



Herlington Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	256771
Inspection date	05 December 2006
Inspector	Melanie Cullen
Setting Address	Herlington Community Centre, Orton Malborne, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE2 5PW
Telephone number	01733 390115
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Registered person	Herlington Pre-School Committee
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 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?

Herlington Pre-School opened in 1980. It operates from Herlington Community Centre in the Orton Malborne area of Peterborough, Cambridgeshire. A maximum of 86 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 07:45 to 15:00 during term time. A summer school is provided during four weeks of the school summer holidays. A transport service is provided for children who live in the Hampton area of Peterborough. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 114 children aged from two to eight years on roll. Of these, 61 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs 10 members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is actively promoted by the staff who follow effective procedures to maintain a healthy environment and to encourage them to develop good personal hygiene practises. For example, staff wipe tables with antibacterial spray before the children sit down to eat and any spills from the water tray are promptly mopped up. Children wash their hands after messy activities and after using the toilet. Staff provide them with wipes before they eat their lunch and children learn about germs and the benefits of maintaining good personal hygiene through discussion with staff. Younger children benefit from the staff's effective practise when changing nappies. They wear gloves and aprons and clean the mat thoroughly between each child. Children receive appropriate treatment when they have accidents because most staff hold current first aid certificates and suitably stocked first aid kits are stored in easily accessible places in both group rooms and in the office. Children benefit from the effective record keeping in relation to nappy changes, administration of medication and records of any accidents. However, the accident records do not always include sufficient detail regarding the site of any injury and are not always signed by a member of staff.

Children are well nourished because they are provided with bowls of fruit and vegetables and a jug of water which they can help themselves to throughout the session. Snack time consists of dried fruit, fresh fruit and vegetables and a choice of milk or water to drink. They pour their own drinks and choose when they have their snack which develops independence skills. Most children stay at the setting for lunch which is provided by their parents. All lunch boxes are stored in the fridge and children sit in small groups supervised by staff to ensure they do not share food. Parents receive written information and suggestions for healthy, varied selections for their children's lunches. Children begin to learn about healthy living because staff talk to them about the food in their lunch boxes such as fruit, salad items and wholemeal bread. Children have recently participated in activities and topics related to health which have included visits from a dietician and a health visitor who gave information for the children on a healthy lifestyle and the importance of cleaning their teeth.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities that help to develop their physical skills. They make good use of the spacious outside play area which has splendid fixed equipment. Children are effectively supported in their play by the staff who become involved in the games, enhancing the children's experience of outside play. For example, staff play games such as 'What's the time Mr. Wolf?' and ring games. They set up a small obstacle course to promote balancing skills and support children using bats, balls and ride on toys. Children have opportunities to practise fine skills inside where they use tools such as scissors, play dough cutters and rolling pins. They enjoy manipulating puzzle pieces and threading activities which develop hand eye co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is actively promoted by the staff who are vigilant in their practise and supervision of the children. For example, the doors to each group room are kept secure, all parents and visitors are greeted when they arrive and visitors use a book to record their arrival and departure times. The outside play area is fully enclosed and has areas of safety surface under climbing equipment and swings. Staff ensure they position themselves in different areas which enables them to supervise children and to support them in their physical play. Children begin to learn about fire safety because they regularly practise emergency evacuation drills where they become familiar with the procedures through clear and calm explanation from staff. Children enjoy using a good range of safe, suitable and appropriately challenging play materials and equipment. Mostly they can self select activities and move freely between their chosen tasks. All toys and equipment are well maintained in good condition. Staff ensure that activities are well presented and children eagerly help to tidy away at the end of the session. They learn to take some responsibility to care for equipment and to maintain a safe environment for themselves and others.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because some staff are experienced in managing child protection issues. Most staff have completed relevant training on how to safeguard children. All staff have a sound understanding of the importance of maintaining confidentiality and the requirement to report all concerns which are recorded by the managers who demonstrate confidence in such matters and have a secure knowledge of the procedures to follow.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy attending the setting and eagerly settle to play with their chosen activities. They have plenty of opportunities to select their own play materials from suitable storage boxes in units that they can easily access themselves. Children are grouped in the two rooms according to their age and ability, children under three are cared for in the smaller room. They enjoy indulging in messy play and freely explore corn flour, shaving foam and paint with the enthusiastic support from staff who encourage them to express themselves and extend their vocabulary by using descriptive words and asking the children how the textures feel in their hands. For example, a child uses paint and discovers that a pleasing splatter effect can be created through flicking the brush over the side of the paint pot. The member of staff praises the child who shows pleasure by smiling and continuing with their picture. Children benefit from the high quality interaction from the staff who sit with the activities. For example, they have access to various boxes, tubes, sticky tape, glue sticks and scissors. Younger children make models and find out how tools such as scissors and sticky tape work through the careful support and supervision from staff. Children's confidence and self-esteem is supported by staff because they have a relaxed approach. For example, children ask to take some cars from the mat and make tyre tracks in the shaving foam and corn flour. Younger children's independence skills are promoted. They wash their hands before they eat and attempt to put on their own coats and shoes. Plenty of opportunities are provided for children to select their own activities such as construction, imaginative and role play materials. Children become familiar with the routines

of the day through careful explanation from staff which develops a sense of confidence and belonging for them.

Children under three years have their achievements and development recorded through effective use by the staff of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Observations on individual children are recorded regularly on sticky notes which are transferred into children's individual files each half-term. Each observation is dated and all are used to inform the short term planning of activities. This ensures that activities can be specifically prepared for the children in order to promote their skills further. Individual children's achievements are focused on each half-term through a detailed observation completed by their key worker which is also used to inform the planning for younger children.

Nursery Education

Children are keen to learn because they are provided with a good range of well thought out activities and play materials that offer appropriate challenge for their individual needs. They listen to the staff and their peers during small and large group time. For example, children are encouraged to give a round of applause to their friends after they sing a song or share a piece of news. They learn to take turns and to think of others. Group time is highly effective in encouraging children to participate and learn because staff make it interesting through the use of stories, flash cards and props. Children's confidence and self-esteem is promoted. They learn to be independent because they self select a number of activities during the session including construction, puzzles and art and craft materials. Most demonstrate a good level of independence in the bathroom and wash and dry their hands. They use wipes to clean their hands before lunch and understand the reasons for maintaining good personal hygiene because the staff talk to them about germs. Most children can put on their own coats and shoes and attempt to put on the dressing up clothes.

Children's communication and language skills are developing because staff engage with them and interact with them throughout the session. They ask questions that promote discussion and describe how to manage various situations. For example, a small group of children wash the dolls using bowls of water and cloths. The member of staff talks to them and demonstrates how to squeeze out the water to ensure the cloth is not too wet. Children enjoy taking part in songs and rhymes. They join in enthusiastically and take on roles in the songs such as 'There was a princess long ago'. Children begin to learn about letters because they have opportunities to recognise their name, to name the letters of the alphabet during group time and have access to a wide variety of labels showing letters and text throughout the setting in the displays and posters. Children have free access to books during the session. They benefit from the times when a member of staff sits in the book area and reads stories chosen by the children. They also look at books spontaneously and hold them correctly. Some re-tell familiar stories from the pictures. Children enjoy using the mark making areas and chose freely from a variety of papers and writing implements. Some can write their names and others form some letters correctly.

Children begin to have an awareness of numbers. Staff use every opportunity to encourage children to count. For example, during activities with small bricks, counting during songs and rhymes and counting crates in the garden as they organise them to make stepping stones.

Children begin to learn about calculating through activities supported by the staff. For example, a group of children playing with a shop. Some take on the role of the customers and have pretend money in their bags and others have the role of the shop keepers. They select items and count how many they have in the basket and give coins to the shopkeeper and receive change in return. Children make observations about size. For example, a child comments that their basket is big and their friend's basket is small. They play with the weighing scales and use mathematical language such as 'heavy' and 'light'. Children enjoy playing with water and sand. Staff ensure that they are provided with items which promote learning and awareness such as floating and sinking, buckets and sand wheels.

Children participate in a wide range of activities that develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. For example, they explore sand, both wet and dry that has animals in it and feel the texture of dry autumn leaves. Children use various construction materials to create structures and enjoy using a work bench and tools to make bird feeders and cars. Children learn how to use tools safely and correctly under the careful supervision of staff. They begin to learn about their local community because they go for walks and look at the design features of different buildings such as houses, churches and shops. Children begin to learn about information and communication technology because they have regular access to the computer. They can successfully navigate the mouse and show pleasure through laughing when they complete a task correctly and are rewarded by a sound on the computer. Children also use programmable toys such as musical toys and calculators. Children's confidence and hand eye coordination is developing through these activities.

Children's creative development is promoted through an imaginative selection of activities. They enjoy playing musical instruments and sing along while playing. They learn how to use the instruments correctly through the demonstration by staff to ensure they make a pleasing sound. Children listen to music and songs during group time and join in with the actions which encourages their listening skills. Children benefit from the carefully planned and resourced activities in the role play area. They enjoy dressing up and taking on roles such as shop keepers, librarians and opticians. Children's creative skills are focused upon through the creativity project which involves visits from various people to encourage their participation in activities such as woodworking where they have made bird feeders, cars and willow stars. Children's confidence and self-esteem is developing through the involvement of specialists in these areas and the support from staff.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from the staff's clear knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how to implement this in order to promote children's learning. They position themselves within the activities and engage the children in purposeful discussions by asking questions, extending children's vocabulary and offering suggestions for other activities if required. Staff manage an effective balance of involvement with the activities while allowing children to lead the play. The planning is linked to the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones. All staff are involved in the planning and each member of staff who works with the children who receive funding for nursery education takes a turn to plan activities which is overseen by the managers. Individual children's needs are taken into account when the planning is done to ensure that activities are pitched correctly. Activities are evaluated during team meetings and any changes required are recorded. Staff identify each child's starting points through observations and information provided by parents.

This enables them to provide appropriate activities to encourage children's development. During their time at the setting children have regular observations recorded of their efforts and achievements which are used to inform the short term planning and are transferred into individual files each half-term. Children also have a detailed target observation completed each half-term. Their progression is shown through these observations, photographs and samples of their work. Children's development and experiences are enhanced because the staff use their skills to provide a high quality range of activities in an interesting learning environment. Children benefit from the praise, encouragement and positive interaction from the staff because their confidence and self-esteem is promoted.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the setting and are included in all activities. They are treated as individuals and with respect. For example, the manager asks children's permission before making video recordings of them participating in a sand activity. Careful planning, discussion with parents and organisation ensures that each child's requirements regarding culture and religion are managed effectively. Children's contributions are valued. They are all given the opportunity to speak during group time and are encouraged to share their 'news' with everyone. Children's work is displayed on the walls. This develops their sense of achievement and self-esteem. Children demonstrate a clear sense of belonging and ownership because they feel secure and they understand the boundaries and the daily routine. They make decisions about their own activities and choose whether they play inside or outside. Children begin to learn about the local community and the wider world because various images are displayed that celebrate diversity through dressing up clothes, books, dolls and characters. Various labels and signs within the setting are written in different languages and texts and children have access to books printed with dual language text. Recent topics have included hospitals and the people who help us when we are unwell. They take part in the celebration of various festivals throughout the year including Chinese New Year, Christmas and Diwali. Staff show confidence when talking to children and answer questions they have about people who are different to themselves. Children who have disabilities or learning difficulties are effectively integrated into the setting. Staff work closely with children and parents to ensure their needs are met effectively and sensitively. This ensures that all children have opportunities to reach their potential while attending the setting.

Children mostly behave well because they are provided with interesting activities which are fun and provide appropriate challenge. They benefit from the staffs active approach when behaviour issues arise. They use age appropriate methods such as explanation and distraction. Children's feelings are acknowledged by staff. Relationships at all levels are good because staff maintain high levels of vigilance in their supervision and children are constantly engaged in their activities which means that behaviour issues are minimised. Children receive a consistent approach from staff. They use positive language, recognise and acknowledge their efforts and achievements and clearly explain what is expected of the children who understand the boundaries that are in place for their safety. Younger children begin to learn to manage their behaviour because staff show a calm, consistent approach when managing issues that relate to children's stages of development. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are encouraged to become involved with their children's learning at the setting. They have access to some information on notice boards and in regular newsletters regarding the policies and procedures, planning and curriculum, current themes and future events of the setting. However, the information regarding the Foundation Stage and planning is not effectively organised to enable parents easy access to the planning and themes of the setting. For example, the information is displayed over three notice boards and some is covered up by other information. Therefore parents do not access the information which impacts on their ability to continue their children's learning at home. Parents are welcomed as helpers and support the committee through fundraising activities such as coffee mornings and cake stalls. They are given information on health issues. For example, leaflets are provided on healthy choices to include in children's lunch boxes and professionals such as Health Visitors attend to provide support to families on other health issues. Parents are consulted before their child starts and ongoing during their time at the setting to find out what the child can do at home and to ensure the family's individual needs are being met. Staff make themselves available during arrival and departure times to discuss any issues with the parents. This positive partnership with parents and carers has a beneficial impact on children's development and feelings of well-being.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the highly effective organisation and committed staff team at the setting. The managers work very well together and ensure that staff are deployed effectively and ratios are maintained at all times. Children arrive and depart at various times during the day and therefore this organisation is paramount. The space available is arranged effectively, children have space to move around and to take part in a variety of activities and good use is made of tables and floor space to display play materials. The setting has comprehensive policies and procedures in place which are available for parents. All the required documentation is in place.

Leadership and management is good. The staff team make ongoing use of the self evaluation form to ensure that the five outcomes for children are kept at the fore front of the setting and staff's practice is reviewed regularly. This ensures that children's needs are met effectively. The two managers are supported by the committee, they also support each other and provide the staff with annual appraisals and regular team meetings. Robust systems are in place to check the suitability of all employees which ensures children's welfare is safeguarded. The setting is working towards the 'Effective Early Learning' Accreditation Scheme with the University of Worcester. The managers and staff review their practice and evaluate their current performance to identify progression. All staff are encouraged to attend training which they identify for themselves and share the information gathered with their colleagues. The setting works closely with other professionals in order to support families and children and receives support from a pedagogical support worker and development worker from the local authority. The management team are highly organised and effective in meeting the needs of all the children. Children benefit because the staff know them very well and can anticipate their needs. The organisation of the documentation, planning and photographs gives a highly professional approach and the involvement in the Effective Early Learning scheme ensures that practise is regularly reviewed and developed which has a positive impact on children's care, learning and

development. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agreed to gain written permission from parents to administer medication. The setting devised an action plan to address the issues and permission is gained in writing before medication is given and all medication is administered by a manager. Parents are expected to provide reasons why the medication is required and records are made in the setting's risk assessment. The provider agreed to increase the staff's awareness of child protection. Most staff have completed training on safeguarding children and an action plan is in place which has revised and updated the procedures for recording concerns and making referrals. The provider agreed to ensure that children are grouped effectively to meet their individual needs. Children are now grouped according to their ages and abilities. The key worker system continues to be developed. The provider agreed to organise the rooms to encourage children's creativity. The rooms have been re-organised to incorporate creative areas ensuring that children have access to creative activities throughout the session. Creative activities are clearly identified on the planning records.

Regarding Nursery Education, the provider agreed to provide parents with more information on their child's development. Parents receive a written report each term on their child's progress. They are invited to coffee mornings where they can look at their child's file and discuss their development with the key worker. The progress on this recommendation continues to be developed particularly in relation to the organisation of the information available to parents for them to continue their child's learning at home. The action taken by the provider enhances children's safety, well-being and learning at the setting.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 1 2004, Ofsted received four complaints relating to the National Standards. Two complaints were investigated jointly and related to National Standard 1 : Suitable Person, National Standard 2 : Organisation and National Standard 6 : Safety. This involved allegations made about staff qualifications, the suitability and behaviour of persons present at the setting, supervision of children at lunchtime and the care of children who have toileting accidents. Four actions were raised to which the pre-school responded appropriately. The third complaint related to National Standard 6 : Safety. This involved monitoring access to the building and the supervision of children. One recommendation was raised to ensure that all visitors are recorded. The fourth complaint related to National Standard 13 : Child Protection and involved concerns raised regarding an injury to a child. No evidence was found to suggest a breach of the National Standards and no further action was taken. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigations were closed.

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):

- ensure that sufficient detail is recorded in the accident record.

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):

- further develop the partnership with parents and carers to ensure they have sufficient accessible information about the Foundation Stage and the planning and purpose of activities to enable them to continue 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