



Collaton St Mary Community Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	139417
Inspection date	09 November 2006
Inspector	Juliet Eileen Hartridge
Setting Address	The Parish Rooms, Blagdon Road, Paignton, Devon, TQ3 3YA
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Registered person	Collaton St. Mary Community Playgroup
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Collaton St Mary Community Playgroup opened in 1989. It is located in the parish rooms, a two-storey building adjacent to the local school and church in the village of Collaton St Mary, on the outskirts of Paignton. The group has use of the ground floor rooms and occasional use of the hall on the first floor of the building. There is also an enclosed garden area.

The playgroup is registered for 30 children aged two to five years, although children are not admitted until the term before their third birthday. There are currently 48 children on roll aged three to five years, including 33 funded three and four-year-olds. The playgroup is open daily during term time from 09:00 to 15:15. A lunch club session is also available for those children who attend on a sessional basis.

The group supports children who have special educational needs; there are currently no children for whom English is their additional language. The group is run by a management committee who employ seven members of staff, five of whom have appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a warm and clean environment, where appropriate routines support their good health. Children are learning about the importance of personal hygiene when they wash their hands before eating and use individual towels and liquid soap which minimises the risk of cross infection. Detailed information and record keeping ensures that children's individual health needs are well supported. These include appropriate consents from parents for emergency medical treatment, as well as clear accident and medication administration records.

Children enjoy a healthy and varied diet, which includes a variety of well presented fruit, raw vegetables and savoury crackers at snack time. They have good opportunities to taste new foods when they try chapattis and naan bread. Children learn about healthy eating from posters and displays or when they prepare a fruit salad at harvest festival time. Drinking water is readily available from dispensers in both rooms, and children are reminded to drink water regularly. There are healthy choices of milk or water to drink at snack time, and children talk about milk being good for them. Staff vigilantly comply with children's individual health and dietary requirements. Detailed documentation is referred to by staff preparing snacks and sensible steps are taken to ensure there is no cross contamination of foods for children with food intolerances. Helpful information is provided for parents about suitable packed lunches, and this helps to ensure that children are well nourished throughout the day.

Children have generally good opportunities to benefit from exercise. They play duck, duck and goose games and enthusiastically enjoy dancing to music indoors. They have a variety of equipment, such as balls, hoops and bean bags, to play with to develop their skills. They enjoy walks in the nearby church grounds and energetically walk up and down the hill whilst observing their surroundings. They play in the playgroup garden during the summer months although insufficient use is made of this area for play and learning activities during the winter.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a bright, welcoming and stimulating environment. Children are safe and secure as staff vigilantly ensure that they are appropriately supervised at all times. Clear procedures are in place to monitor and secure the door after the start and end of the day, and documentation is effectively used to ensure that children are collected by appropriate adults. The clear fire procedures in place ensure that children are well protected from the danger of fire. Children learn about walking safely outside, and take great care when they are near cars. They hold hands when they walk and discussion takes place regarding hazardous berries or prickles in the hedgerow. Risk assessments are generally effectively used to identify any

concerns within the premises. However, children's safety is at risk as a radiator guard fixing has come away from the wall and has not yet been repaired.

Children play with well maintained toys and resources, which they can access easily from clearly labelled boxes and storage units. Staff regularly ensure the resources are clean and in good order and have a major cleaning day at the end of each term.

Children's safety and welfare is well promoted as the child protection co-ordinator and the staff have a clear understanding of their responsibility to protect children in their care. Child protection information is readily available for staff and parents to read, and staff regularly undertake child protection training.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled and eagerly arrive at playgroup, confidently hanging up their coats and choosing their names when they register themselves. Some new and less confident children are very caringly supported by staff who sensitively help them gradually separate from their parents or carers. Children sit attentively at circle time and enjoy looking at photos of their friends' birthday celebrations. They eagerly listen to the Tiger's Birthday Party story and confidently share with the group their recent experiences at a friend's birthday party or firework celebrations. Books are carefully selected and invitingly set out to link with the current celebrations theme. Children regularly access the comfortable book area to look at the books or just chat cosily with friends. Staff are warm and friendly and help to create a welcoming atmosphere in the playgroup.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound understanding of the principles of the Foundation Stage of education, and the long term plans clearly identify the six areas of learning. Children have suitable opportunities to learn through play by participating in a suitable range of meaningful and interesting activities which link with the current theme. They are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. However, opportunities are not always taken throughout the day to question children and develop their thinking and problem solving skills, for example, when setting up the train track or during free play and adult-led play situations. Although staff are aware of the individual interests and stages of development of children, more able children are not always given sufficient challenges.

Children are learning to recognise their names when they register themselves at the start of the session. They confidently link sounds and letters when they carefully sound out and write letters on the party invitations to their friends. Children use their imagination and creativity when they set up a party in the role play area, or dance to music, and their co-ordination and fine motor skills are developed when they print with potato cuts or use paint brushes, and tools, such as scissors. They skilfully manipulate the mouse when they use the computers. They have good opportunities to learn about the world around them when they observe and identify the buzzards flying over the copse or look at the badgers' run and the mole hills. Children are beginning to recognise numerals, for example, when they play with puzzles or write their party

invitations. However, there are insufficient opportunities available during the day to explore number or quantity in everyday situations and staff do not count or compare regularly which means that children's mathematical language and understanding is not consistently being developed or extended.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children quickly settle to enjoy playing together before circle time. Children are greeted warmly by staff, who use Makaton signing at circle time to welcome and include all children. The special needs co-ordinator is clear about her role to identify children who have learning difficulties or disabilities and ensures that parents are consulted fully about the needs of their children. Good links are forged with professionals, such as speech therapists, and the resulting effective team work ensures that all children are well supported and included.

Children are well behaved. They are kind and thoughtfully aware of the needs of others, for example, an older child befriending a new child when walking outside. They are encouraged to share and negotiate when they play with the train track and listen attentively at story time. The positive and simple rules and expectations used in the setting are displayed where parents and staff can read them. This helps to support good continuity and consistency for children. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they are praised when they do well, for example, mastering a new sound or putting on a painting overall unaided.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are learning about their local community as well as the wider world. They enjoy walks in the church grounds or looking at the stained glass windows and listening to organ practise in the church. They learn about Divali and other celebrations, and enjoy tasting food and wearing clothes from other cultures. Older children are helped with the transition to primary school when they join the Acorn group of rising fives who visit the school.

The partnership with parents and carers is good and staff are aware of the importance of working closely with parents for the benefit of the children. New parents and carers are very well informed about the playgroup and its procedures through the informative welcome pack, prospectus and helpful leaflets. They complete the 'All About Me' profile, which ensures that staff are well informed about the stage of development of every new child joining the group. Regular newsletters ensure that parents and carers are kept well informed about any changes. Parents and carers are given helpful information about the Foundation Stage and parent consultation meetings are held each term which give them the opportunity to have an update on their child's progress and share the information gathered in the children's passports and 'I Can Do' folders. Informal chats with parents and carers at the start and end of the day ensure that the needs of children are met and staff are updated regarding any changes.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The good organisation of the playgroup ensures that children are safe and well cared for. Children are well protected as rigorous vetting procedures are followed, and new staff undertake an induction process to ensure they are familiar with the procedures used in the setting.

There is a good commitment to training, for example, staff training needs are identified during their appraisals and their training records are regularly assessed and updated. Key staff changed towards the end of the previous school year and they have a commitment to evaluating and updating their practice, through regular meetings with the local authority advisory team, and during staff meetings. This has a positive impact on the care and welfare of the children. The policies and procedures as well as the planning and observation systems are currently under review. Staff have a good understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and are using the information to plan for the needs of younger children during the term before they are three.

Documentation is effectively used to support the well-being of children in the playgroup. This includes a comprehensive complaints procedure, clear registration systems for children, staff and visitors, and detailed registration forms including consents for photography. These ensure that children are cared for safely and according to the wishes of their parents or carers. All documentation is securely and confidentially stored in a locked filing cabinet, and registration and insurance documents are clearly displayed on the informative notice board.

The leadership and management of the Foundation Stage are satisfactory. Staff meet regularly to produce long and short term plans which clearly indicate the six areas of learning and the proposed outcomes for children's learning. There are effective systems in place for evaluation and recording children's achievements and progress on a daily basis, and this information is recorded in the children's passports and folders. However, the information gained from these assessments is not used to inform the planning for the session. This means that the more able children do not always receive sufficient challenges to help them move onto the next stage of their learning.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group was asked to improve the frequency of risk assessments to include any hazards arising during the session. Whilst detailed risk assessments are undertaken, the identified hazards are not always dealt with swiftly.

In order to improve nursery education the group was asked to improve planning to ensure experiences and activities can be adapted for individuals or groups of children. They were also asked to improve challenges for more able children in everyday routines to help them extend their skills, for example, using mathematical awareness to solve simple problems.

Some progress has been made as the planning and observation systems have been developed and improved, however, there are still some weaknesses in these areas.

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 that any hazards identified in the risk assessments are dealt with promptly

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 to ensure that it is clearly informed by the observations and assessments of the children
- plan and provide more opportunities for children to count and solve everyday mathematical problems as part of the daily routine.

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