers and pour their own drinks. They also take their plate and cup and wash them when they have finished. This helps with their personal independence and is helping them to take some responsibility for their own health care needs. The staff are looking at other ways that they can develop children's learning during the normal daily routine.

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 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):

- continue to review the daily routine and delivery of activities to ensure that all children attending the setting remain suitably stimulated and focused
- make sure regular risk assessments of the whole premises are conducted and recorded to identify potential hazards and possible actions needed
- ensure all children attending the setting are aware of the emergency evacuation procedures
- ensure behaviour management strategies are consistent to promote children's welfare and allow all children to fully understand the boundaries of expected behaviour, to help ensure the safety and well-being of themselves and others
- develop effective systems to monitor and evaluate the quality of care and nursery education, to ensure the outcomes for children are suitably promoted.

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):

- continue to develop the links between planning and assessment systems to support staff in providing suitably challenging activities, which are based on children's existing skills and abilities
- continue to develop clear systems for recording observations, to clearly evidence children's achievements and effectively show their progress across the stepping stones.

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