



## Hockley Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** 402192

**Inspection date** 12 May 2006

**Inspector** Patricia Mary Champion

**Setting Address** United Reformed Church, Bramerton Road, Hockley, Essex,  
SS5 4PJ

**Telephone number** 0780 8017278

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Hockley Pre-School Group Committee

**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](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?

Hockley Pre-school is run by a committee. It opened in 1966 and operates from three rooms within the Bramerton Road Community Church premises in Hockley. All children share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions times are from 09:30 until 12:00.

There are currently 52 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, 42 children

receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The pre-school serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have special needs.

The pre-school employs 13 staff, of whom eight of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP), the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA) and the Rochford Cluster Group.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are well nourished. The pre-school has just adopted a healthy eating programme and children now bring a variety of fruit to eat at snack time each day. They are learning about food that is good for you through discussion with staff and their friends. Drinking water is always freely available so that children can pour a drink for themselves at any time. Staff are vigilant about dietary needs and there are systems in place to ensure that all staff are aware of any allergies or food intolerance.

Children stay healthy because they deal appropriately with their own personal hygiene needs. They know to wash their hands before eating and after playing in the garden. There are guidelines that protect children from illness and infection and staff discuss with parents the procedures in the event of a child being unwell. Staff have attended first aid courses and keep clear records of any accidents. However, staff may not always be able to act in children's best interests as they have not yet requested parental permission to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment.

Children take part in frequent exercise and physical play each day. During warm weather children have free access to the garden and can decide for themselves when they go outside. The divided areas in the garden provide them with good opportunities to ride bicycles, push and pull prams and trolleys or climb on apparatus. Children learn to develop control over their bodies and the way they move and know that they have to pedal harder to climb an uphill slope. Each day children take part in music and movement sessions. They are active and move expressively to songs and follow instructions using a range of movements. Children learn about the effects of activity on their bodies through the daily routine and planned activities. All children are given a wide range of opportunities to develop their hand-eye coordination by using a variety of tools and other equipment.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and welcoming environment. The creative presentation of play equipment, posters and displays of artwork all contribute to parents and children feeling welcomed. The risk of accidental injury to children has been rigorously

minimised. Each morning the supervisor checks the premises and equipment to ensure the safety of the children. Written risk assessment is completed by the management committee and this is regularly reviewed and updated. The staff are vigilant about the security of the children. All visitors are monitored and exits remain locked throughout each session to prevent a child leaving unnoticed.

Children learn about their own personal safety and talk about safe practice, for example, when they follow road safety signs and traffic signals as they ride bicycles. They know how to evacuate the premises in the event of an emergency because fire drills are practised regularly. Children use tools such as scissors carefully and in safety.

Children use safe furniture and equipment that is of appropriate size and in good condition so that they are able to take part in their play safely. All toys are checked regularly for damage and cleanliness.

Children are safeguarded by staff who have a secure understanding of their child protection responsibilities. There is a clear child protection policy and recent training ensures that the staff know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and most have settled well into the pre-school. Many valuable and interesting first hand learning experiences are provided for the children. They show great interest and confidently make choices about their play as they explore and investigate activities for prolonged periods of time. The staff are calm, relaxed and friendly in their dealings with the children and create a stimulating, happy and relaxed atmosphere. They make clear their expectations for good behaviour and offer lots of praise and encouragement. The key worker system enables staff to get to know individual children and their families well. Staff attend training related to the 'Birth to three matters' framework to ensure that they can provide appropriate and stimulating activities for the youngest children attending the pre-school.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. An inspiring range of well planned activities is provided on a day-to-day basis, ensuring that the children's progress is assured through a balanced programme. However, staff do not currently maximise children's learning by linking the everyday core activities and all the resources the children use to the curriculum. Staff are skilful in their use of questions to encourage the children to think. This encourages children to focus on the task in hand and motivates them to learn.

A good emphasis is put on helping children to develop independence skills. All children know the morning routine and find their names on coat pegs and the snack table. They are eager to help staff and distribute drinks to their friends at snack time.

The older children are encouraged to take off and put on their shoes independently. The 'rising fives' work in small groups where they enjoy being challenged and are enthusiastic to find answers or solutions to problems. They show great curiosity and like to look at objects closely. Children acquire new knowledge and skills as they tune an electric guitar or learn about halves and quarters as they count and divide pieces of play dough. Children listen attentively when working in small groups with staff. However, they find it harder to concentrate when taking part in large group activities.

Children are given many worthwhile activities to support their creative development and enhance their knowledge and understanding of the world. They explore sounds with a variety of musical instruments. Children investigate how cymbals vibrate and how tempo and noise levels change. They explore items that float or sink in water and examine objects on the nature table. The provision for role play is varied frequently to create different contexts for children to use their imagination or act out roles as they play. For example, they take care of sick animals by visiting the vets and adventurously sail a boat to distant shores. Children frequently share their experiences with staff and their friends, both spontaneously and in planned activities.

Children have good opportunities to use and enjoy books. A suitable range of fiction and non-fiction books is available to children and they show an awareness of how books work and handle them appropriately. Children recognise simple labels in the environment and write for a purpose within their role play. The older children can write their own name and are encouraged to practise this skill regularly, for example, by labelling their own artwork.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals as staff effectively observe, assess and record their achievements and use this information to inform the next steps in learning.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel a strong sense of belonging because of the positive relationships with staff. They build respect for themselves and others as all children are valued and included in the daily routines. Staff provide an ample range of resources to help children value diversity. Books, posters and play equipment portray positive multicultural images. Festivals and traditional events from around the world are celebrated. Staff recognise that children have additional needs and key workers work with parents closely to ensure that children develop, progress and have fun whilst in the setting. There are appointed special needs coordinators to work with any children that may have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Children play harmoniously and are aware of right and wrong as they take turns and share fairly when working in groups. They stop and listen when staff need to gain their attention. Staff apply rules consistently, acknowledge good behaviour and give clear explanations as to why some behaviour is not acceptable.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the range of strategies to involve their parents in the pre-school. Parents are encouraged to

support the running of the setting by becoming a committee member or joining the parent rota to help in the pre-school. A clear key worker system enables frequent exchanges of information. A wide range of notices and the curriculum planning is displayed for parents to view each day. All parents know that they can see their child's records at any time. Several parents were spoken to during the inspection. They all spoke positively about the staff team and the care and education they provide. Staff are now aware of the need to devise a complaints log that can be shared with parents.

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

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a dedicated and well qualified staff team with a good knowledge and understanding of child development. There is a proper application, selection and checking process to ensure that staff recruitment and vetting procedures are robust. High adult: child ratios are maintained and this is a particular benefit to the children. Children have good opportunities to work individually or in small groups. The different rooms and the outdoor area are organised to create an inviting environment, which are conducive to learning. Sessions mostly run smoothly. However, at times during the morning the number of children within a group exceeds 26. This has an impact on the quality of their learning and care.

Documentation is well organised with a high regard given to confidentiality. Written policies have been reviewed and updated to reflect changes to the National Standards. However, they do not all contain sufficient detail to ensure that children are fully protected.

The leadership and management is good. The play leader's clear vision is effectively implemented by the committed staff, who are supported by a strong management committee. Children benefit from an environment, in which skilled staff monitor and evaluate the quality of the activities. Regular staff meetings are held and early appraisals undertaken. All staff are active when promoting their professional development by attending regular training to keep up to date with current childcare issues and trends.

Overall the range of children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection for nursery education the pre-school was asked to consider matching children's individual aims to the wording of the stepping stones. Documentation has now been enhanced to ensure that both the planning and the children's developmental records detail the stepping stones of progress. There were no weaknesses identified and no recommendations were made at the last care inspection.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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 that the size of a group never exceeds 26 children
- request parental permission for seeking any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment
- review policies and procedures to meet the National Standards and associated guidance.

### **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):

- review the organisation of larger groups of children and make sure that everyday activities are planned to maximise children's learning.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: [www.ofsted.gov.uk](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)