

# Broadlands Bright Sparks Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	223502
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 July 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Josephine Mary Hammick
<b>Setting Address</b>	Broadlands Primary School (The Annexe), Prospect Walk, Tupsley, Hereford, Herefordshire, HR1 1NZ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Broadlands Playgroup Committee
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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](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 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?

Broadlands Bright Sparks Playgroup opened in 1978 and operates from an annexe within Broadlands Primary School. It is situated in Hereford city.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 08:45 to 16:00 during term time. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 39 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas and most children go on to attend the school. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs nine staff, seven of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications to National Vocational Qualification Level 3 and above. The group is supported by a mentor teacher from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy and are protected from infection because staff have procedures in place to protect them. For example, vinyl table coverings are wiped with anti-bacterial solution prior to being used for snack and meal times and cleaning cloths are laundered after use. Children are learning why routines are important through everyday conversations with staff; for example, one child, without prompting, informed the group how germs spread into your tummy if you do not wash your hands thoroughly before eating.

Children are well cared for in the event of an accident. Sufficient staff hold first aid qualifications to enable them to deal with accidents effectively. Appropriate documentation is kept and shared with parents to safeguard children, including reporting of accidents and administration of medicines. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through regular routines for washing their hands before snacks and lunch times, after using the toilet and playing outside.

Children learn about leading a healthy lifestyle through everyday practical experiences. At snack time children enjoy fresh fruit and vegetables together with toast, low sugar juice and milk. Snack menus are varied so that children have many opportunities to experience different tastes and textures. Although parents provide packed lunches for their children, they are learning to make healthy choices about the foods they eat through discussions with staff and through planned activities.

All children benefit from the well planned emphasis on physical development. They enjoy a range of indoor and outdoor activities which promote their physical development. For example, they frequently play outside using a range of equipment such as bikes, balancing logs and climbing frames. They share the outside play space with the school and also go for walks in the nearby woods to look at the trees, plants and insects. Music and movement sessions ensure that children benefit from opportunities to stretch and let off steam when they can not go outside. The wide provision of resources ensures that activities provide sufficient physical challenges to children of all ages. Children also have opportunities to use cutters, scissors, paint brushes and other small tools to develop their manipulative skills.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a well maintained and child-focused environment. Staff prepare the room with a range of appropriate resources before children arrive each day to create a stimulating environment for them. Children are able to access a range of developmentally-appropriate toys and equipment which ensure they play safely and are happily occupied.

Children's safety is enhanced by sound safety procedures which are used to restrict access to the setting. For example, access is restricted into the nursery by the door being chained and visitors being supervised at all times. There are also close circuit television cameras at the front of the school campus. All visitors are asked to sign the visitors book upon arrival and before departure. Children enjoy well planned outings to places such as the local wildlife discovery centre to see the animals. Full risk assessments are carried out before each visit and a high adult-to-child ratio is adhered to at all times. This helps children to remain safe. Children's safety in case of fire is generally promoted. However, opportunities to practise emergency

evacuation drills are not carried out regularly enough to ensure that children learn how they could leave the premises safely to protect themselves.

The group have a written policy on child protection and a copy of the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance. Staff are up to date with training and are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse, and their duty to safeguard children. This protects children from harm or neglect.

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

The provision is good.

All children are happy to attend, they enjoy their time in the stimulating and well resourced environment. Children throughout the setting are happy, confident and have built secure relationships with each other and their key worker. Staff provide a good balance of child-initiated and group projects to ensure that children have access to a range of stimulating activities. For example, stories and songs during circle time ensure that play is linked in with the theme of the seaside; the painting and gluing activities stimulate interest and extend learning in a fun and informal way. The children are keen and motivated by what is available to them and demonstrate a sound understanding of the overall theme.

Children's play and learning is very well supported by staff who have a good understanding of how children learn, making links with the Foundation Stage and 'Birth to three matters' frameworks. Staff consistently interact with children to extend their learning and play. Children's confidence and self-esteem is developed through the attention and praise they receive for their achievements. Staff value children's creations, displaying them attractively on wall displays or by including them in their own diaries.

### **Nursery education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy being in the setting. They are enthusiastic about the range of activities provided. They concentrate and persevere well, whether playing alone or when benefiting from interaction with their peers or adults. However, there are few opportunities to ensure sufficient challenges are set for individual children, which could inhibit their progress. Children are confident to express opinions or suggest ideas. Staff ensure children have plenty of opportunities for conversation and discussions, while the less articulate children have good support to help them join in. Good use is made of questions to foster children's thinking and inspire curiosity.

Children enjoy stories and rhymes. They listen attentively and contribute well to discussions about features of stories; for example, when discussing how a character in a story would feel when she swallowed all the animals, the children talk about feelings of being full up or not being able to stand up. Excellent use is made of props and visual aids. Larger format books and story sacks help children to concentrate and enjoy different aspects of stories. Children sing tunefully and with enthusiasm; rhymes are used imaginatively to reinforce aspects of the topic. However, there are missed opportunities for children to link sounds to letters, which potentially compromises their progress.

Counting and number recognition activities are practical and fun for children. Many can count confidently beyond 10. During routines, play activities and discussions, children get plenty of opportunities to consolidate their understanding of one-to-one correspondence. Children enjoy working out simple number problems, such as how many more cups are needed at each table

at snack time, and adding the number of children to adults on any one day. Stories and rhymes are also used well to support children's awareness of simple number operations. Staff encourage children to check their answers so that, for example, they often spontaneously count using their fingers.

Children are inquisitive, keen and interested in how things work. They explore different materials, such as wet and dry sand and play dough. They find out how different construction toys and other items fit together. They enjoy using technology, for example, by using the computer and the digital camera. Children confidently handle tools such as scissors. Children design and make their own buildings with Lego and Mobilo. They test their models out to see which fit and which do not. Children use mathematical language to describe their building's appearance and the position of key features.

Children move confidently. During an enjoyable outside play session they competently follow different actions, stretching up, doing star jumps, hops and running in different directions. They talk about how they feel out of breath after exercise, and the consequent need for a rest.

A wide and varied range of collage and creative materials encourage children's imaginative painting and craft work. They often draw and paint expressively, trying out different techniques and using colour well. Role play areas are available throughout the session to enable children to fully develop their own ideas. The scenarios that are provided are realistically resourced and promote children's meaningful play. For example, the children enjoy going to the 'hairdressers'. They have fun using the full sized hooded hairdryer and massaging each other's heads whilst they wash their hair. They also enjoy the role play area being a 'vet's surgery'. The children have plenty of soft toys, carry-boxes and bandages to extend their play. They delight in a visit from the local veterinary surgeon who brings real animals along for them to touch and 'examine'. Their knowledge and understanding of animal care is enhanced greatly by the experience.

Planning and assessment effectively support children's learning. Topics are fun, interesting and relevant to children. The children are involved in initial discussions about the subject and are active in the formulation of a mind map about what the project means to them before staff spend time researching topics to ensure their ideas are exciting. During the current topic on the seaside, children enthusiastically recall their own family experiences during discussions and through role play, art and craft work and modelling activities. Plans have clear learning outcomes which are followed through organised, focused activities which stimulate children. Assessment procedures ensure a clear audit trail of children's progress whilst they attend the pre-school. Parental contributions and early observations help staff to compile an initial profile on each child, but from then on assessments are based on formal observations of children during play and activities. Staff have systems to check children's progress in relation to the stepping stones and early learning goals; they adapt activities to suit children's differing levels of skill or individual needs.

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

The provision is good.

Children's individual personalities and needs are well known and respected within the setting. The group seek a wide range of information from parents such as children's special interests, festivals that they celebrate at home and things that are special to the family. This information is used to ensure that children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet their individual needs and also ensures that all children are valued and included in the life of the setting. Children's play is supported by a wide range of resources such as books, dressing-up

outfits and dolls which are aimed at promoting positive images of people from a wide range of cultures. For example, familiar objects are labelled in several languages; there are multilingual welcoming posters and pictures promoting positive images of diversity. Children are actively involved in activities and projects to promote positive images of race, culture and ability. Attractive wall displays and photographs show how the children are involved and enjoy learning about the wider world. For example, they look at maps of the world, clothing and customs; they have food-tasting sessions, music and movement sessions and stories to develop their understanding.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are recognised and well supported by experienced and caring staff. Daily records are kept of children's progress and shared with parents and outside agencies to ensure that the children's changing needs are recognised and can continue to be met. Children behave well, care for each other and freely share and take turns. For example, when playing at the water tray, children share different sized containers and take turns using the whisks and sieves. They are developing a good understanding of right and wrong and are generally able to play happily within clearly set boundaries. Children benefit from the staff having a good insight into behaviour management. Strategies used are sensitive to each child and based on praise and encouragement. Sound settling-in procedures, which are based around their individual needs, support them in the transition between home and the setting. For example, parents and carers are actively encouraged to stay with their children until they are settled. This helps children to feel secure and confident in the group.

The partnership with parents and carers is very good. The well thought out information booklet includes information on the Foundation Stage framework and the six areas of learning. Photographs and labels on displays help parents and carers to learn about what educational aspects of learning are possible in any activity. Newsletters, the website and notices on the information board keep parents and carers informed about activities or social events. A full and informative profile is kept for each child which they send home at the end of the week. Parents contribute whenever they feel they want to. A fully written update of children's progress is sent home at the end of each term. Parents are always welcome to view or discuss their child's diary or progress record informally or formally through appointments. This enables parents to be involved and enhance their own child's learning.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The premises are well organised and good use is made of the space available. All staff work well together and demonstrate enthusiasm for creating a learning environment that stimulates children of all ages. Children are well cared for by suitably qualified staff who have been appropriately vetted to ensure that they are suitable and have sufficient skills and knowledge to work with them.

Policies and procedures are clear, comprehensive and regularly updated. All staff are familiar with their content to ensure children are well cared for. There is a high emphasis on staff training and working with other professionals, such as those from the local authority. As a result, children benefit from practices which are in line with current ideas and legislation.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is very good. There is a strong commitment by staff to develop provision to promote learning in all areas; they are competent within their

roles and have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage. These skills and knowledge are supporting the children's learning and development well.

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

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

At the last inspection the provider agreed to: develop the staff's awareness of effective ways to manage children's behaviour; develop their range of activities and resources to promote positive images of diversity; keep detailed records of significant issues to share with parents; and to make sure that staff are deployed effectively when working in large groups.

Since then the provider has worked hard to gain effective ways of dealing with a range of children's behaviour which is sensitive to their age and personalities. Children benefit from firm, fair and secure boundaries. The children enjoy an excellent range of projects, activities and resources to promote positive images of diversity. They have good opportunities to gain a positive image of culture, race, gender and ability. Children's records are detailed and shared with parents and carers on a regular basis. Staff are actively involved in small groups with the children at all times. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities. Consequently the children benefit from the close, well organised supervision.

### **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 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):

- ensure emergency evacuation drills are regularly practised with the children

#### **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):

- ensure sufficient challenges are set for individual children when organising activities

- ensure there are more activities to link sounds to letters: naming and sounding letters of the alphabet

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)