

Honey Bees Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109441
Inspection date	21 June 2007
Inspector	Christine McInally
Setting Address	The Pavillion, King George V Playing Field, Plumpton Green, Nr Lewes, East Sussex, BN7 3DP
Telephone number	07745 570882
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Registered person	Honey Bees 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?

Honey Bees Playgroup opened in 1999 and is managed by a voluntary committee. It operates from a purpose built room housed in a sports pavilion in the village of Plumpton Green, near Lewes. The playgroup serves the local community, and children attend for a variety of sessions.

There is currently 23 children on roll, of these 18 receive funded nursery education. The playgroup is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or those who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup opens five mornings per week from 09.30 to 12.00, during term time only. There are five members of staff of these, three hold appropriate childcare qualifications and the other two have good experience of working with young children. The group receive support from a Teaching and Learning Consultant from East Sussex School Improvement Service and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted through everyday routines and a range of worthwhile activities. They learn about the importance of good personal hygiene and understand why they need to wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating food. They also learn about the need for hygiene within the playroom as they help to clean the table with anti-bacterial spray before snack. Good arrangements for dealing with sickness and accidents ensures that children are looked after well and minimises the spread of infection.

Children enjoy regular physical play both indoors and out and extend their physical skills, on a daily basis. A stimulating variety of activities helps children gain increasing control of their bodies for example, as they pour water from container to container or as they play on the large climbing frame in the public park directly outside the setting. Staff have a good understanding of Birth to three matters and use the guidance well to provide a range of physical play experiences for the younger children.

A very good variety of healthy and nutritious snacks are offered to the children and snack time is a social occasion, which the children clearly enjoy. They display enthusiasm in making choices from the different snacks available including toast, fruit bread and exotic fruits. As they eat staff talk to the children and encourage conversation promoting their social development. While children can ask for a drink of water at anytime they do not have free access to drinks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children enjoy their play in an extremely safe environment because staff are exceedingly vigilant and use thorough risks assessments to reduce potential hazards. Space within the playroom is effectively organised, allowing children to move around safely, freely and independently. Children are enthusiastic explorers when playing outside with a variety of challenging physical play equipment in the public playground beside the setting. Staff check the outside area every session and children understand why as staff discuss this with them daily.

Children use a wide range of high quality toys and resources appropriate to their age and stage of development. Children begin to develop an understanding of keeping themselves safe as they practise fire evacuation procedures or as they learn about road safety helping them to begin to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe. They also learn about safety through staff's clear and simple explanations as to why a rule is in place, for example they know not to run inside as they might fall and hurt themselves.

Children are safeguarded by staff that have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures. There is a clearly written policy which is shared with the parents. These measures contribute to the safety and welfare of the children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the welcoming environment. The care, learning and play experiences are good. Children develop good relationships as they learn to play cooperatively

or chat to staff about significant events, such as, the visit to the playgroup of the Lollipop Lady. Children are given lots of praise and encouragement which develops their confidence and self-esteem. The playgroup operates a free play session which means children are able to select their own activities and staff support them well in their chosen activities. Children show considerable independence as they make choices about the toys and resources they want to play with. A wide range of appropriate resources and activities promotes children's development.

Children are interested in the activities available and spend time concentrating on self-chosen tasks. Staff encourage children to play together and share. All children enjoy plenty of opportunities to develop their social skills, for example, as they sit together and chat at snack times. Children enjoy their play outside, and staff support them well encouraging children to attempt increasing challenges, such as, helping younger children to use the pedals on the bikes.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge and understanding of how children learn and use the stepping stones to clearly identify children's achievements. Planning is good, links clearly to the stepping stones and ensures a wide range of activities and experiences are provided to extend children's learning. Observations and assessments are detailed, however they are not consistently used to inform planning for children's next steps in learning.

Children access a comprehensive range of well chosen resources which support their progress across all areas of learning. They form good relationships with each other and the staff, they show concern and are sensitive to others' needs. Staff and children alike laugh together and enjoy very good relationships helping to support their personal development. All children are eager to learn, self assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. Children are fluent speakers and initiate and continue conversations with others. Children develop a healthy interest in books, they enjoy sharing stories with adults and peers and delight in predictable endings. They are learning that print carries meaning through recognising their name as they find their seat at snack time and seeing words in the environment. They have good opportunities to practise their emergent writing skills in the writing area. Children skilfully use and recognise numbers in everyday activities. Children count confidently and recognise numbers that are important to them. They choose number activities during free play and enjoy number rhymes and songs. They are beginning to use mathematical language appropriately as they tell staff which is the tallest and which is the shortest 'building' as they play with the construction toys.

Topic work and practical activities arouses children's natural curiosity and develops their exploration and investigation skills. Children use their own ideas to make things by building and joining. They use everyday technology in their play and learn about the world in which they live through visitors to the playgroup such as, police and fire officers. Photographs are used to particularly good effect to help children recall significant events within the playgroup. Children move confidently and are developing good coordination skills, they show a good awareness of space and handle a range of tools and small equipment well. They learn to balance and climb on outdoor equipment and enjoy playing on the sit and ride toys. Children use their imagination and enjoy making models with recycled materials. They express themselves freely through painting and role play. They enjoy many different textures such as collage, sand, water and ice.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Friendly staff provide a warm, welcoming environment for children and their parents. Children are greeted warmly by staff who ask how they are and what they have been doing at home. This helps them feel secure and develop a sense of belonging. Children are encouraged to select their own activities, learning to make their own decisions.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are beginning to learn about the wider world through a range of activities and celebrations such as Chinese New Year. There is a range of resources that reflect the diversity of culture, gender and disability that children regularly play with. This helps develop children's understanding of others. The setting is not currently caring for any children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. However, staff have relevant past experience and ensure that they work with parents and other professionals to meet each child's needs.

Staff are friendly and approachable; they work well with parents and exchange information about the children each day as they arrive and collect them. The notice board provides parents with additional information to ensure they are kept informed. Parents also have opportunities to be involved through the rota of parent helpers. Partnership with parents and carers who receive nursery funded education is good. They receive information on the educational programme provided for their children and are kept informed of current topics and events through newsletters and items on the notice board. The consistency is further advanced by daily verbal feedback to ensure parents are informed about what their children have been doing whilst at playgroup.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children feel at home and are at ease in the well-organised environment. Children benefit from being cared for by staff that are qualified and experienced in childcare. All staff members have a good knowledge and understanding of children's developmental needs. All children receive good support from a staff group that enjoy their company and know them well helping them feel secure and confident.

Leadership and management is good. There are systems in place to monitor and evaluate the funded nursery education. Policies and procedures to guide the staff team are in place, and available to parents. These are used effectively to promote the welfare, care and learning of children. Staff and committee members are very aware of their differing roles and responsibilities and work well together. Staff work well as a team and clear communication and guidance allows them to provide a stimulating well-balanced programme. There are regular appraisals that identify training needs and staff are encouraged to enrol on relevant courses. This supports staff in their role and ensures they have the latest and most relevant information available. All aspects of the children's care and learning are discussed with the parents, who are kept well informed of their child's achievements. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous nursery education inspection the playgroup uses focused learning sessions within the daily activities. This provides staff with good opportunities to explore a range of

words and texts with the children, helping to improve their understanding of the written word. Children are being helped to develop a sense of time and space through daily routines and planned topics. Planning now includes ideas for extending activities so staff have a better understanding of how to challenge older or more able children. Written information on the early learning goals is included in the reference file available for parents. All of these measures make a positive contribution to children's learning within the setting.

Following the last care inspection the playgroup has increased the use of visual materials that reflect diversity. This helps children to develop an understanding of others.

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):

- explore ways of enabling children to help themselves to drinking water

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 use of the assessment records to ensure the information gathered is used to plan for the children's next steps in learning

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