



Fownhope Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY255746
Inspection date	04 July 2005
Inspector	Janette Elizabeth Owen
Setting Address	C/O St Mary's School, Fownhope, Hereford, HR1 4PG
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Registered person	Fownhope Playgroup
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 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?

Fownhope Playgroup opened in 2002. It operates from a classroom within St. Mary's School in Fownhope, Herefordshire. A maximum of 18 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday during term times from 09.00 to 12.00 with a lunch club from 12.00 until 13.00. Children have access to a secure enclosed play area and the school playing fields.

There are currently 26 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 18

receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup supports children with special needs, and who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs five staff. Three staff have early years qualifications and one is currently working towards an NVQ level 3. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health and safety is promoted through clear procedures being implemented for managing any accidental injuries to children and appropriate steps being taken to care for children who are ill. There are sufficient first aid qualified staff available. Children are developing their self care skills as they independently take themselves to the toilet and learn the importance of washing their hands.

Children are beginning to learn about being healthy through topic work and visitors to the setting. Very good use is made of visitors who share their experiences with the children such as the dentist and health visitor. An extended topic on "The environment and what keeps us healthy" was used to raise children's understanding of healthy living and fresh and dried fruit has been introduced at snack time, providing children with a more healthy snack option.

Children are able to be active and develop their physical skills using the well equipped outside area and the school playing field and playground. They can participate in activities and exercise all year round using the all weather facility which allows them to develop their mobility and co-ordination as they run, jump, climb and balance using different equipment. The large open space of the playing field and playground provides sufficient space for children to move about freely as they run and manoeuvre wheeled top around each other safely. Discussions and topic work reinforces children's understanding of how exercise helps them to be healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have access to premises which are safe, secure and provide a suitable play and learning environment. The under cover outside play space is effectively used to provide children with an all weather area where a range of learning opportunities take place. Children have more scope for free movement and are able to engage in messy play and extend their role play to incorporate the equipment outside.

Toys and activities are safely set out for children, with designated areas for activities such as role play and information technology, table games are organised on child height tables allowing children to reach the activities with ease. A wide range of resources are stored but children are unable to make independent selection from these items, limiting their developing independence. There are sufficient child sized

tables and chairs arranged flexibly to allow groups of children to play and eat together in comfort and safety-.

Staff take positive steps to promote the safety and well being of the children. Written procedures are followed and risk assessments carried out to minimise identified risks to the children. There are clear emergency procedures and children are involved in regular fire drills. Children are well protected by staff who follow clear guidelines in relation to the protection of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are provided with a well equipped learning environment where they are able to develop their ideas and creativity using both indoor and outside space. Children are well supported and learn new ideas and share their experiences with caring staff. All children are provided with opportunities to talk with staff and are developing their confidence as they develop a good relationship with the staff. Opportunities for children to make choices are not used effectively to enable children to further develop their independence. Good quality resources are provided which are age appropriate and used to enhance children's play and learning. Although staff have a good understanding of how to provide for the individual care needs of all children, they are less clear about providing suitable activities to meet the developmental needs of the younger children.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are settled and are beginning to develop good relationships with staff and make friends with other children. They persevere with tasks and activities for prolonged periods, often playing in small groups with little adult intervention, developing their own negotiation skills as they learn to share and play co-operatively. They are generally well behaved and show concern for each other during their play and respond to requests from adults in a positive manner. Staff make effective use of their knowledge of individual children to encourage them to talk about their experiences and share information. Children enjoy 'show and tell' sessions and show pride in their contribution to the group. A book scheme allows children to take books home to read, encouraging their enjoyment of books and stories. Activities to enable children to link sounds and letters and to provide opportunities for children to practise their writing skills are not well used, limiting children's development in these areas. Children are able to count with confidence using numbers in everyday situations such as counting the number of children present each day and number songs. There are good quality resources and planned activities available to support children's understanding of mathematics but they are not used effectively to introduce new concepts or to reinforce the understanding of numbers, shape, size and position during daily activities such as construction and role play. Children benefit from strong community links and activities which relate to the world around them. They have taken part in topics about recycling and the environment where they learn how to keep themselves and the world around them healthy. Very good use is made of visitors who share their experiences with the

children. Children have ample opportunities to observe and investigate living things such as plants, animals and insects. Good opportunities for children to develop their imagination and creativity are provided using the indoor and outside play space. They set up role play areas and use a good range of resources to support their imagination. Children are able to safely use a range of tools and have access to a variety of different media including natural materials such as stone and wood. A variety of different learning opportunities are provided using messy play allowing children to explore new ideas using water and sand.

Staff make good use of resources to support the activities, providing children with reference materials and appropriate equipment. Planning of the curriculum has been improved and activities are varied and interesting. However, staff do not always use effective teaching methods to extend children's learning such as through effective use of open ended questions and challenging activities for more able children. Activities are sometimes too prescriptive and adult led, limiting the learning opportunities of more able children. Resulting in a programme of activities which do not meet the developmental needs of all children.

Staff regularly observe children and make assessments of their progress. This information is used to influence the forward planning and provide activities which are required to fill any gaps identifies in the children's learning. A record book is produced which contains examples of children's work and photographs, the book is well presented and shows that children's achievements are valued. A final assessment of children's progress is completed before they move on to school providing parents and reception teachers with useful information on the child's attainments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff use their knowledge of individual children to ensure that appropriate care is provided. Children's individual needs are recorded and information exchanged with parents. There are effective arrangements in place for supporting children with special educational needs. Children are generally well behaved, offering to share activities they are helpful and polite. However, there are inconsistencies in the management of the children and some children can become boisterous at times when not effectively supervised or occupied. Staff are good role models and use praise and rewards for good behaviour and helpfulness. Staff talk in a respectful manner to children and to each other.

Children are beginning to learn about the world around them, they have access to a range of multicultural resources and take part in activities to celebrate different cultures and backgrounds. They are learning about the environment and their place in the local community in which they live. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

The partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from parents' involvement in the group, staff keep parents informed about the provision through written and verbal exchange of information such as news letters and curriculum planning sheets.

Information on the daily activities and curriculum are available to parents and they are encouraged to participate in their children's learning. They are encouraged to help on a parents rota and committee and to support their child by providing items of interest to support topic work and 'show and tell'. There are good arrangements in place for sharing information with parents on children's developmental progress particularly before they move on into school.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by qualified staff who have implemented the policies and procedures required to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. Staff have continued to update their training and are currently taking part in a quality assurance scheme in order to continue to improve the provision. Although staff work well together, sharing roles and responsibilities the organisation of the daily activities does not effectively support children's development at all times.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. There is an active management committee who take on specific roles within the provision such as managing the finances, they support the staff who are responsible for the daily operation of the provision and implementation of the foundation stage curriculum. Written policies and procedures are available for staff and parents which are informative and contribute to the safe operation of the provision. They are reviewed and updated to reflect changes made to the provision. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection several issues were raised relating to the care of children and the provision of nursery education. Progress has been made in addressing the issues but further improvements are still required to address outstanding issues.

Training has been completed to raise staffs awareness of behaviour management issues and special educational needs. A member of staff has been identified who is responsible for supporting children with special educational needs, she is supported by staff and an area special educational needs co-ordinator. Children's safety has been improved, they are no longer able to access the school pond as the area has been made secure. Children's have been provided with additional resources which reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability and topic work relating to the celebration of festivals and traditions have been used to raise children's awareness of the wider world.

Children's access to a well balanced curriculum has been improved by a better system of planning which allows staff to focus on the learning objectives and develop a better understanding of the foundation stage curriculum. However, staff still have not accesses training and this has an impact on how the learning objectives are used to meet the needs of all children, resulting in missed opportunities to make effective use of all activities provided. The interaction between staff and children has been

improved and children have more opportunities to respond to questions which enables them to learn from new ideas and information.

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):

- further develop children's opportunities to develop their independence and make independent choices
- review the organisation of the daily activities to ensure staff are effectively deployed to meet the needs of all 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):

- improve the language and literacy provision by enabling children to link sounds with letters and to begin to use 'writing' for a variety of purposes
- improve the programme for mathematical development by developing children's use of mathematical language and use of numbers in practical activities
- improve staff's understanding of children's development and effective teaching methods to ensure all children are provided with a programme of activities which meets their individual developmental needs.

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