



Hazeldene Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY312155
Inspection date	23 May 2006
Inspector	Jeannette Waring
Setting Address	Footscray Baptist Church, Sidcup Hill, Sidcup, Kent, DA14 6JS
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Registered person	Nicola Ann Edmonds
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?

Hazeldene Pre-School opened in 1969. It was re-registered under new management in August 2005. The pre-school operates from Footscray Baptist Church Hall in Sidcup Hill. The group has use of a large hall, which is divided into two parts by folding doors. There is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play. The group is open Monday to Friday from 9:15 to 12:15, during term-time.

The pre-school is well established and serves families from the local community.

There are currently 34 children on roll, 33 of whom receive funding for nursery education. The setting supports children with special needs. At present there are no children attending who speak English as an additional language.

There are six members of staff, including the manager who work with the children. A minimum of four members of staff are present at every session. Four members of staff hold an appropriate childcare qualification and two are working towards an NVQ 2 in childcare and education.

The setting receives support from an advisory teacher from the Bexley Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are protected from the risk of the spread of infection because staff follow good hygiene procedures and help children to develop an understanding of the importance of good hygiene routines. Children are encouraged to take themselves to the toilet and are able to manage hand washing independently. In addition there is a policy on the exclusion of children with infectious illnesses which protects children. Staff record any accidents they regard as significant in an accident and medication record and parents are asked to sign each entry. However, some minor accidents are not recorded, although parents are told about the incident. A number of staff have applied to up-date their first aid training, but currently only one part-time member of staff holds an up to date qualification.

Children are encouraged to select a healthy snack, such as fruit or bread and butter, at refreshment time. However, children are also routinely offered a biscuit as well as their healthy option. Drinking water is available throughout the session and children often help themselves when they are feeling thirsty. At snack time children have a choice of fresh milk or water to drink. Children learn about food and have opportunities to learn about healthy eating during project work but they do not routinely help staff to prepare snacks.

Children have daily access to physical play equipment. Staff ensure that they rotate the physical play apparatus so that children have opportunities to climb, balance, use wheeled toys and take part in group games on a regular basis. However, planning does not ensure that children's all round physical development is well supported. Physical play activities are generally recreational and activities such as large group bike sessions lack a clear purpose.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in a warm, bright and welcoming environment. The hall is generally well maintained and staff work hard to make a large space look

interesting and child-friendly. Children are safe because the hall is kept secure throughout the session and staff have put in place good procedures for the safe arrival and collection of children. Because staff have ensured that the areas of the building used by children are safe and have secured doors to all other areas, children are free to move around independently. There is a securely fenced outdoor play area which children use during fine summer weather and staff routinely check this area before use in order to ensure children's safety.

Toys and equipment are stored securely in large walk-in cupboards, children do not have access to these cupboards but are able to freely select activities from the range provided each day. Staff protect children by ensuring that all toys are routinely checked, any broken equipment is repaired or discarded and all toys are maintained in a clean condition.

The group's health and safety policy details routine checks on premises and equipment and staff are vigilant about maintaining a safe environment for children. Children are learning to keep their play space tidy in order to ensure their own safety and they enjoy helping to tidy toys away at refreshment time. Currently formal risk assessments are not carried out. The fire policy states that fire drills will be carried out every half term and these are noted in the diary, however, the fire drill record was incomplete.

A child protection policy is in place and staff are aware of their responsibility to refer any child protection concerns to the local authority social services department. A number of staff are currently attending training on the new local procedures and there are plans in place to amend the groups child protection procedure in accordance with the new procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at pre-school. They come in happily each day and settle well to play. The whole of the staff team are warm and caring and the children relate very well to them. The group's key-worker system ensures that children's individual needs are understood and staff demonstrate a good knowledge of the children in their group. Children enjoy taking part in the many worthwhile activities provided and staff support and encourage them in their play. The daily routine is complicated and involves several breaks in play to clear activities, organise group times and re-set new activities. Although children know the routine this process interrupts children's play and concentration and removes staff from their role supporting children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. The younger children are making generally good progress because staff are skilled at helping them to feel settled and secure and introduce them to a range of new activities, topics and ideas. Children enjoy the activities provided and are learning to concentrate and complete tasks with adult support. However, progress for some older and more able children is limited because activities lack sufficient challenge and staff do not always provide

opportunities for children to extend activities for themselves. For example children enjoyed building with recycled materials and some older children concentrated at this activity for sustained periods but became frustrated because they were not allowed free access to scissors.

Staff provide a suitable range of activities and make sure that during the course of a week children have access to activities which support development in all six areas of learning. Children's personal, social and emotional development is particularly well supported and children are also making good progress in their language development. This is because the kind and caring staff team spend time talking and listening to children, they value children's efforts and offer appropriate praise and encouragement. Consequently children are confident and their self-esteem is high. Because staff have high expectations of children's behaviour and set consistent boundaries children's behaviour is very good. Children readily approach adults and enjoy talking about their play and their family life. Children are also confident when speaking during group times and are learning to listen to each other. Activities which encourage older children to develop their drawing/writing skills or encourage them to explore books for pleasure are limited and the use of worksheet type activities, either during the session or for homework, does not effectively extend children's learning or engage their interest.

There are opportunities for children to build, design and construct using toys and recycled materials and they have daily access to art and craft materials in both adult-led and free activities. Children have time to use their imagination in the role play area although the complicated session structure does not always allow children time to develop their ideas. Project work helps children to learn about the world around them as they plant and grow seeds or learn about people in their local community. They have regular access to a computer and explore other elements of everyday technology in their play. For example as they play with keyboards and calculators in the role play area. Children enjoy their physical play time, however, there is no clear plan for children's all-round physical development and this time is largely recreational. Young children are introduced to counting and begin to learn about mathematical concepts such as size, shape and position through projects such as 'Opposites'. However, older children do not have sufficient opportunities to fully explore these ideas or begin to understand the practical applications of mathematics in daily life.

Although staff are aware of the Foundation Stage they do not refer to either the early learning goals or the stepping stones in their planning. Plans do not detail any learning intention either for individual activities or for the session. Because of this some activities lack a clear focus and staff are not always clear themselves about the aim of an activity or of how to extend it for older or more able children. In addition, although staff record children's progress this information is not systematically used to inform planning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning to respect each other and to value differences, for example when using sign language as they sing their good morning song. They learn about elements of a range of cultures during topic work, when singing traditional songs from a variety of countries, and when playing with the books and toys which reflect a range of cultures. Staff spend time talking to parents about the family background and details such as children's home language, religion and culture are recorded on their record sheets. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are well supported within the group. The group's special educational needs co-ordinator (senco) works with parents, the area senco and other professionals to draw up individual education plans for children who require additional support. She routinely attends all training offered by the local authority and disseminates this information to the staff team.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children behave very well. They are polite and friendly to staff and each other, they are keen to help staff tidy away toys and are proud when staff praise their good behaviour. Staff set clear boundaries which children know and understand and they have high but realistic expectations of children's behaviour. Because of this children are beginning to learn right from wrong and are learning to become self-disciplined.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are generally happy with the service provided by the pre-school and all parents spoken to highlighted the kind and caring approach of the staff. However the parents of some older children felt that their children were in need of some more challenging experiences. Parents have friendly relationships with the staff, they are aware of the key worker system and know that they can approach their child's key worker at any time to discuss their child. Staff have put in place a system for ensuring that they speak to the parents of each child each term. However, parents did not know about the Foundation Stage and there is no system in place to enable parents to support children's learning by extending meaningful pre-school activities at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children are protected from un-vetted people and all new staff obtain CRB clearance, however, the groups recruitment policy has not yet been up-dated in line with the new Ofsted requirements.

The operational plan ensures that there are always sufficient qualified staff working with the children although there is not always a qualified first aider on duty. Staff plan and provide many worthwhile activities for children and ensure, over the course of the week, that all areas of learning are covered. However the complicated daily routines sometimes disrupt children's play and concentration.

The new management team have worked hard to provide continuity of care for the children since the retirement of the previous playleader but have not yet reviewed and updated their policies and procedures. Although the policies provide a sound basic framework for the pre-school some of the policies are now out of date or do not truly reflect current practice.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The playleader and staff team work well together, they work co-operatively, with each staff member taking responsibility for an area of work. Although they provide children with a happy and supportive environment in which to play, they have not yet undertaken a full review of systems or practice. Regular staff meetings and visits from the advisory teacher provide opportunities for staff to reflect on practice but there is no rigorous system in place to monitor or evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery education programme. Planning is not systematic, it does not identify learning intentions or relate easily to the early learning goals or stepping stones and children's progress records are not used effectively to inform planning. As a consequence some older or more able children are not provided with sufficiently challenging activities.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration. 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 a member of staff who is trained in first aid is present at each session and make sure that all accidents are recorded in the accident book
- make sure that all fire drills are fully recorded in the log book
- review the child protection procedure in order to make sure that it complies with the new local procedures and the requirements of the National Standards

- ensure that parents are informed about the Foundation Stage, the early learning goals and the stepping stones and are aware of how they can effectively extend children's learning at home
- review and update the groups policies and procedures so that they are an accurate reflection of practice and can be used to inform staff and parents of procedures

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 planning and ensure that plans identify learning intentions and relate to the early learning goals and stepping stones and make sure that the assessments of children's learning are used to inform the planning
- put in place a system which will enable staff to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the nursery education programme and review the session structure, in order to ensure that it is effective for all children and does not interrupt children's play and concentration

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