



TMA Helping Hands Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141824
Inspection date	16 January 2007
Inspector	Dorcas Forgan
Setting Address	2 Church Hill, Two Mile Ash, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire, MK8 8EQ
Telephone number	01908 568586
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Registered person	TMA Helping Hands Pre-School
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?

Two Mile Ash helping Hands Pre-School opened in 1999. It operates from a community building that, at other times, functions as a church. A committee of volunteers manages the group. The pre-school serves the local area. A maximum of 32 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open five days a week during term times from 09:10 until 11:45. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 40 children from two to four years on roll, of these 32 children receive nursery funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The Pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs six full time staff to work with the children, an administrator and four relief workers. Of these, two staff including the manager hold appropriate early years

qualifications and four staff are currently on training programmes. The pre-school are accredited with the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current environmental health and hygiene guidance, policies and procedures very effectively. The designated member of staff ensures that the group keep up to date with any new recommendations or requirements. The committee and staff review policies as necessary and all are aware of the changes. The majority of staff have first aid qualifications. All documentation is kept as necessary. Children are gaining a very good understanding of effective hygiene routines and personal independence through well-organised routines and consistent support. Children ask to be escorted to the toilet and are encouraged to wash their hands. The tissues to wipe their noses are within easy reach so that children can help themselves.

Children are very well nourished and are learning about healthy living. Staff provide snacks that are a choice of healthy options such as fresh fruit, cheese and bread sticks. The snack bar is organised so that children can choose when they would like to eat their choice of fruit and have a drink. They help to prepare the fruit and pour their drink of milk or water. They sit with a few other children or a member of staff and chat socially. This is a happy relaxed activity where children are practicing many skills. Children are encouraged to help themselves to drinks, as they feel thirsty especially after very energetic physical activities. They are learning to recognise their bodies' needs.

Children enjoy physical activity and enthusiastically take part in organised sessions such as those laid on by Milton Keynes Don's. They play various energetic games in which they negotiate spaces, learn to move with ease around obstacles, follow instructions and use footballs. Children have daily opportunities to use the physical equipment inside. When the weather allows they play in the fresh air. Amongst the activities that they enjoy are using the parachute, balancing on the beams, riding bikes and playing with the hoops, beanbags and stilts.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a light bright premises that is very welcoming, safe and secure. The wide ranges of suitable activities are set out in an attractive well-organised way so that children can move around safely and independently. Risks of accidental injury are minimised as the staff check the building and use safety checklists before the children arrive. The security procedures at the front door are thorough with additional safety checks when another adult collects a child.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe and avoid accidental injury, through gentle reminders and clear guidance. They confirm at the beginning of some of the sessions that they should not run when inside and they help to clear away toys and activities so that they are not

hazards. Children practise the emergency evacuation regularly so that all know what they should do and are not frightened by the procedure.

Children are well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of their duties

and responsibilities to protect children from harm. The staff have a good knowledge of the groups policies and procedures and receive ongoing training to ensure they remain up to date.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enter the group happily, staff greet them all individually. Most of the children are settled in the group, some still like their mothers to stay with them for a short while. Children have comfortable relationships with the staff and many have made good friends with other children. They play happily together, such as the four girls who play an imaginary game together that involves dressing up. The children choose which activities they want to take part in independently, they decide for themselves when they have finished the activity and move on so they can complete to their own satisfaction. Staff are beginning to use Birth to Three Matters to ensure that the younger children receive appropriate stimulation to enhance their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching is good. Senior staff have a competent understanding of the Foundation stage, the remaining staff are rapidly becoming familiar with it through training and practical experience. Staff are becoming effective in challenging the children by asking questions and extending activities. The plans include all areas of learning and they clearly show the learning intentions which are linked to the stepping stones. However, they do not show how adaptations are made for children of different abilities or evaluations of the activity. Key workers plan separate activities for the children in their group, to concentrate on their individual needs.

Children's progress is recorded in their individual files. Staff make observations of the children and the progress they are making. Examples of the children's work and photographs are also kept as a record. Staff develop Individual learning plans for each child which are based on the Stepping stones, this is done in consultation with the parents. The daily routine in the pre-school is well planned to maximise the amount of time children can spend at activities, their concentration is being extended very well. The special sessions that are arranged for the children provide additional fun and stimulation. Children are gaining confidence and self esteem as they begin to achieve new skills and form relationships, they are beginning to distinguish right from wrong. Children talk confidently about home and their emotions as they use the puppets to act out stories. Some use other means of communicating such as activity pictures. Children enjoy listening to stories they handle and care for books well. The more able children recognise their own names and some are beginning to write them, they have opportunities to mark make, but there are few opportunities to use reference books or to see letters displayed to practise linking sounds with letters.

Children use mathematical resources as they wish, they are becoming familiar with counting. They enjoy doing puzzles and some are able to match shapes and sizes to printed sheets. Children are learning about volume and capacity whilst playing in the water. There are few numerals displayed. Children explore different materials when creating scrapbooks and making collages. They use their own initiatives to decide how to create their pictures and books and what resources they will use. The role-play areas are very well resourced so that children act out different situations in the home and library areas and also with the puppets. They dress up in many different costumes from fairies to cats and dogs and invent their own stories, children often include others and sometimes adults.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who work with parents to meet individual children's needs and to ensure they are included in the life of the setting. Children are becoming aware of a wider society, and that other children differ to them and have different needs. They enjoy many different activities, which are connected to various festivals such as Valentines Day, Chinese New Year and Easter. Children have access to a wide range of equipment, which promote positive images of diversity in the wider world. Staff are developing effective procedures to support children with learning difficulties. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is very good. They work harmoniously with others and are sociable. Children make choices and decisions and are learning self discipline. They receive appropriate support. Staff are very good role models and provide a positive environment.

Partnership with parents is very good. Children's care is enhanced by the close relationships developing between staff and parents this also reinforces the children's sense of belonging and confidence in the setting. Communication is made in various ways from the notice boards and newsletters to the termly meetings held to discuss their child's progress. Parents are informed and involved in their child's learning so that all work together with the staff to ensure children make progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The good organisation of the activities and staff deployment contribute to the children's good health, safety and enjoyment. The new committee manage the staff and carry out effective employment procedures, they ensure all staff are competent and vetted. All members of the staff are committed to improvement as is evident through the amount of training that is attended. The operational plan is a working document and along with the policies and procedures is reviewed frequently, However contact details for Ofsted are out of date.

Leadership and management are good. The new manager has a clear idea of what the group should offer, she works closely with the team of dedicated staff, they are all keen to do their best for the children. The staff receive the backing of the enthusiastic committee. They monitor

and review the sessions to ensure all are happy and well occupied. They are all willing to seek advice and make changes as necessary. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last children Act inspection recommended that the pre-school develop their documentation to include all necessary parental permissions. Extend the child protection policy to include the procedures to be followed if allegations made against staff and include Ofsted's contact details in the complaints procedure. They should also ensure all staff are aware of the child protection procedure. At the Foundation Stage inspection key issues raised were that planning should be developed to show differentiations for children's ages and the focus of learning. They should also provide further opportunities for children to use language skills, write and explore sound and music. The group have developed their documentation to include all necessary details, however the address included for Ofsted is out of date. All staff are made aware of the child protection policy to assure the children's safety. The weekly plans show the learning focus but do not include the differentiation of activities for children of different abilities. There are good opportunities for children to write and to explore music.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1st April 2004, Ofsted received one complaint relating to standards 10, with concerns that child's special needs were not addressed appropriately and standard 12, the provider not working in partnership with parents. The provision carried out an internal investigation and submitted a detailed response. Ofsted were satisfied the National Standards were being met and took no further action. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 that all contact details are up to date

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):

- improve the children's understanding of literacy through non fiction books and displays of letters and numbers.
- develop plans to include evaluations of focused activities and differentiations to show how children with various abilities will be challenged.

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