



# Little Houghton Primary School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY216220
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 June 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Lynne Kathleen Talbot / Anne Schurek
<b>Setting Address</b>	Lodge Road, Little Houghton, Northampton, NN7 1AF
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<b>Registered person</b>	Sarah Prince and Diane Ridley
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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*

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## 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?

Little Houghton Primary School Playgroup registered in 2002. It operates from the library within Little Houghton Primary School in the village of Little Houghton, Northamptonshire. There is also access to the main hall and enclosed outdoor play areas. A maximum of 16 children may attend the pre school at any one time. The pre school is open each Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 11:50 during term time only. There is a lunch club from 11:50 to 12:45.

There are currently 27 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these 19 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the village and surrounding areas. The nursery is able to support children with special educational needs.

The provision employs four staff. 50% of the staff hold recognised early years qualifications, one staff member is working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children's immediate safety, health and welfare is well developed because staff promote children's good health. Children are developing their own understanding and awareness of good health and hygiene through helpful explanations and daily routines, such as regular hand-washing, which reinforces good practice and acts as a reminder to encourage their independence. Children's health is effectively promoted because staff follow appropriate hygiene routines to minimise the risk of cross infection, such as carefully wiping tables before food is served. Positive steps are taken to follow current health guidelines, procedures and requirements of the National Standards which prevents the spread of infection and ensures that children's health needs are met. Some detail within written procedures requires attention to ensure effective procedures for seeking emergency medical attention.

Children are appropriately nourished and enjoy a variety of snacks and lunches which include fresh fruit, vegetables and drinking water. Snack and lunch menus provide children with opportunities to try healthier options and comply with their dietary requirements. Children's dietary and cultural needs are respected, as well as individual likes or dislikes, because staff work closely with parents and share information.

Children's physical health and development is well promoted through both independent opportunities as well as adult planned sessions. They have daily opportunities to enjoy a wide range of purposeful and developmentally appropriate activities which contributes to their good health and well being. There are good opportunities for them to run, ride wheeled bikes to develop co-ordination and control their bodies on an outdoor balancing 'trail'.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming setting where their work is creatively displayed throughout the room on all available surfaces. They feel welcome as the playroom is for their sole use and is decorated with photographs of them at play. Children have access to a broad range of resources and activities. The resources are rotated weekly but are changed during each session to promote a stimulating, challenging environment with safe and age appropriate provision.

Continuous monitoring of the environment and staff's attention to details ensures that children's access to play materials reaches a satisfactory standard of safety although increased freedom of choice and accessibility is required to foster development. Children explore and investigate within a child centred environment. Staff work as a team to ensure that risk assessments are in place to identify and minimise any potential risks to children. This is shown by their forward planning for outings when they carry out risk assessments and plan thoroughly. However, the premises does have areas which require attention to eliminate safety issues to minimise risks to children.

Children are well supervised by staff who ensure that most of the daily preparation for the pre-school is completed out of hours. This allows staff to be actively involved with children at all times which contributes to children's safety. Children are gaining a basic understanding about keeping themselves safe and avoiding accidental injury due to clear explanations by staff during everyday play. They take part in regular fire evacuation and learn to move around the premises safely showing growing consideration for others in the building.

Children's welfare is promoted and they are protected because staff have a sound understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice. Children feel able to share any concerns and are appropriately supported by staff. They are encouraged to make their own needs known, so that they feel safe and secure whilst at pre-school. There are, however, areas which require attention to ensure that current guidelines in line with the October 2005 Addendum to the National Standards for under 8's day care and childminding are fully understood.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy, secure and settled. They are enthusiastic and enjoy their time at the setting which enables them to make positive relationships and respond to new challenges. They settle eagerly to spaces at the tables and invite staff to join imaginative play, such as play with the farm where they talked about the animals and the farm machinery. Children are confident in their relationships with each other and with staff, participating in discussions and initiating conversations. Their personal development and self-esteem are consistently promoted through sensitive support and interaction from experienced, caring staff. Children and staff engage in discussions about a variety of topics, for example, exploring the development of butterflies, the making of a wormery, and children's siblings and families. This assists in developing their self-esteem.

Children show developing levels of independence as they choose resources and activities set out for them throughout the sessions. However, children have limited opportunities to develop creative choices or have control over their own activities and independent learning. Increased access to activities and responsibility for materials needs to be offered to support children's natural curiosity as learners.

Assessment of children's progress is detailed and purposeful, staff are skilled in

using a variety of methods. They ensure that assessments are always fed into planning so that all children are offered challenging opportunities and activities which are adapted to suit individuals. This helps to ensure that children are able to realise their full potential.

Children settle quickly due to the staff's understanding and planning. They ensure that they have all necessary information about children, including their likes and dislikes. The introduction of extensive early profiles, drawn from parental experience of children, assists both the separation process and the initial developmental support for children in their play. Younger children's learning and development is promoted because staff have a very good understanding of child development. The managers have a good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, through independent reading, and have worked out the practicalities of implementing this.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum and recognise how children learn most effectively. This ensures that children make good progress in their individual learning. Children's learning is reinforced as staff ensure that activities and themes are cross-referenced, for example, growing seeds and linking this to personal growth, exploring musical instruments and developing awareness of sounds, and exploring nutrition and growth together with hygiene.

Children show great enjoyment as they participate in the extensive, well-balanced range of activities. These include opportunities to engage in imaginative role play scenarios, exploration of natural substances, use of information technology equipment, and a wide variety of crafts and construction. Children show great skill in handling small tools and implements such as scissors, paint brushes or dough cutters, and persist at activities showing satisfaction for their own end product. Children have some access to free creative materials but these are, as yet, insufficient in quantity or play a significant part in children's free choice. This area of creativity requires further extension and development across all areas to ensure that it is rich in choice.

Children are given opportunities to explore language with support, for example when looking at the current topic of 'mini-beasts'. They extend and develop new language to describe what they are experiencing through their senses. They participate in negotiating turns with help and ask prolific questions gaining knowledge of their developing skill with language. Children enjoy stories and books but require increased opportunities to link sounds, letters and phonics to support development of communication, language and literacy skills. This needs to be throughout the normal, everyday activities and not just at focussed activities.

Children count confidently and use mathematical language and concepts throughout their daily play. For example, they compare and group objects by size, shape and colour, recognise patterns and symmetry, and recreate and design patterns with a variety of materials. They explore addition and subtraction independently and are aware of making informed guesses at totals, showing early prediction skill. This is shown as they predict and calculate how many they have, what the total may be if

another is added, and anticipate quantities of materials needed. They use mathematical language competently in all areas including speed, weight and direction.

Children are highly motivated and fully engaged in their play and activities. They have a good understanding of their own needs and demonstrate a growing appreciation of making relationships with others, for example, they show excitement and enjoy making jokes with each other. Children are gaining a comprehensive knowledge of their community and the wider world through the provision of a range of resources and innovative activities. They have opportunities to learn about the local environment and observe the natural world at length.

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

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and play a full and active part in the pre-school because staff value and respect their individuality and the family context for each child. Children are offered a wide range of opportunities which promote their understanding of their local society. They increase their awareness of other cultures as they explore celebrations connected with Divali and Hanukah, as well as taking part in events organised by the local community church. Parents and carers are well informed and contribute to the setting, however, the complaints policy does not reflect current legislation. This requires attention within the operational plan.

Children are kind and considerate to each other and to staff. Their behaviour is very good throughout the sessions as they competently organise turn-taking and sharing. Children are able to feel secure as staff make efforts to understand significant events in their lives and ensure they have sufficient information to meet their individual needs. Children respond well to praise which is given readily by staff, and they show increasingly developed self-confidence as they speak within the larger group. Participation in realistic role play such as animal hospitals enables children to gain a clear, meaningful knowledge of these issues. The positive approach and excellent staff role modelling ensures that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children who have special needs have their requirements clearly identified as there is a practical policy relating to this. Staff ensure, when children with a special need are attending, that this is implemented, working with individual children and parents to make sure that all are included in the activities and routines. Children for whom English is not the first language could receive appropriate support as staff work hard to establish working relationships with parents and extended family.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good. There is a strong commitment to involving parents fully in the setting and in their children's learning. Parents are kept very well informed of their children's progress through regular newsletters, consultation meetings with staff and open access to their children's files and assessment records. Parents value the 'learning journey' books which are compiled in partnership with them throughout the children's time in the setting. The children's daily progress, with observations, is linked to

progress and development. This positive attitude ensures that parents' views are valued, standards are maintained and high quality care can be provided for each child.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Overall the needs of the full range of the children attending the setting are met. Children benefit from the care provided by experienced and skilled staff. Their daily comfort and enjoyment is enhanced by the quality of organisation and the attention to all details relating to their care and well-being. Children's varying needs are consistently met and they are offered a broad, planned range of activities and a wealth of play opportunities. The setting is divided into sections according to activity or area of learning. Children are able to move safely and independently from one area to another, confidently initiating their own play and learning.

Children's welfare and safety are promoted through the setting's clearly defined policies and procedures and the staff's practical knowledge and daily implementation of these. There is an induction process for new staff, providing information and support. This continues through the staff development which ensures that all training needs are identified and staff are able to work appropriately with all children.

The quality of leadership and management is good. Children's overall welfare is promoted by the very good understanding that the managers have of their role and responsibilities. They ensure that they are aware of all regulations, carrying out their own research and reviews to implement any changes and carefully studying the implications of these to both children and staff. This includes the implementation of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. There has been a lack of information received recently, however, and this impacts on the organisation overall. There does need to be further review of the procedures to ensure that current legislation is met.

The managers act as good role models and staff are very motivated, acquiring qualifications and regularly attending additional training. All daily pre-school sessions are very well planned, with a balanced range of opportunities throughout the day. Staff pay attention to what children are doing and ensure that they are given sufficient time and resources to complete their activities and tasks. Staff meet regularly to plan future work, and thereby ensure that the needs of individual children are met, the development of all children is promoted and the setting continues to provide high quality care.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider was asked to increase opportunities for children to use number during practical activities and to develop staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage to extend differentiation, to monitor and evaluate the quality of teaching, and to focus on the learning intention. The provider was also asked, at the last care inspection, to have staff records available and to develop a key worker system.

Since that time the provider has adapted and developed all planning and evaluation systems to provide areas of challenge for individual children, and introduced clear methods of evaluating and monitoring all aspects of the quality of teaching. The provider has increased the opportunities for children to develop understanding of number and calculation across all activities. This has improved the quality of teaching by ensuring that all activities are able to promote children's progress and improved children's ability to use and understand mathematical concepts throughout all activities. The provider has maintained all staff records and meets regulations, and ensured that each child is cared for within a stable and consistent staff group improving their consistency of care.

### **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):

- improve opportunities for children to become independent, care for their surroundings and understand self-control through positive behaviour management
- review the operational plan and procedures to improve safety. Include the changes in National Standards and regulations as set out in the October 2005 Addendum to the National Standards for under 8's day care and childminding

#### **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 opportunities for children to link sounds, letters and phonics to



support development of communication, language and literacy skills

- increase opportunities for children to develop creativity through accessibility of materials for self-selection and opportunities to understand the links between previous and practical experiences- also applies to care.

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