



## Hanney Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

**Unique Reference Number** 135003

**Inspection date** 20 June 2006

**Inspector** Jill Milton

**Setting Address** Elliot Building, St James C of E School, The Causeway, East Hanney, Wantage, Oxfordshire, OX12 0JN

**Telephone number** 01235 223349 and (m)07759 181330

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Hanney 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](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?

Hanney Playgroup opened over 30 years ago and it is managed by a voluntary committee of parents and carers. The playgroup is located in the grounds of St James Church of England School in East Hanney. The children have the use of rooms in purpose-built accommodation with access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The intake of children is from the village and the neighbouring rural communities.

The playgroup opens on weekdays during term time, from 09.00 until 12.00. An

optional lunch club operates on Tuesday and Thursday until 13.00. An additional session is offered on Wednesday afternoon from 12.30 until 15.00.

A maximum of 16 children between the ages of two and five years may attend at any one time. There are currently 31 children on roll and of these 14 are in receipt of nursery education funding. The playgroup employs four staff, over half of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment where they are learning about good hygiene. They are familiar with routines for regular hand washing and they know to do this before starting a cooking activity. The children see the staff wiping tables with antibacterial spray and they assist when the place mats require cleaning too. The children enjoy a good variety of chopped fresh fruit, eager to try strawberries, satsumas and apple slices. They are developing independence as they pour drinks at snack time from a jug, though they do not have free access to drinking water at all times.

Staff care for children well if they have an accident, applying a cold compress and reassurance for a hurt finger for example. The staff renew medical supplies and attend regular refresher courses for first aid. Children's good health is assured since the staff work closely with parents to collect information about any individual concerns.

The children enjoy lively play in the garden area which they can access directly from the main room of the pre-school. This enables them to choose quieter activities or more energetic play outdoors. The children use a broad range of equipment to develop their physical skills and staff vary the resources to provide fresh interest. The children go on regular walks together and use the open space of the school field for games with a parachute. Staff put up a large gazebo outdoors in summer months so that the children can play comfortably in a shady area.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a bright pre-school room with lots of natural light and ventilation. The walls display many colourful examples of recent topic-based art work that the children help to label. They can choose to play from the range of exciting activities and there is ample child-sized furniture for their needs. The equipment is in good condition and children are keen to use new items, such as a wooden fire station. Staff regularly clean and monitor the resources to check on their suitability for the children. On sessions specifically for the younger ones the children use equipment that matches their abilities. Many items are on low-level storage units so that children can access

them independently.

Children play safely since the staff have a number of effective procedures in place to monitor the security and safety of the premises. Staff closely supervise the children at play, adjusting to the children's choices to play indoors or outdoors. When the children take part in outings the staff conduct written risk assessments to accurately identify and minimise potential hazards. Children take part in regular fire evacuation practise and staff talk to them about safety issues like sitting properly on a chair so that it does not tip over.

The staff have a sound understanding of child protection issues. They have all the necessary guidance to hand to enable them to address any concerns they have for a child's welfare. All the staff working at the preschool undertake the required checking procedure to ensure they are suitable to work with children.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and enthusiastic about attending pre-school. They settle well as they arrive and staff spend time talking to the children and their parents until everyone is ready to start the session. Children under three years can attend a morning that is just for their age range. This enables them to gain confidence in separating from their parents and to take part in age-appropriate activities. The younger children have an exciting time exploring different textures and learning some early social skills. Staff are starting to incorporate ideas from the Birth to three matters training that provides a focus for work with younger children. The staff are good at recognising the needs of different ages and offer lunch club and a more structured session as the children mature. A developing partnership with the adjacent school provides children with some shared activities with school age children and staff. This is an effective way to help prepare children for the move to school.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The children are developing social skills as they play together and they are eager to call over a friend to share in a game. The children want to take part in the good range of interesting activities the staff present to them. The children make decisions and are developing independence. They are gaining an awareness of the local community in the village with topics like 'Homes'. Staff also ensure children learn about cultures different to their own.

The children sit well at group time when they listen to others and join in conversations. Staff provide support and encouragement to build the children's confidence in talking in front of the group. The children enjoy echoing the sound of the letter of the week and some of them are able to think of words beginning with the same sound. Children listen attentively when staff read stories and they access a wide variety of books for themselves. The children take part in many mark-making activities when they gain early pencil control. They recognise their own names and are learning some basic letter writing. Children learn that writing is for different purposes as they help staff make labels for displays or write name labels on items to

take home.

The children are progressing with counting and they readily tell staff how many cups they need at their snack table. Daily activities help children to develop mathematical ideas and use language to compare shapes and sizes. The children show a keen interest in topic work. They handle natural objects, for example sea shells with different shapes and textures that reflect a project on 'Under the Sea'. Children expand on their ideas when they play in an area set out with props that also reflects the current topic. The children use a variety of materials for cutting, gluing and building so that they can express their own ideas. They are also developing confidence at using technology at the computer station. Play in the outdoor area enables the children to access a variety of experiences, though at times staff miss the chance to expand and develop the children's interests. Children experience creative activities using materials like paint or collage and when taking part in music and dance.

The staff interact well with the children and they organise the sessions effectively to provide a mix of adult-directed and child-initiated activities. The staff plan the curriculum thoroughly and they cover all six areas of learning. The children are making good progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Staff monitor the children's achievements and development through a mixture of dated lists and observations. They collect photographs and examples of children's work to follow progress during their time at pre-school. Staff use the information to focus generally on areas that need some development, for example noting that children require more practise using scissors. However, this does not focus on individual needs to help children take the next steps in learning. Staff plan topics with care to provide the children with links in their learning, for example cooking pastry crabs when finding out about creatures under the sea. The detail that staff put into planning reflects their good knowledge of the Foundation Stage.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and secure with the daily routine at pre-school. Staff help them to be familiar with what happens, for example by making a display of the regular activities like snack time and outdoor play. Families receive a warm welcome from staff and the children develop their sense of belonging when they see their names on coat pegs and on trays for their own belongings. The children are learning to respect those of different cultural and religious backgrounds as staff include a good variety of celebrations through the year. The children use resources that provide them with positive messages about diversity. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of the children is fostered.

Although no children with learning difficulties or disabilities attend the group at the present time, the staff have the experience and training to offer good support. They have in the past worked with families and other professionals to meet a range of needs. The children show a good understanding of how to behave appropriately in a group and staff help by acting as good role models. The children abide by simple

rules like standing behind a chalk line for a turn at a skittles game or waiting to take part in a cooking activity. The staff use a successful range of strategies to manage the children's behaviour. They make good use of stories to discuss issues with the children, like focusing on what each of them can do well.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. The families have a relaxed and informal relationship with the staff and many conversations take place on a daily basis about the care of the children. The parents have access to a wide range of helpful information through regular newsletters, a prospectus and notices in the cloakroom. Parents receive encouragement to involve themselves in children's learning since they know in advance about the current theme of the activities. Some children are eager to bring articles from home to share with the group and this strengthens the links between home and pre-school. Photographs with helpful captions demonstrate to parents what children are learning as they play.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The procedures and policies work well in practice to promote outcomes for children. The staff work effectively as a team to provide good standards of care that contribute to children's good health, safety and well-being. There are secure systems in place to ensure only adults who undergo checks are in unsupervised contact with the children. The committee and staff are aware of their responsibility towards the children to keep them safe. Staff plan the weekly sessions to take into account the ages of the children attending. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Staff are well organised and they keep documentation accessible, whilst maintaining security. Staff respond positively to recommendations for improvement and they bring new ideas from training courses back to the group. Staff are keen to use recent ideas from Birth to three matters in their provision for the children under three years who attend the group. Although staff regularly attend training there are no formal appraisals currently in place to identify and plan more systematically for the professional development of the staff.

The leadership and management are good. The staff evaluate the activities they plan for the children and they make reflective notes on the children's responses. This helps them to develop their skills and be aware of ways to improve. Staff also work with other professionals to gain fresh ideas of how to support the children's learning.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Staff were required to address two issues from the last care and nursery education inspections. A number of policy documents needed slight amendments to bring them in line with the National Standards. All the required additions are now in place to provide staff with an effective set of policies on which to base their good quality practice in caring for the children.

A point for consideration suggested widening the access to the book library to children of all ages. Staff now encourage all children to borrow books from pre-school so that they can share their early enthusiasm for stories with their parents at home.

### **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**

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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 children have access to fresh drinking water at all times
- make more effective use of staff appraisals to identify and plan for training needs.

#### **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):

- extend the opportunities for children's learning in the outdoor play area
- use assessments of the children's progress to plan their next steps in 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)