



Hevingham Under 5's Association

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254110
Inspection date	28 November 2006
Inspector	Rosalie Mary Turner
Setting Address	The Portacabin, Hevingham CP School, Westgate, Hevingham, Norwich, Norfolk, NR10 5NH
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Hevingham Under 5's Association
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Hevingham Under 5's Association is run by a voluntary committee of parents and carers. It opened in 1984 and was re-registered in 2004 following a move to a mobile building within the primary school grounds in the rural community of Hevingham, Norfolk. A maximum of 22 children may attend the facility at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.10 to 15.10 during school term times. Out of school care is also provided for children up to 12 years of age from 08.00 to 18.00 during the Easter and summer holiday periods. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 30 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions and come from the local community and surrounding villages.

The association employs four members of staff. Of these, two hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a higher qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are protected from the spread of infection because they are not allowed to attend if they are suffering from a contagious illness and staff wipe surfaces where food is served with anti-bacterial spray. Children learn the importance of personal hygiene as the staff remind them that they must wash their hands after they use the toilet and before eating to prevent germs from spreading. All staff are qualified to administer first aid treatment and they keep a stocked first aid kit close to hand so that children receive suitable treatment if they hurt themselves during play. However, staff do not always obtain a carer's signature to acknowledge the accident and this could compromise children's well-being.

The staff take positive steps to promote healthy eating. They ensure children enjoy a variety of nutritious options, such as cheese and crackers followed by fresh fruit, for their mid-session snack. Exotic fruits, such as pomegranates, tempt children to try food that they have not previously experienced and a member of staff sits with those who stay for their lunch, to ensure they eat sufficient food to meet their needs. As a result, children learn which foods will promote their growth and development.

Children are able to help themselves to fresh drinking water if they feel thirsty, especially after they have been active. They are learning about the positive effect that fresh air has upon their health and look forward to playing in the recently improved outside play area. The staff plan a worthwhile range of outdoor activities to encourage children to use up their surplus energy and learn how exercise will help them to stay fit and healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is assured because the staff carry out a daily check of the play environment and take steps to ensure that the inside and outdoor areas are free from hazards. For example, they inspect the resources and remove any toys that are damaged or have pieces missing. The adults also sit with children as they play to make sure they use small tools safely and protect them from harmful materials in the kitchen with a safety gate. Children learn to keep themselves safe when they go for walks in the village as the staff talk to them about the danger from traffic.

Children come into the playgroup happily. They receive a warm welcome from the staff who work hard to make the playroom a stimulating environment by draping the ceilings with colourful fabrics, displaying the children's art work and playing background music. Parents are able to stay to support children who may find separation difficult and, as a result, they settle well, stay relaxed and are emotionally secure.

Children are safeguarded from possible risk of harm because the staff supervise them closely at all times and help them to be aware of personal safety. They are protected from 'stranger danger' as children are not allowed to leave with adults unless the staff have consent from their parents and a password is known. Staff demonstrate that they can recognise, and respond to, the signs and symptoms of possible abuse. Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance is kept in the playgroup and a clear child protection policy ensures adults are able to act quickly if they have concerns to safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and they have formed friendships with the staff who tempt them to join in with play so that they develop their confidence. All staff are warm and kind towards the children and chat about what they are doing, speaking clearly so that they learn new words. Children are given time to develop their own ideas and thoroughly enjoy spreading glue onto their paper and making patterns with the brightly coloured glitter. They show pleasing hand to eye co-ordination and skilfully place tiny sequins on to their Christmas decorations.

Younger children are reassured by the familiar routine because they know what happens next. They work happily alongside each other and co-operate well as they take turns to jump on the mini trampoline or share the bicycles. Children are learning to concentrate and they persist with challenges, such as rolling or cutting out pastry, with appropriate support from the staff. For instance, they ask 'Are you going to have a go at rolling?' and exclaim 'Well done! A really good try!' to encourage children to persevere. The treasure box is popular and contains a commendable range of natural materials to stimulate children's tactile learning including shells, polished stones, wooden balls and curtain rings.

The staff get to know individual children well so that they can provide a range of activities that match their interests. However, they do not observe or key work individuals until the start of the Foundation Stage and this could limit their overall progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are developing their skills in most areas of their learning, although there are weaknesses in planning that impact on the progress that children are able to make, particularly in their mathematical and physical development. All staff have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. They observe children as they play and assess their findings in all areas of learning. However, there are no clear links between the assessment documents and future planning to ensure that the activities provided fully challenge all children to extend their skills. Furthermore, the new staff team has not yet developed short-term plans or evaluated the focussed activities to help them to recognise where they are successful in promoting learning and where aspects require improvement.

Children have worthwhile opportunities to make marks within their routine play. They enjoy 'writing letters' in the post office and some are able to form recognisable letters without help. Children speak confidently and make their needs known as they play. They are beginning to

show an awareness of the listener during conversations and they are attentive when they are listening to stories. Staff hold books so that the pictures can be seen, they point out items of interest and follow text from left to right. Consequently, children develop early reading skills and they enjoy looking at books. The staff emphasise the initial sounds of words to encourage children to link sounds to letters, therefore, children are making valuable progress towards the early learning goals for communication, language and literacy.

Children are given a sense of pride in their work because their pictures are displayed to decorate the walls. They enjoy experimenting with a variety of manufactured and improvised musical instruments and staff extend learning by exploring rhythms. Children's imaginations are stimulated by the varied use of the role play area. For instance, in addition to a home area, the 'post office' is effectively resourced with parcels, postage stamps, writing materials, scales, leaflets and a letter box.

Children demonstrate their developing spatial awareness by running around the outside area without bumping into each other. However, there are no planned activities to help them to use up their surplus energy when it is too wet to play outside or develop control over their bodies by climbing and balancing. Children count within routine play but they are not sufficiently challenged to recognise and recreate numerals or to solve simple mathematical problems for themselves. For example, there is no low-level number line to help them to work out 'one more' or 'one less'. Children confidently build and design using a variety of construction sets. They have effective opportunities to learn about the natural world by caring for the playgroup fish, digging for worms or collecting collage materials, such as acorns and leaves. They are confident to follow simple computer programmes and use the mouse skilfully.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Children's welfare is not fully promoted because the playgroup has not recorded all complaints that parents have made to Ofsted or to the committee. Parents have some guidance to help them to make their concerns known but the contact details for Ofsted are out of date and the complaints policy does not make them aware that they can see the complaints record on request.

However, children from all backgrounds and of all abilities are helped to feel at home in the playgroup because they are treated equally and fairly. Staff take time to get to know families so that they are able to respond to children's individual interests. They use their names and look at children when they are speaking to show that they are interested in what they say and do and help them to feel good about themselves.

Staff have not yet undertaken relevant training but they are supported by the school special needs co-ordinator who provides guidance to ensure they can recognise, and respond to, any developmental delay. Therefore, children of all abilities are able to receive appropriate care. Staff have procedures in place to work with parents and other agencies so that all children can participate to the best of their ability.

Children behave well because they know what is expected of them. Staff use consistent techniques and quickly intervene to distract children if they become restless to prevent disputes

occurring. Children are learning right from wrong as the staff clearly explain why they ask them to change their behaviour. They set positive examples by speaking calmly and thanking children for their efforts so that they learn to manage their own behaviour.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They behave considerately and are learning to share resources with suitable support. Children learn to respect the customs and beliefs of our multi-cultural society through a range of planned topics, such as the Chinese New Year or Id-ul-Fitr, and their awareness of their own culture is well promoted. They are reminded of the world around them through the books and displays that help the children to respect diversity.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. The playgroup brochure explains the day to day care that is provided and includes detailed information about the six areas of learning. Parents are kept informed of children's ongoing progress through their daily communication books, newsletters and open evenings. However, they are not asked about children's starting points towards the early learning goals so that they are fully involved in their learning. Parents are supportive of the playgroup saying they particularly like 'the open relationships between staff, the committee and parents' and feel that their children look forward to coming to the sessions.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Children's welfare and care cannot be assured because Ofsted has not been notified of all changes to the committee that forms the registered person to ensure that individuals are suitable to provide care. The staffing arrangements do not always meet children's needs as there are insufficient nominated adults to provide emergency cover if more than one member of staff is unexpectedly absent or unwell. As a result, children's care has been interrupted as the playgroup has been forced to close at very short notice. The staff do not record the times that they work with the children to safeguard their welfare and visitor's attendances are not robustly recorded so that staff know who has had close contact with the children to protect them from risk of possible harm. However, all other required documentation is appropriately maintained. The robust records of children's attendances ensure that they are kept safe in an emergency and the comprehensive range of policies and procedures are specific to the setting. Information is organised clearly and is easily accessible.

The staff work well together as a team and they understand how young children develop. They seek training to ensure that they have up to date skills and have completed short courses within the last year to support children's learning.

The leadership and management of the provision is satisfactory. The playgroup is guided by aims that help the staff to provide an appropriate environment in which children learn through play as evidenced by the satisfactory progress that they are making. The committee is effective in their recruitment procedures and all staff are vetted. The well developed job descriptions ensure that they have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities to promote learning and protect children's well-being. The newly appointed supervisor and committee are

establishing their working relationships but they have not yet implemented the appraisal system or fully developed practices to monitor the effectiveness of the setting.

Overall, children's needs are not met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the playgroup was asked to develop procedures to deal with bullying, to ensure that children practise emergency evacuation and that staff are able to take appropriate action if children are ill.

Children are safer because they frequently practise fire drills so they are familiar with the process for evacuating the premises quickly in an emergency. The behaviour management policy includes a paragraph that helps staff to recognise, and respond to, any incidence of bullying. As a result, children can play without fear of being hurt or abused by others and their safety is assured. Staff have written parental permission to seek emergency medical care, therefore, they can summons help quickly if children are seriously injured or ill to safeguard their welfare.

At the last inspection of early years education the playgroup agreed to expand planning to take account of sessions in the school, to create opportunities for children to develop their skills in calculation and increase the challenges for them to develop their early reading skills.

Planning is in place that covers all playgroup sessions to help children to make satisfactory progress. However, the newly formed staff team has not yet had sufficient opportunity to develop the plans so that they fully cover all areas of learning and ensure that children have chances to develop their calculation skills. The playgroup makes very good use of labelling in print and pictures to encourage children to develop their reading skills from a very early age. They have robust opportunities to recognise their names and the well resourced book corner prompts children to self-select and use books for pleasure.

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 provider has not recorded all complaints made to Ofsted by parents.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure all adults providing day care submit to a vetting procedure
- develop a system for registering staff attendance and ensure the records of visitor's attendances and accidents are robust
- develop and implement an action plan to ensure that suitable contingency arrangements are in place to cover unexpected staff absences
- develop a system to keep a record of complaints that includes any action taken and update the complaints policy to reflect changes to the regulations.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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 opportunities for parents to contribute to their children's learning, with particular reference to consulting them about starting points towards the early learning goals
- further develop assessment documents and ensure they are used to develop and evaluate planning so that it provides appropriate challenges to all children, particularly in their mathematical and physical development
- improve the leadership and management of the setting to implement the appraisal system and further develop practices to monitor the effectiveness of the educational programme.

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