



## Hartshorne Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	206783
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 October 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Sheena Gibson
<b>Setting Address</b>	C/O Hartshorne Primary School Main Street, Hartshorne, Swadlincote, Derbyshire, DE11 7ES
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<b>Registered person</b>	Hartshorne Playgroup
<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*

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 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?

Hartshorne Pre-school Playgroup opened in 1982 and operates from the hall in Hartshorne Primary School, in Swadlincote, Derbyshire. The school is close to the village centre and there are shops and parks in the immediate area. The playgroup serves the local and surrounding community. The setting does not currently support children with special educational needs. The playgroup is registered to care for 24 children under eight years. Currently there are 11 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions.

The playgroup offers sessional care, five mornings a week, during school term times. There are two full and two part-time staff who work with the children. Over 50% the staff have early years qualifications to level two or three. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is satisfactorily supported because practitioners engage some appropriate practices with regard to health and hygiene procedures. The environment is generally clean; staff have suitable cleaning materials, such as mops, cloths and antibacterial spray. Children are encouraged to wash their hands routinely before snacks and after visiting the toilet, supporting their early understanding of good hygiene practice. The toilets used by children are those also used by the school. These are cleaned in accordance with school policy. However, a communal roller towel is used for hand drying in the toilets, which could result in infection being spread. A suitable policy that informs parents that poorly children should not attend the playgroup helps to minimise the risk of germs being passed to other children.

Children are well cared for if they have an accident. All staff have undertaken paediatric first aid training and understand about managing and recording accidents. Permission has been sought for staff to seek emergency medical attention for children if required, which ensures that all of their first aid needs are met. Children have daily opportunities to be active and enjoy playing in the school playground. The development of their large muscles skills is adequately supported through the use of some fixed equipment in the school playground which enables them to balance. There are some opportunities to climb. They use tools, such as scissors and rolling pins to help the development of small muscles skills. Children are offered snack whilst at the playgroup and are given a variety of different choices that help with their understanding of healthy eating. They independently quench their thirst from an accessible jug of water.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment that helps them to feel secure and comfortable. For example, staff greet them warmly, their photographs are displayed at a height that enables them to see themselves, and their 'art work' is also displayed. Activities are set out prior to their arrival, which encourages them to want to immediately begin to play. Both children and parents are keen to enter and are happy to stay and chat to staff at the beginning of the session. Space is sufficient and is organised to support children's free movement around the activities. Some positive steps have been taken that enable children to self-select activities and play materials, supporting their confidence and independence.

Detailed risk assessments are carried out periodically with daily checks also in place, which effectively promotes children's safety. Effective fire evacuation procedures are in place with fire drills being regularly carried out with children. This helps them to begin to learn about taking responsibility for their own safety. They also learn about safety during planned and unplanned play and learning activities. For example, staff remind children about not climbing on a fence. Staff are suitably aware of the child protection procedures to be followed in the event of any concerns regarding child abuse, therefore effectively safeguarding children's welfare.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled. They benefit from staff knowing them well and taking time to find out what interests each child. They make satisfactory progress with their development through accessing a suitable range of resources, such as, sand, fire station and large trucks, chalks and paper, jelly with vehicles and puzzles. Children are developing independence and confidence, as they choose toys for themselves; they are encouraged to tidy away toys, which promotes a sense of responsibility. The setting is not currently considering the 'Birth to three matters' framework when planning for younger children and as a result some children's individual needs are not as effectively met. Children are beginning to show natural curiosity and are keen to question staff. For example, they often begin sentences with what, when or how. They have a warm relationship with each other and relate well to staff, who encourage politeness and good manners. For example, they gently remind children to say please and thank you.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make satisfactory progress because most staff have an adequate knowledge of the foundation stage, the early learning goals and stepping stones. Some staff are skilled in knowing what children may get from an activity and so are able to use this to help them progress. Adequate assessments enable staff to be aware of children's progress and to consider this when carrying out activities. Long term planning indicates that all areas of learning are covered, although infrequently. This results in weaker aspects in all areas of learning, which is particularly evident in communication, language and literacy, also in mathematical development. Planning does not show a clear learning intention or how activities are adapted to support more or less able children and as a result some children are not sufficiently challenged. Some methods which staff use are effectively supporting children's learning. For example, staff demonstrate how to do something and children respond well when with staff on a one to one basis. Staff manage children's behaviour appropriately, which enables them to play and learn comfortably.

Most children are interested and keen to engage in play and learning. They have a developing sense of awareness of their own needs and have suitable personal independence skills. For example, some capably put on their coat for outdoor play and prepare their own snack. They move around the environment confidently choosing what they want to play with. They enjoy playing in groups, for example, in the role play area or on their own with a puzzle. They generally behave well and will focus on an activity for a period of time, particularly when suitably supported by staff. Children talk freely and use language effectively to express their needs. Some children have good language skills and can hold a complex conversation. For example, they enjoy conversing with staff about 'daddy using his tools to fix things'. Open questioning from staff is limited and therefore children's language is not always extended; there are minimal opportunities for children to begin to link sounds to letters. Children enjoy listening to a story read by staff and are keen to lift the flaps to see the picture underneath; they do not regularly access books independently. There are opportunities for children to make marks. For example, they use chalk on paper and wipe boards with markers; more capable children can write the initial letter of their name. They also incorporate mark-making into activities, such as pretend appointment sheets and prescription in the role play area, helping to consolidate learned skills.

Children of all ages have some early counting skills and many children can count to five. They use simple mathematical language, such as 'lighter' and 'heavier' when playing in the sand. Shape and colour are learned during everyday activities and routines. For example, at snack time they discuss the shape of the crackers. Resources that support mathematical development are not effectively used within play activities and early calculation is poorly promoted. They gain some valuable experiences through using their senses as staff discuss the taste of milkshake and the feel and smell of jelly. They periodically benefit from a nature table where they look at and feel items from the local environment, such as conkers. Some electronic toys give children an early understanding of information technology. They construct three dimensional models from blocks and use assembling and joining materials, such as hole puncher with tags and sticky tape. Some children enjoy music and sing along when playing ring games. They use their imagination whilst playing in the role play area, pretending to go to the doctors on the bus. Their physical skills are adequately supported through regular opportunities to play outside. They enjoy riding bikes, which helps to promote co-ordination and balance, most children are able to successfully negotiate their way around the playground. They use tools during activities, such as playing with dough, to effectively promote their manipulative skills.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual care needs are satisfactorily met through information about their preferences, along with likes and dislikes gathered at the time of placement. An initial assessment states what they can already do. Staff have regular discussions with parents who feel very comfortable in approaching them to tell them about any changes to their child's circumstances. There are displays of the children's work around the setting, which promotes a sense of belonging. They develop an understanding of the wider world through a satisfactory range of resources and activities. For example, they join in the celebration of a variety of religious and cultural festivals. Children who have a special need or learning difficulty are suitably supported. Staff have undertaken some training and are pro-active in working with parents, the school and other agencies to effectively support children's specific needs.

Children generally behave well throughout the session. They are considerate of others when playing and will take turns and share the toys and resources. They can communicate, for example, that it is 'not nice to hurt each other'. Staff provide effective role models and they often demonstrate what is expected of the children, for example, saying please and thank you and being helpful to children and other staff. Children's self-esteem is well fostered as they receive plenty of praise, stickers and certificates for special recognition of achievement. For example, they received a certificate for successfully completing a sponsored walk, which they are very proud of. Children benefit from a positive working relationship between staff and parents. Consistency of care is suitably promoted through some effective information that is shared with them regarding the setting's policies and procedures. Parents also enjoy chatting to staff about their child's care when they drop off or collect children. As a result of these practices 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 some brief information regarding the nursery education in the setting's

prospectus. They are involved in initial assessments of their children, supporting the staff in understanding children's starting point. Staff share regular verbal exchanges of information with parents regarding the children's abilities and assessments are shared with parents during arranged coffee mornings. However, parents are not offered information on how they can support their children's learning at home which could result in children's learning potential not being maximised.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a well-established staff team, most of whom are suitably qualified and have a wealth of experience. On-going training for staff has a positive impact upon children's care and welfare. Staff are from the local community and therefore often know children and their families, which enables children to quickly settle and feel secure. High ratios of staff to children means that their welfare is effectively supported and they are more likely to make positive progress. The supervisor has a rudimentary understanding of procedures to follow with regard to checking staff and committee members. However, changes within the playgroup have impacted upon the organisation. Recently appointed committee members are not yet checked through the Criminal Records Bureau and there are no clear lines of responsibility for ensuring staff suitability.

There are currently no effective recruitment procedures in place and staff do not receive an induction, nor is there an functional appraisal system. As a result, children's safety and well-being could be compromised. Documentation that is in place suitably informs staff practice. Policies and procedures are periodically updated although some do not comply with the most recent regulations. Overall, 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 supervisor of the setting is enthusiastic and motivated. This provides a positive role model for the staff team who, as a result, work well together. The manager works co-operatively with external agencies, such as the Local Authority to identify some strengths and areas for improvement. However, there are no systems in place for regular monitoring and evaluating of practice and therefore weaker areas often remain undetected, which results in children's progress being hindered.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last Children Act inspection the setting was given a recommendation around organising resources so that they are readily accessible to children. This has been addressed through developing a book of photographs from which children can choose an alternative toy or activity, supporting their free choice.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was given key issues around: developing systems to enable parents to share what they know about their child; making more use of activities and equipment available during free play to foster children's learning in mathematics and communication, language and literacy. Positive steps have been taken to address these. An initial assessment form effectively informs staff about what parent's know about their child, which promotes consistency and supports children's well-being. Some equipment is available

to support children's learning in communication language and literacy, such as paper and pencil in the role play area. However, this recommendation has not been fully addressed and is therefore a recommendation in this inspection.

### **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**

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 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 systems and procedures for supporting children's good health through good hygiene and ensuring that the risk of infection spreading is minimised
- review the planning and provision of activities and play opportunities considering the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- review the policies and procedures of the setting to ensure that they comply with the most recent regulations
- ensure that there are robust systems in place for recruitment and the assessing of staff and committee suitability.

#### **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 all aspects of learning within the six areas are covered frequently; identifying clear learning intentions and ensuring that activities are sufficiently challenging for all children
- monitor and evaluate the nursery education to ensure children make good progress and staff develop their skills

- take positive steps to ensure that parents are well informed about the nursery education provision and how they can support their child's learning at home
- continue to improve on the opportunities for children to develop skills in all areas of learning and in particular Communication Language and Literacy and Mathematical Development.

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