



Silverdale Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254673
Inspection date	07 July 2005
Inspector	Alison Putnar
Setting Address	The Downs, Wilford, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG11 7EB
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Registered person	Elaine Hardy
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 good. 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?

Silverdale Playgroup opened in 1972 and operates from 2 rooms in a community centre in the Silverdale area of Nottingham. They have access to a kitchen, toilets and an enclosed outdoor play area. Car parking is available. The setting serves the surrounding areas of Silverdale, Wilford and beyond.

The playgroup accept children between the ages of 2 and 5 years. There are currently 45 children on roll. This includes 35 funded 3 and 4 year old children.

Children attend a variety of sessions each week. The setting supports children with special educational needs. None of the children have English as an additional language. The playgroup opens 5 mornings a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 to 12:00.

Seven staff are available to work with the children, of these, five have a level three early years qualification. The setting have achieved a quality assurance accreditation 'aiming for quality'. They receive ongoing support from the Nottingham City Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing healthy practices as they wash their hands before snack and after using the toilet, some are able to carry out these routines with minimal adult support. Children's health and well-being is promoted. Staff follow good hygiene procedures and have a clear understanding of related policies, such as, administering medication, the care of sick children and treating minor accidents. Records relating to these issues are accurately maintained and shared with parents as required.

Children learn about the benefits of eating healthy foods through planned activities. They are not able to fully benefit from regular opportunities to talk about healthy foods at daily snack time. Some children make healthy drink choices and fresh fruit is available daily. Children's individual dietary needs are met as staff take account of this information supplied by parents.

Children are active during the daily opportunities to access physical play both indoors and outdoors. This includes regular use of bikes, wheeled toys, climbing frames and balls. They enjoy and benefit from the fresh air when using the outdoor play area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure and well organised spacious environment. They are comfortable as equipment is of appropriate design and style. Resources are well maintained, safe and suitable for the ages of children attending. Activities are attractively presented to capture children's interest. Good opportunities are created for children to be active or take part in quiet activities. Children make independent choices in play due to the appropriate organisation of toys and activities.

Children are safe and secure. Staff monitor this through ensuring the setting is safe before children arrive, vigilant supervision at activities and monitoring children as parents drop off and collect them. Children are beginning to learn about safety, for example, when using the climbing frame and taking part in the regular fire drills.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have a suitable knowledge of child protection procedures. Relevant legislation and policies are in place to guide staff practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are confident, happy and enjoy their time at playgroup. They benefit from the many incidental learning opportunities, as they freely explore the wide range of free play activities. For example, children compare sizes, using related mathematical language, when grouping different sized cows with the farm toys. Children are active and engaged as time is well-organised with emphasis on free-play.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a suitable knowledge of the foundation stage. Less experienced staff benefit from working alongside the more experienced. Together they provide a sufficiently stimulating environment for children. Children have opportunities throughout the year to access a curriculum that covers all six areas of learning. However, current systems mean that some areas are less frequently covered. This limits opportunities for children to regularly practise and consolidate their skills. Children's progress is observed and recorded. However, the system does not clearly show how they are making progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Children develop as staff use their knowledge of children's abilities to develop individual play plans for them. Staff continue to monitor and develop this practice to ensure activities provide appropriate challenge for more able children.

Overall, children make sound progress in learning. Children with special educational needs are supported to access all areas of the curriculum. Children's behaviour is good during free-play activities enabling learning to take place. This is not always consistent during group activities. The organisation of these adversely affects some children's abilities to listen and participate fully. Some children willingly share and take turns; others are developing these skills as they are appropriately encouraged by staff. Children work independently, alongside an adult, or as a group as staff adopt various teaching methods; some with more skill than others. Older children have good concentration skills and are able to persist at a task. For example, a child completes a complex puzzle with words of encouragement from a more experienced staff member. Children demonstrate good personal independence skills when selecting activities and some manage their own toileting needs. Independence is less well promoted at snack time.

Many children have good speaking and language skills. They share experiences from their own lives during group activities. As a result some children are developing their confidence to speak in a large group, also promoting their self-esteem. At register time older children enthusiastically share their recent experiences of a visit to school. Most children listen well at story time as staff use a variety of methods to sustain their interest. Children enjoy sharing books with adults in the setting; they less often independently access the book area. Older children attempt to make marks and write

their names on art work. They rarely attempt to write for a purpose at other activities, for example, recording their own names on the computer rota. Some older children know the sound of the first letter of their name, but have less frequent opportunities to learn about other letter sounds. Children develop their confidence of using the computer as adults are on hand to offer support. Older children complete simple programmes using the mouse. The use of the appropriate range of programmes also enhances children's mathematical skills and provides some opportunities for learning letters of the alphabet.

Children display good physical skills as they confidently climb, slide and balance when using the climbing frame and manoeuvre bikes regularly. They develop their fine motor skills using a range of tools and resources including scissors, pencils, rolling pins and threading activities. Children enjoy their play and are active. Children enjoy role play resources and act out familiar scenes and experiences when playing in the home corner. They explore their imagination further when accessing a wider range of resources or through staff's support and encouragement. For example, when the role play area is transformed into a café or shop. This popular area is not always used to gain maximum learning opportunities, for example, to promote children's use of text and emergent writing skills. Children explore a good range of malleable materials including dough, water and sand. They take part in craft activities and create pictures using their own ideas or to support topics. Children know a good selection of songs and join in during singing time. At this time they also show an awareness of counting when singing number songs. Visual aids and number labels are not often used to fully support younger children in this area. Children confidently use mathematical language to describe size and enthusiastically explore volume during water play. Routines are less well used to consolidate children's mathematical knowledge, such as counting and simple addition. Some mathematical activities fail to sustain children's interest and lack appropriate challenge for more able children.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed into the setting. They are happy and confident in staff's care. Children gain a sense of belonging and learn about their own beliefs, and the beliefs of others through planned activities. For example, they celebrate birthdays and festivals, such as Chinese New Year, Diwali, Christmas and Easter. Parents are encouraged to share their skills and knowledge, promoting good working relationships between staff and parents. New children settle well as the sensitive and flexible settling in routines cater for all needs. Children benefit from a secure environment that reflects the background of those who attend. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children have firm relationships with staff and older children are forming close friendships with their peers. This is promoted well as staff encourage group play and invite less confident children to join them whilst working with others.

Throughout free play sessions children behave well. Many understand the expectations for behaviour within the group. The organisation of group activities does not effectively support children with needs in this area. Children benefit from close

relationships developed between staff and parents. Their care needs are met as staff take note of the well documented 'children's information forms'. A detailed prospectus keeps parents clearly informed about playgroup's policies and practices. Children with special needs are well supported as key staff, parents and relevant professionals work closely to ensure their needs are met. Children are developing an awareness of others needs. They enthusiastically learn and use simple signs to support spoken language. Staff use visual aids and gestures to support children with hearing and language needs. Partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Children benefit as staff and parents frequently discuss children's progress. Parents are well informed about the educational curriculum. Some ideas are provided for them to continue to help children learn at home, for example, sharing pre-school reading books, or taking 'Travelling Ted' on holiday.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's safety and wellbeing is maintained as appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures ensure they are well-cared for and protected by staff. Systems are less secure for keeping Ofsted informed of the details of temporary support staff. The majority of staff hold relevant qualifications. Policies and procedures are in place to guide staff practice. Suitable systems are in place to keep them updated of any changes in policy. Children's personal details are well documented and staff take account of these and parent's wishes ensuring children's needs are adequately met. All records for the safe and efficient management of the setting are in place and stored confidentially.

Children benefit as time is organised effectively to give a balance of free play and adult led group activities. However, at times group activities fail to sustain all children's interest and adversely impacts upon their ability to concentrate, make progress and behave appropriately. Children receive appropriate support and supervision as there is a high proportion of adults to children present. The leadership and management is satisfactory. Senior staff access some training to develop their knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum, there are fewer opportunities presently to support the quality of teaching for less experienced staff. The staff team meet to discuss and identify strengths and areas for improvement in the education provision. In order to make improvements the team seek and take on board advice from relevant professionals showing a clear commitment for further improving the quality of teaching for children. Children are appropriately supported as staff work well as a team, sharing skills and ensuring they are deployed effectively. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection actions and recommendations were raised relating to procedures around keeping children safe. These have all been addressed suitably and children's safety in the setting is improved. Staff have updated their knowledge and improved policies in relation to child protection and outings. Practice is improved in relation to keeping records of staff attendance and staff clearances.

Since the last nursery education inspection progress has been made to address the two key issues raised. Staff have reviewed the organisation and grouping of children at story time. As a result children benefit from this time and are grouped effectively to ensure the story is of appropriate length and content for their age and ability. Staff also use positive methods to capture and sustain children's interest. Grouping of children at other times remains an aspect for improvement following this inspection.

Staff have begun to introduce differentiation into planning, to ensure planned learning intentions are appropriate for the varying ages of children in the group. This has yet to fully benefit all children as some staff are at an early stage of developing a firm knowledge of the stepping stones in children's learning. As such this remains an aspect of a recommendation made from this inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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):

- improve further the procedures for ensuring that Ofsted are always kept informed of relevant details, in relation to staff changes
- continue to improve the organisation of large and small group times to ensure that all children are sufficiently engaged and supported (also applies to nursery 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):

- create opportunities for some staff to build a greater knowledge of the stepping stones in children's learning and a wider knowledge of practical play activities that promote these and enable children to reach their full potential

- review systems of planning the daily 'focused' activity and the 'key worker' group activities to ensure each of the six areas of learning are equally and more frequently covered.

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