Hippitots

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY233891
Inspection date	30 October 2006
Inspector	Lindsey Pollock

Setting Address	The Tarka Centre, Commercial Road West, Coxhoe, Durham, County Durham, DH6 4HJ
Telephone number	0191 3773759
E-mail	
Registered person	Hippitots Ltd
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care

This inspection was carried out under the provisions of Part XA of the Children Act 1989, as inserted by the Care Standards Act 2000

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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hippitots opened in 2003. It operates from two-storey premises in Coxhoe. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas and provides full day care including out of school care.

There are currently 59 children on roll, including 21 funded children. The setting has procedures in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and for those children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday from 07.30 to 18.00.

There are 11 staff including the manager employed to work with the children. Ten staff have an early years qualification and some are currently on further training programmes. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and suitably maintained environment to promote their health. Appropriate procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection when nappy changing, such as wiping the mat between use and disposing of soiled items immediately. Children are becoming aware of the importance of washing their hands, however, individual hand towels are not available in all nursery rooms. This does not reduce the spread of germs. Cot bedding is changed on a regular basis, however, babies do occasionally share the same cot between changes which does not help to prevent the risk of cross infection. Sufficient numbers of staff have completed up to date first aid training to help protect children should an accident occur. There are procedures in place regarding the administration of medication, whereby staff obtain detailed written information regarding correct dosages and times to administer. They then record fully what has been administered but not all staff obtain written permission from parents for this which places children at risk and is a breach of regulations. Children benefit from regular opportunities to play outside in the fresh air. Older children access this daily and experience all types of weather as they wrap up in suitable clothing. As children use outdoor equipment, such as bikes and climbing and balancing resources, they develop a positive attitude to exercise. They manoeuvre the tricycles around the play area skilfully negotiating around other children and stopping before running into them.

Children are appropriately nourished. Menus are balanced and meals are prepared using fresh ingredients when possible. Snacks, which are generally fresh fruit, are offered to the children. Older children are beginning to learn about the importance of healthy eating through baking and shopping activities and using real ingredients in the role play area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Premises are made warm and welcoming to children and parents. Art work and information is displayed and staff are on hand to settle the children on arrival. Children have independent access to a wide range of good quality toys and resources. These are attractively presented on low shelving to encourage children to access them safely and independently. Equipment is set out ready for when children arrive so that the rooms look inviting. Children who attend the after school choose from a good range of age appropriate toys and games. These are all easily accessible to them so they can select what they want to play with. The outdoor play area has recently been developed to include a sensory garden where all children can explore and investigate.

Premises are secure and staff are vigilant. Reasonable steps are taken to keep children safe, such as checking the outdoor area and ensuring they cannot access stairs or the kitchen area.

Children are helped to gain an awareness of safety by staff explaining safe practice to them, such as being careful with scissors and cutlery. Older children learn how to keep themselves safe, for example, how to cross the road safely through planned activities and role play. Staff are clear about the emergency evacuation procedures and practise these regularly so children become aware of what to do in an emergency. Children who attend the out of school provision know how to behave sensibly in the car and know the routine for being collected from school at the end of the day.

Staff have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities in safeguarding children. Some have attended relevant training and information is available to enable them to report any concerns promptly. Procedures are in place should an allegation be made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally happy and content whilst in the nursery. Staff consult with parents about children's individual needs and pay attention to them. They know the children well and respond appropriately to their needs for sleep, feeding and nappy changing which contributes to them feeling secure. Communication skills are developing well. Babies vocalise and older children are happy to chat about what they are doing. A satisfactory range of activities are provided for children under the age of three years. They freely choose from activities set out for them and also self-select from the low storage. They happily experiment with play dough and proudly show off the pumpkin faces that they have made. There are opportunities for them to participate in many craft activities and explore different textures as they use finger paints and make collages from different materials. Babies and very young children have access to colourful shape sorters and musical toys to aid their development. Although activities are generally purposeful staff do not have sufficient knowledge of an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters' to enable them to promote the outcomes for children fully, and to be sure of what they expect children to achieve from the activities. Staff observe and record what children can do but do not use their observations to plan the next steps for children's play, learning and development. Children who attend the after school provision are happy and relaxed. They are free to choose from a varied range of resources and activities which are based around their interests. Particular favourites are the playstation and the keyboard. They enjoy regular outings to the park and the shops.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The children are well supported by staff who have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and know how children learn effectively. As a result, the children are making good progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. The curriculum is balanced and covers all areas, however, the documentation which shows the learning outcomes for children is not clearly linked to the stepping stones so that staff can be sure all are covered. Children's learning is well promoted because they enjoy exploring interesting themes and topics which are carefully planned to link to all six areas of learning. There is a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities. The challenges set for children arouse their interest and curiosity and help them to develop their thinking skills. Children's

progress is recorded using the local authority's assessment system, Flying Start 2. Staff use their knowledge of the children to complete these and keep photographs and samples of children's work as evidence of what they have achieved.

Children are motivated to learn and able to concentrate well. They work well together and know to share resources. For example, when playing in the role play area preparing real ingredients. They are self-assured and confidently speak to the whole group during story and welcome time. Writing materials are freely available and children use them in the course of their activities, demonstrating good early writing skills. Children are developing good mathematical skills in well-planned activities, free play and the daily routine. For example, they count four bricks when building a tower and know that 'one more makes five' and take the correct amount of steps when playing 'What's the time Mr Wolf'. They love experimenting and exploration and watch carefully to see what happens when ice melts and their plants grow. Computer skills are developing well and they successfully complete programmes using the equipment competently. Outings in the local area, to the theatre and farm, and visitors to the nursery such as firemen and Ben and Jess the police dogs, mean children are gaining a sense of place and an understanding of the roles of different people. They express themselves very well in imaginative play and in creative activities. Children successfully use real resources, such as tea pots, cutlery and vegetables in the role play area to recreate first hand experiences. They enjoy music and participate enthusiastically whether they are singing, dancing with the dance teacher or distinguishing between the different sounds of instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery welcomes all children. They have a sense of belonging and are generally happy and secure within the setting. Older children have good access to a range of activities to raise their awareness of diversity and broaden their experiences. They celebrate festivals, such as Christmas, Easter and Diwali which helps them to develop a respect and understanding for their own and other's beliefs. This positive approach means that children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development is fostered. Satisfactory procedures are in place to support children who have learning difficulties/and or disabilities. The newly designated member of staff is currently developing in her role and is aware of her responsibilities. Effective systems are in place to ensure staff work fully with parents and outside agencies to ensure children reach their full potential whilst in the nursery.

Children's behaviour is generally good and staff provide polite and respectful role models that the children are beginning to mirror well. The older children are familiar with the boundaries and simple rules and help to tidy away and take care of resources willingly. They remember to say please and thank you and are polite when talking to adults. They show care and concern for others and play well together sharing resources and developing friendship groups. Younger children are beginning to understand about acceptable behaviour with the support of staff.

Parents are warmly welcomed and chat to staff when they drop off and collect their child. Written policies and procedures provide parents with essential information about the provision, however, the complaints policy has not been updated to show the correct contact details for Ofsted. Parents are encouraged to share information about their child when they join the

nursery and continue to share information through regular informal talks with staff. This effective communication between parents and staff helps to promote children's welfare and safety. Partnership with parents of children receiving nursery education is satisfactory. At the start of the placement they are made aware of the records retained on their children and are given some opportunities to discuss their child's progress through annual open days and informal discussions. Information about activity planning is displayed in the nursery but little information is provided to help parents to contribute and consolidate their child's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Sound recruitment and selection procedures are in place which ensures that all adults have completed an appropriate vetting procedure and are suitable to care for children. New procedures for staff supervision and appraisal systems have recently been introduced to monitor staff effectiveness and develop their practice. Registration systems are detailed and clearly show when children are present. This helps to safeguard their welfare.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The nursery has a strong commitment to developing the funded education and has benefited greatly from the expertise of the setting's advisory teacher who leads the staff team. She works very closely with the staff to develop and monitor the curriculum and teaching and to build their confidence and knowledge. As a consequence, the teaching staff have a clear view of their role and are constantly seeking ways to bring about improvement for the benefit of the children.

Policies and procedures which are required for the safe and efficient management of the provision are in place and most are maintained to a good standard. The exception to this is the complaints policy and the documentation relating to the administration of medication and for taking children on outings. This is not organised effectively to fully support the children's welfare and safety. All records are up-to-date, easily accessible and stored securely to maintain confidentiality.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the setting has ensured that children are grouped appropriately to promote their welfare. Following the last nursery education inspection the setting has provided more opportunities for children to investigate how and why things work to help increase their knowledge and understanding of the world. There are more opportunities provided for children to develop their mathematical understanding through everyday fun activities. Systems are now in place to monitor and evaluate the curriculum to ensure there is sufficient challenge for older children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004, 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 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 written consent is obtained from parents for the administration of all medication and for taking children on outings
- reduce the risk of cross infection by ensuring children do not share hand towels and cot bedding
- improve the outcomes for children under three by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three' matters
- update the complaints policy so this shows the correct details for contacting Ofsted.

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 the documentation which shows the learning outcomes for children so they are clearly linked to the stepping stones
- develop the ways in which information regarding children's achievements can be shared with parents and of how they can consolidate children'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*