



Horsendale Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253134
Inspection date	05 December 2006
Inspector	Sheena Gibson
Setting Address	New Community Room, Assarts Road, Nuthall, Notts, NG16 1AP
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Registered person	Horsendale 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?

Horsendale Playgroup opened in 1985. It is situated in Nuthall, a suburb of Nottingham and operates from a self-contained community room within the grounds of Horsendale Primary School. The building contains toilets and a kitchen and they also have access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup is open Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 09:00 to 11:30 and Monday, Wednesday and Friday 13:00 to 15:30, during term time only. Children attend a variety of sessions each week. There are currently 50 children on roll, of these 15 are funded three-year-olds and 22 are funded four-year-olds.

The playgroup supports children with special educational needs and who speak English as an additional language. There are seven staff working with the children, on a full or part-time basis. Two staff have level 3 qualifications and three are working towards these. Support and

training is accessed through the Nottinghamshire County Council's Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership. The playgroup are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is suitably promoted as staff take positive steps to make sure that good hygiene procedures are followed. For example, they use anti-bacterial spray to clean tables prior to snacks and ensure that children have satisfactory and hygienic hand drying facilities. A project on germs and regular reminders to wash hands after visiting the toilet and before snack help children to understand the importance of good hygiene practice and minimise the risk of cross-contamination. A sick child policy and discussion with parents means that children who are unwell are unlikely to attend and this minimises the risk of germs spreading. Children are well cared for if they have an accident. A number of staff have undertaken paediatric first aid training and appropriate records are in place to ensure that all children's first aid needs are effectively met. Children are offered some healthy snacks, which are in line with their dietary requirements and drinks are available for them to independently access if they are thirsty.

Children have some opportunities to be active through physical exercise. There is a suitable outdoor area available to them to ride bikes, skip and play with balls. They have the facility of an indoor climbing frame and enjoy playing with stilts and a large parachute. A popular music and movement activity means that they are able to exercise indoors as well as outside. This contributes to their overall general fitness and the development of their large muscle skills. Their small muscle skills are satisfactorily promoted through using tools such as rolling pins and dough cutters.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed by staff into a bright and friendly setting. They settle quickly and are keen to begin to play. Their craft work is displayed, which helps them to feel a sense of belonging. Space is sufficient and used creatively with tables and activities set out to provide free movement around them, whilst still offering a wide variety. The indoor and outdoor areas are secure; the play rooms are secured through the use of a chain on the external door, meaning that children's safety is effectively supported. Children benefit from a wide variety of toys and activities. Much consideration is given by the supervisor to ensure that the resources are of good quality, safe and appropriate for children to use. They can freely access resources from those set out within the play areas, promoting their confidence and decision making.

Children's welfare is suitably maintained through the use of risk assessments that are regularly carried out. Fire procedures are in place and fire drills are carried out so that children know how to safely evacuate. Children learn about taking responsibility for their own safety through, for example, learning to safely cross the road when on a walk. They are adequately protected from abuse as key staff are confident in their management of a child protection concern. However, children's safety is potentially compromised as staff have not accessed recent training

and the setting's policy and procedure does not reflect the most recent changes to local and government child protection procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and generally settled. Most enter smiling, keen to enter and separate from their carer with ease. They benefit from staff knowing them well and are able to feel confident and secure in the surroundings; routines support children's self-confidence. Staff are warm and compassionate, approaching children who may seem a little nervous or unsure. Children enjoy a wide range of activities that are organised prior to their arrival. For example, they enjoy games, threading, making Christmas cards and puzzles, all of which effectively supports their development skills. They also take part in some spontaneous activities that offer additional valuable opportunities to support development. Children are encouraged to learn about right from wrong and are aware that it is not nice to hurt another child. They develop their social skills effectively through staff being a good role model, saying please and thank you and urging children to do the same.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make sound progress towards the early learning goals because most staff have a suitable knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones. Children are confident and most are motivated to learn. They show a range of emotions, such as enthusiasm and excitement, when carrying out activities. For example, a child claps himself after successfully completing a Christmas card. Most are self-assured and speak out loud when within a large group, such as at register or circle time. They understand expectations, such as sitting quietly at register and generally, when focussed, behave well. They have suitable independence skills such as toileting or helping themselves to snack. Most share well, co-operate in play and are able to negotiate for toys. Most children have well developed language skills and are able to hold a conversation about a topic that interests them. Some staff ask children questions during activities that encourage children to respond and therefore practise their communication skills.

Children are keen to chat about their experiences outside the setting. For example, they enthusiastically talk about a weekend away, when they will going swimming and take their arm bands. They enjoy making up their own imaginative stories and games, involving their friends in the game. They have opportunities to freely look at books and know how books work, understanding that print carries meaning. They have many opportunities to make marks both during set activities and in free play, such as in the play shop. Most recognise their own written name and some older children can legibly write their name. There are fewer opportunities for children to begin to link sounds to letters. Most children can count to five and many can count to more than five. Counting by rote is regularly carried out during activities and routines. For example, children count each other at register time. They describe shapes such as triangle, square and more able children can logically work out, during a puzzle game, that two triangles make a square. They know several colours and these are regularly repeated during activities.

Children use language such as heavy, light, long and short. For example, whilst threading a number, a child compares the sizes of the lace. They learn basic calculation during activities and games, such as a 'penguin' game. They have some opportunities to develop their physical

skills and move confidently indoors, safely negotiating around objects such as tables and other people. Children use their imagination freely, making up stories and games with role play equipment or small world play. They create their own ideas during craft activities. For example, they create dinosaurs and crocodiles that have been developed from a picture of a bell, they also enjoy making their Christmas cards. Music is carried out regularly and children learn about rhyme and rhythm. They enjoy daily opportunities to consider the day of the week and the season of the year, although opportunities to further their understanding of a sense of time or learn about a sense of place are not as effectively planned for. Children design and build using various items such as pipe cleaners, glue and boxes. They use their senses when, for example, playing with scented dough. They have some awareness of Information Technology through toys such as programmable bees.

Planning and assessment is satisfactory and adequately supports children's learning. It indicates that most areas of learning are planned for over a period of time. However, some aspects within the areas of learning are infrequently planned for, such as physical activity and linking sounds to letters. Planning does not indicate a clear learning intention, based on children's assessment, nor helps staff to know how an activity is extended for more able children or how less able children are supported, which hinders effective learning. An established staff team means that most have a satisfactory knowledge of their key children's abilities. Assessments are regularly carried out. However, these are not always accurately completed and are not used to effectively inform planning. As a result some, more able children are insufficiently challenged. Methods used by staff to support children's learning are satisfactory. There is some useful questioning from staff and some staff can be seen to role model activities, for example, showing children how to use a stencil. Children benefit from a satisfactory use of time and resources by staff. There is a combination of incidental learning and structure, which benefits their learning as, in some areas, they consolidate their learning through play. For example, some children use paper and pencil to write 'receipts' in the role play shop area.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed and suitably included in the life of the setting and as a result they are able to feel settled and confident. Their individual care needs are effectively met and they receive consistent care, because staff gather information from parents to find out about their care needs, likes and preferences. An equal opportunities policy is in place to suitably support staff's practice. Positive steps are taken to ensure that the resources positively represent the children who attend, as well as those in the wider community. Children who have special needs or a learning difficulty are well cared for by staff who are appropriately trained and work with parents and other agencies to ensure that they are fully included.

Most children behave well, particularly when focussed on an activity. Older children can capably negotiate for toys and they generally co-operate well together, with small groups of children enjoying making up a group game. Staff are calm and manage any small disputes appropriately. Parents and staff have an obviously warm relationship and parents are confident to approach staff to talk. The setting's policies and procedures are available to parents on request. Parents are informed that they can contact the regulator if they have a concern. However, the setting's

complaints policy does not detail the process followed by the setting if a complaint is made and the contact information for the regulator is incorrect. As a result parents are not fully informed of the factors that potentially impact upon children's well-being. Children's social, moral spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents receive brief information about the provision of the Foundation Stage and stepping stones. Staff informally chat to parents about their children and occasionally the setting sends some information about how parent's can help their child's learning at home. However, parents are not formally asked to share what they know about their child's capabilities and children's assessments are not regularly shared with parents. As a result children's learning potential is not maximised.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff who are directly caring for children are appropriately qualified and have undergone required checks by, for example, the Criminal Records Bureau. Adequate systems for recruitment and induction are in place, with regard to child care staff. However, Ofsted have not been informed of recent changes to the committee, who have not undergone relevant checks to ensure children's safety. Most of the staff team are well established. This provides security for children and parents, as families are often very familiar to the setting and are able to feel very comfortable approaching staff. The adult to child ratio positively supports children's care. Staff are adequately deployed, although this does not always effectively support children's learning and development. Most documentation is available and organised to be generally effective, supporting children's well-being. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The setting's supervisors are well motivated and enthusiastic. The staff team work well together, co-operating with the various activities that take place, they also work closely with the development officer from the Local Authority. An action plan has been drawn up to consider improvements, although these have not been carried out to the full. Staff do not benefit from regular appraisals and the monitoring of practice is rudimentary. Therefore weaknesses in staff's knowledge and practice are not always identified and addressed, which hinders children's learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection the provision was given recommendations around: ensuring good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing; including the procedure to follow if a child becomes ill whilst in your care in the sick child policy; extending the range of toys and activities to reflect disability. These have been suitably addressed, which supports children's care and well-being.

At the last nursery education inspection the provision was given key issues around: increasing opportunities for children to see letters, written words and names within the setting for them to begin to recognise, write and link sounds to letters; providing opportunities for children to

see numbers within the environment, to help them to recognise them, and begin to count and calculate independently; providing more opportunities for the children to learn about the concept of time, past and present; continuing to devise more formal strategies for parents and carers to be kept informed of the children's attainment and progress and for them to share their observations of children's learning at home. Positive steps have been taken to attend to most of these, which effectively supports children's learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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 satisfactory.

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):

- develop further, the child protection policy to ensure that it reflects the information in the recent addendum and make sure that staff are aware of the procedures to follow if they have a child protection concern, with regard to the local and government information
- ensure that all staff within the setting have been subject to the appropriate checks
- consider the deployment of staff to ensure that it is effective in supporting children's learning and development (also applies to nursery education)
- develop further, the complaints procedure so that it reflects the information in the recent addendum and ensure that parents have correct, accessible information that enables them to contact the regulator.

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 to ensure that the aspects within the six areas of learning are given an equal emphasis and are covered frequently; identifying clear learning intentions and ensuring that activities are sufficiently challenging for all children
- consider how you monitor and evaluate staff's practice to ensure that they are organising and implementing activities effectively
- develop systems to ensure that parents can formally share what they know about their child, are informed of children's progress and regularly given information about what they can do to effectively help their child's learning at home.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk