



Upper Hopton Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	311348
Inspection date	13 December 2006
Inspector	Hilary Mary Mckenning
Setting Address	Jackroyd Lane, Upper Hopton, Mirfield, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, WF14 8HS
Telephone number	07989 212296
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Registered person	Upper Hopton 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 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?

Upper Hopton Playgroup registered in 1993. It operates from rooms within Croft House Community Centre, in Mirfield. The children are accommodated in one room, with adjacent kitchen, cloakroom, toilet and storage facilities. Children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area to the side of the building. The playgroup serves the local and wider community.

There are currently 44 children on roll. This includes 11 funded children. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09.30 until 12.00.

Seven members of staff work with the children. Most of them have an early years qualification. The setting receives support from the committee and the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment. Staff promote good hygiene practice to prevent the spread of infection and keep children healthy. Children are encouraged to manage their own personal hygiene through appropriate practice and daily routines. For example, children wash their hands before eating and after outdoor play.

Children enjoy a well-balanced and nutritious range of snacks and drinks to meet dietary needs and requirements, essential for their well being, healthy growth and development. Snack times are social occasions where staff maximise opportunities, encouraging children's independence in serving and feeding themselves and joining in their conversations. Children enjoy having the opportunity to choose what they would like to eat.

Children enjoy regular physical activities both indoors and out, promoting a positive approach to exercise. They take part in an enjoyable range of physical activities that contributes to their well-being. They make their own choices from the range of resources available to help them to gain confidence and new skills. Children move around confidently and safely, negotiating space and obstacles as they skilfully manoeuvre wheeled toys around the environment.

Children under three are beginning to benefit from the setting using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff support younger children effectively, as they follow their own routines for rest and develop confidence in a nurturing environment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and well-maintained environment. The play room is organised to create a child-friendly environment with clearly defined areas, such as construction area, creative area and a quiet area. Children move confidently around the space available, developing their independence. They understand not to run indoors and take care when climbing, as staff sensitively remind them of good practice. Regular discussions and topics help children learn about keeping themselves safe and build on their awareness.

The risk of accidental injury is minimised, as staff conduct clear daily risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. The nursery has effective safety and security precautions, such as door security buzzers and visitor's book. Staff ensures that it is a safe place where children can play and learn. Children are reasonably well protected as staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities regarding child protection issues. However, the child protection policy has not yet been updated to include the contact details for Ofsted.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe as staff involve them in discussions about safety and teach them safe practice. For example, children are gently reminded not to put toys in their mouths and where they may ride bikes indoors. Staff are skilled in allowing a good balance

between freedom and safe limits. Children are able to self-select equipment and activities from a range of resources, which meet safety standards.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and secure as staff get to know them and their families well, fostering warm, trusting relationships. Children enjoy their time in the playgroup and arrive happy and eager to participate. They show enthusiasm and anticipation for the day's events. Children become independent as they choose between a broad variety of toys, books and activities, which appeal to all. They enjoy exploring a wide range of activities that contribute to their creativity, such as painting and model making.

Younger children enjoy many pleasurable experiences. For example, they laugh with delight as they have fun in the water play tray. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used to promote younger children's learning with activities that are stimulating and achievable, such as singing, story telling and mark making. Children easily engage in conversation with their peers and adults as their language skills are developing well. Staff encourage communication as they echo babies sounds and talk through their actions.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy coming to the playgroup and are supported by a high ratio of staff. This ensures children make good progress in all areas of learning. Staff's knowledge of the early learning goals is sound and they use this to plan a relevant curriculum. They are enthusiastic and work hard to provide a varied and interesting curriculum for children. The manager works alongside staff to monitor their work practice and offer support. Children behave very well and are sensitive to the needs of others. They manage their own behaviour positively, using language to resolve conflict, encouraged and supported by skilled staff.

Children are very good communicators and use language confidently for a variety of purposes. They readily initiate conversations, make their needs known and describe past events. For example, children enjoying snack time discuss favourite's saying 'grapes are my favourite fruit, what's yours?'. Children access books and are aware that print carries meaning. They create their own books, using words and photographs to record their visits and outings. For example, photographs and words recall the events of the day the fire fighters visited.

Children learn effectively about space, shape and measure through many practical activities, such as exploring capacity in water play. Children gain confidence in using numbers and they have good counting skills. However, opportunities are missed for them to attempt simple number problems in everyday situations, such as working out how many cups are needed at snack time.

Knowledge and understanding of the world is extended as children use technology to create different kinds of pictures and complete programs on the computer. Some more able children use the mouse skilfully and are eager to help others not as familiar with the controls.

Staff are aware of children's interests and needs. They give priority to getting to know children and their families well. Staff acquire beneficial information by talking to parents and observing children as they play. They regularly assess children's progress through the stepping stones, providing a clear picture for parents. This information is also used to provide appropriate challenge for children. Planning is flexible enough to respond to children's interests and stimulate their curiosity, which ensures they enjoy their learning. Overall children make good progress in all areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have a strong sense of belonging and feel at ease in the playgroup. They are warmly welcomed by staff who are sensitive and value their individuality. Staff work closely with parents to find out what is important to children, such as family occasions and special events in their lives. Children know they are valued, as staff listen attentively to what they say and ask questions about their experiences and interests. For example, they make sure they greet each child individually on arrival and talk to them about what they have been doing at home. This contributes effectively to children developing their self-esteem.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children play harmoniously together, are aware of their own needs and show consideration for the needs of others. For example, older children explain what needs to be drawn next when making a picture with chalks outside in the playground. Children confidently share information about themselves and listen with interest when others share their news. This is due to staff planning opportunities for them to be together in group times and independent play. For example, a small group of children spontaneously talk about their favourite story book and one child begins to tell the story.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are confident in approaching staff and regularly share their views and what they know about their child. Staff keep parents well-informed about what their children are doing and learning through good quality information. This includes regular newsletters, photographs, written details of the nursery's activities and daily discussions. Parents regularly see their children's assessments and comment on their progress. This encourages parents to become involved in their children's learning in meaningful ways.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a homely environment where they can move around and explore freely. Effective deployment of familiar staff and good use of the premises promotes children's well-being. This contributes to children feeling secure and content in the playgroup. Staff have secure knowledge of how children learn and use this to make sure all children participate and are fully included in the group.

Staff work well together and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. They are appropriately vetted and have suitable skills to work with children. Their details are recorded and kept up to

date. Most documentation is in place to support children's welfare and are successfully shared with parents. However, some records available do not reflect up to date information regarding the complaints process and the child protection policy has not yet been updated in line with current guidance. Parents' wishes regarding their child's care clearly influence day-to-day practice and clear written agreements are recorded. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. The manager leads a committed staff team who have a high regard for children's welfare. She acts as a good role model as she works alongside staff. Organisation of the planning is a team effort and a key worker system is in place for recording observations. Team meetings are held regularly to enable staff to evaluate their practice. Regular appraisals have been established to review work practice and identify further training. This commitment to improvement ensures the continuing development of the educational provision.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider was required to address issues relating to staffing and the recruitment process. The committee has now reviewed the procedures and the policy has a clear process to be followed when recruiting staff. There is also a clear expectation of staff roles and responsibilities when working with the children.

The provider was also asked to improve hygiene practices within the playgroup. The group now has bowls of water available throughout the session to enable children to independently wash their hands. These bowls are changed frequently throughout the session.

The provider was asked to address several issues relating to the nursery education. The setting has extended the range and variety of multi-cultural equipment raising children's awareness of the wider world. Children are now also introduced to words and numbers through the use of labels around the room identifying different areas and at different activities areas.

The committee has also established a system where by they can identify the strengths and weaknesses of the playgroup and a strategy to develop the service through accessing training courses.

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.

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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 documentation contains current information regarding child protection and complaints.

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):

- use daily routines consistently to develop children's use and understanding of mathematical language and simple problem solving

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