

# Heaton Manor School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	319192
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 May 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Judith Ann Hodgson
<b>Setting Address</b>	Jesmond Park West, High Heaton, Newcastle upon Tyne, Tyne and Wear, NE7 7DP
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 281 8486 ext 2018
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<b>Registered person</b>	Heaton Manor School 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?

Heaton Manor School Playgroup is situated in the grounds of Heaton Manor School. The children who attend come from a mixed social background and access the group on a flexible basis for up to five sessions per week. The playgroup has been registered since 1974 and is able to provide care for a maximum of 12 children aged two to five years of age. The playgroup is open 37 weeks of the year and runs concurrently with school term times, providing 10 sessions per week.

There are 24 children on roll, of these, 19 receive funding for nursery education. There are currently three children who have English as an additional language.

There are four members of staff who work with the children, all of whom hold a suitable qualification. The playgroup receives teacher consultant support from the local authority and is a member of a playgroup network.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff help the children to stay free from infection as they encourage younger children to wash their hands after using the bathroom, after being outside and before eating their snack. Paper tissues are freely available for them to wipe their noses and children use paper towels to dry their hands, which helps to prevent cross contamination. There is a range of measures in place to support children's good health and to protect them from those who are unwell. Written parental permission has been obtained for seeking emergency treatment and the group's sick child policy is made available to parents. Written records of accidents are maintained and shared with parents, so they are aware of any injury to their child. Most staff members hold relevant and up to date first aid qualifications.

Children enjoy some healthy snacks and drinks that help them to increase their awareness of good nutrition. They are offered sweet biscuits, fruit and toast. Allergies or dietary needs are discussed with parents as part of the registration process. These discussions are recorded to enable staff to accommodate children's individual needs. Children do not have free access to drinking water which means that they may become thirsty. However, staff take steps to prevent this by offering extra drinks during hot weather.

There are good opportunities for children to develop their physical skills as they use the adjoining school playground and large ride-on toys. They are also given opportunities for exercise indoors as staff clear suitable space in the nursery to allow freedom of movement. For example, at the end of a session, children enjoy moving to music, gently exercising their bodies following prompts from staff and a music programme. They enjoy their exercise. These steps have a positive impact on the children's well-being.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The children have access to a playroom which is bright and airy. Children's work displayed on the walls makes it a child-friendly environment and helps them to take pride in what they do. There are sufficient good quality, well maintained playthings, which are appropriate to the children's stages of development. Space constraints mean that not all equipment is available for children to choose freely. However, staff ensure that the children have a wide choice of appropriate equipment by rotating toys and games to maintain their interest. There is sufficient child-size furniture and equipment, such as small tables and chairs, to meet the needs of all children.

Children visit the toilet facilities independently, which enables them to develop their confidence in managing self-care skills. There is a range of measures in place to support safety and help avoid accidents. For example, fire fighting equipment is in place and daily visual risk assessments are completed to minimise any hazards to children. Children learn to share responsibility for their safety through meaningful activities, such as tidying away toys and taking part in emergency evacuation drills in conjunction with the adjoining school. Children's safety is ensured through the effective security of the premises. For example, outer doors are locked so children are not able to leave unsupervised and visitors are required to sign in and out.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as staff have a sufficient understanding of child protection. Staff discuss any concerns with the manager who is confident in implementing the setting's child protection procedure.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy coming to the playgroup and have fun here. Staff work hard to support new parents and children through a flexible settling in period which enables both parents and children to feel comfortable with the staff and setting before care commences. As a result, children settle quickly. Young children leave their carers with confidence and enjoy access to all available activities and resources. They are well included at group times, such as snack time, circle time and outdoor play. Children have free choice of the activities set out by the staff which fosters independence. They have good relationships with staff, are confident and comfortable, seek support with their activities when they need it, and enjoy chatting to the adults who care for them. Although some activities are in line with 'Birth to three matters' framework, this is not reflected in the setting's planning. Staff listen to children, respond to their comments and use praise constantly, increasing the children's self-esteem.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals as staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Assessments noted through observations of children provide evidence of their achievements and these are used by staff to guide future planning. The planning does not identify how children will be supported or challenged and, therefore, opportunities for individual learning may be lost. However, staff have good knowledge of the children in their care which means that they receive the support or extension during the activity. This enhances the children's learning according to their individual needs. Staff are currently amending the setting's formal planning systems and are aware that this is an area for development. Children's individual development records are clear and comprehensive. They include achievements related to the stepping stones and photographs of them involved in activities which give a clear picture of their attainment. Staff are committed to improving their practice and evaluate the planned activities.

Stimulating activities and free choice provide children with good opportunities for learning. Children are confident and interested, ask staff questions and enjoy the activities. For instance, when using water and paintbrushes to make marks on the wall and yard outside, the children discuss colours and shapes, wet and dry, and show curiosity at what happens to the water in the sunshine. Incidental learning opportunities are seized by staff to challenge the children's thinking. Children have good relationships with staff and each other. They greet each other warmly and join together in games and activities. Children show good levels of concentration when building towers of bricks or when drawing pictures. They are encouraged to be independent as they bring in the equipment from outside and wash their hands before starting a new activity.

Children enjoy listening to stories both in large and small groups where they are encouraged to be involved in the story through skilled staff intervention. For example, when listening to 'We're going on a bear hunt', children participate in the story by performing various actions and sounds to mimic the events in the journey. Staff ensure books are displayed in the book area of the playroom and are accessible to all the children. Children have opportunities to recognise their own name or that of their friends. For example, they find their name card when

they come in at the start of the session. Some children are beginning to form letter shapes and are able to write their names as they are supported in their early writing. The children are good communicators; they interact well with each other and with the adults who care for them. They confidently discuss events from home, such as birthday parties and other family events. Children learn about numbers and counting as they are encouraged to count when playing games, when singing songs in circle time and as they take turns to count biscuits at snack time. They extend their mathematical vocabulary as they make shapes with water outside and compare sizes. However, there are limited opportunities for the older children to develop calculation skills which means that they are not challenged in this area of learning.

Planned activities offer a wide range of practical experiences to enable the children to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. Children ask and answer questions with confidence and enjoy discussing the activities with staff. Planning, resources and activities for information technology are very limited which means that children have insufficient experience in this area of the curriculum. Children benefit from being offered activities to develop their fine motor skills, such as construction with large and small bricks and use small jigsaw pieces, pencils and paint brushes.

Children enjoy opportunities to enhance their creative development. They draw and construct with card. They have opportunities to develop their musical ability as they sing together at circle time. Children engage in imaginative role play, using the good quality resources provided. Staff support this by being involved in their games and reinforcing their ideas. For example, when playing in the pretend kitchen, staff become involved in the children's game by asking open questions and pretend to drink tea that the children have made. The children respond by discussing the meal with staff, thus enhancing their play. Children have fun and enjoy being at the nursery and they are able to name their favourite activities, books and friends.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed and included within the setting. Children have access to a wide variety of resources to help them gain an awareness of diversity. They play happily with a 'dressing the child' game and comment on the different costumes used. The children are confident as they are praised for their achievements; staff listen to the children's comments and respond warmly and appropriately. Children are thanked for their responses and good manners are positively reinforced. Staff are experienced in meeting children's additional needs, which they do by working in close partnership with parents. Children are generally well behaved; they are polite and listen carefully to each other at circle time. Parents comment on the friendly welcome they receive from staff and that their children are happy here.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children benefit from the staff's friendly relationship with parents. Parents are supplied with written information about the setting at the beginning of care and have opportunities to discuss issues with staff throughout the flexible induction period. This enables both parents and children to feel secure with the playgroup before the children settle on their own. Noticeboards, daily dialogue and newsletters provide further information throughout the period of care and education. Staff complete the children's individual progress files with photographs and examples of work in line with the stepping stones and six areas of learning. Although these files are available for parents on request, parents are not asked to contribute to children's initial assessments and they have limited planned opportunities to discuss and review children's educational records. Parents make very positive comments about the good atmosphere and friendliness of staff and the good job done on

increasing children's confidence and independence. Children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is adequately supported by the appropriate organisation of the playgroup room and staff. The daily routine and play areas are organised to allow the children access to a range of different play opportunities, which helps to support their development and learning. Most documentation is in place and up to date. However, the procedure for lost or uncollected children is only in the information for parents, it is not available in the policy documents. Therefore, staff do not have all the information they need, which may have a negative impact on the children's well-being. The staff are currently updating the policy and procedure documents, as they have identified it as an area for development. Some staff first aid certificates are no longer valid which means that children are not fully protected in the event of an emergency. Satisfactory recruitment and induction procedures safeguard children.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff have appropriate experience and qualifications, a sound knowledge of childcare and the early years Foundation Stage and benefit from training opportunities. The staff work well as a team and meet on a regular basis to plan the educational provision. The group is aware of their strengths and areas for development in the playgroup. The group welcomes support from the local authority advisory staff to aid the development of the provision. Planning systems for the children are currently being evaluated and revised with this support.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting was asked to ensure that the complaints procedure included the contact details of the regulator and that written, parental permission was in place to seek or administer emergency treatment. The documents have been updated to include the required elements, which means that children are protected in these areas of care. The setting was also asked to include the procedure for lost or uncollected children in the written policies of the playgroup. This has been included in the policy pack for parents, so parents are aware of the procedure. However, it has not yet been included in the setting's policy file.

## **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 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):

- make drinking water freely available throughout the sessions
- continue to update policy and procedures to reflect current practice and include a procedure for lost or uncollected children
- undertake first aid training which includes training in first aid for young children.

#### **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):

- develop resources and activities to provide experiences in information technology and calculation in mathematics
- develop planning systems to incorporate differentiation for all ages and stages of development
- develop more formal opportunities to report children's progress to parents.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)