



## Cowcliffe Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY333633
<b>Inspection date</b>	08 December 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Judith, Mary Horsfall
<b>Setting Address</b>	Fixby Junior & Infant School, Lightridge Road, HUDDERSFIELD, HD2 2HB
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<b>Registered person</b>	Cowcliffe Pre-School Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 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?

Cowcliffe Pre-School Playgroup is managed by a voluntary committee and the group is a registered charity. It has operated for over 40 years but opened in 2006 in their current premises. It operates from a new building in the grounds of Fixby Junior and Infant School, in a residential area of North Huddersfield. A maximum of 26 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 38 children aged from two to five years on roll, many of whom attend on a part-time basis. The group is open each weekday from 09.15 to 15.15, term time only. The children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor area, the school field and woodlands.

The playgroup currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

There are eight staff and of these, six have an appropriate early years qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children enthusiastically enjoy a wide variety of activities that contribute to keeping them healthy. They purposefully use indoor and outdoor activities on a daily basis to develop their physical skills, enjoying riding bikes, balancing and playing ball games. Effective use of outdoor space, including a soft surface play area, school fields and woodlands, allows children to explore a variety of environments in most weathers. Children's fine motor development is successfully promoted as they manipulate tools well, including dough cutters, scissors, threading materials and paintbrushes.

Staff create many opportunities for children to talk about being healthy through the use of displays and planned topics. Children are developing an understanding of a healthy diet, as staff talk to children and parents about healthy eating as part of the daily routine. Children demonstrate a robust understanding of their likes and dislikes, for example, saying which fruits they prefer. Children really enjoy social meal and snack times, where they can sit together and chat over their packed lunches. Staff take into account children's individual dietary needs and plan snacks accordingly; main meals are not provided. Free access to drinking water is restricted, resulting in the children not always being able to quench their thirst without assistance from staff.

Children are cared for in a warm, very clean environment, where highly effective policies and procedures ensure the children develop a good understanding of personal hygiene, such as using aprons, hand washing before snacks and after messy play.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a generally safe and secure environment where risks are minimised because of comprehensive policies and procedures. However, the lighting system presents some hazards to children due to lack of tubes and diffusers. Children confidently move around, both indoors and outdoors, to develop their independence and learn to keep themselves safe. The premises are attractive, colourful, warm and welcoming to children and families.

Children understand safety issues because staff talk to the children about keeping safe as part of regular discussions. Staff actively use resources and themes to consolidate children's understanding, such as discussing safety when using knives and having visitors from the police service. The premises are very secure as experienced staff effectively monitor all access to the premises with records, buzzers and keen observations.

Children independently make choices of activities from a broad range of easily accessible, stimulating resources. Well planned areas allow children space to be quiet, creative and to socialise. Children benefit from daily access to a secure outdoor play area with a wide range of stored play equipment and resources. They particularly enjoy playing with bats and balls and

making patterns with the plastic footprint shapes, whilst indoors, playdough and puzzles are very popular.

Effective procedures are in place to support sound practice and seven out of eight staff hold current first aid certificates. The staff team are experienced and demonstrate a suitable knowledge of child protection procedures and how to keep children safe, as they have all completed basic training.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very settled and confident in the pre-school. They make effective progress in almost all areas of development because knowledgeable staff plan activities and experiences which keep children interested and motivated. Staff effectively use the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' to provide good quality care and education.

Children are interested, happy and secure as they enthusiastically undertake a broad range of stimulating activities, such as bus trips to the library and visits from a local goat group. Children are motivated and curious about their surroundings, establishing very positive relationships with staff and children alike. Children actively make choices about their play, selecting resources to undertake tasks from the varied and interesting range available. They demonstrate firm independent skills and successfully plan their own time, making decisions about what to do. They move freely between activities, negotiate turn taking and use their imagination to progress simple role plays, particularly in the dressing up area. Attractive and well presented displays of the children's work successfully contribute to promoting their self-esteem.

Staff consistently respond to the children's individual needs and adapt activities to follow their ideas and suggestions, making changes to the routine as needed. Children are encouraged and supported to extend and try out new skills, such as using play post office equipment. Children receive enhanced levels of support from staff, who use observations and their knowledge of the children to build on what they can do to extend activities at the child's own pace. Staff use plans to develop focused activities with small groups or individuals, ensuring all children get equal chance to partake in all activities.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff's thorough knowledge of the Foundation Stage ensures that children progress well in all areas of development. Children are interested and motivated to learn through well planned and spontaneous activities. They use their imagination very well during role play activities and recount experiences outside the playgroup, such as visiting Santa with siblings. Children show robust concentration skills and have free access to tools and materials, including card, sticky tape, glue, glitter, paint and scissors, encouraging the construction of simple and complex models, such as money boxes. However, restricted resources which promote everyday technology is reducing the children's opportunities to learn about the functioning of technological apparatus.

Children are confident speakers; they ask detailed questions and listen intently to each other. They are beginning to recognise letters and some four-year-olds recite the entire alphabet with confidence. They share experiences, talking about home, holidays, family and events with enthusiasm. During games, they join in with friends and are relaxed in a social group. Staff listen with great interest to what the children say, offering support and suggestions to enhance their experiences.

They enjoy learning about the lives of others through visitors, planned activities and topics, such as Diwali. Children are introduced to number and problem solving through daily activities, counting and sorting as part of daily routines, at group time singing and circle games.

Children's physical development is enhanced by the active promotion of the secure outdoor area where the curriculum is continued with the use of a wide range of exciting resources. Indoors, the children are purposefully using appropriate tools, such as cutters, scissors and paintbrushes. Children are beginning to develop an awareness of space and good control of their bodies.

Observation systems are in place to effectively monitor children's progress and development. Staff complete regular, comprehensive observations and produce learning plans to meet individual children's needs. Children undertake a good balance of focused and freely chosen activities, with staff responding to children's behaviour and making changes should the children lose interest in particular activities.

Planning is comprehensive and rooted in a secure knowledge of the Foundation stage. It is very clear and links well to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals, based on themes and areas of learning. The staff work together with the manager to develop long, medium and short term plans which cover a broad range of activities and themes.

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

The provision is outstanding.

Children build strong and respectful relationships with staff and each other. They show extreme confidence and self-assurance, asking questions and actively making choices. Children are very warmly welcomed by sensitive staff who value their individuality. They receive praise and encouragement for achievement and attempts, for example, stickers are given for special efforts made. Well planned, meaningful activities and resources help children become aware of similarities and differences, which in turn increases their understanding of the wider world. Children enjoy exploring outdoors, whilst visitors to the group and local visits broaden their knowledge of the community.

Staff and children share their home experiences and cultural differences with each other as part of planned and spontaneous activities. There are signs around the building in different languages to ensure children feel welcome and that an awareness of other cultures is being actively fostered. The children and their families benefit by having members of staff who are fluent in several community languages, which improves communication and ensures all children's needs can be understood. Maketon is also used to aid communication with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed

into the provision and excellent systems are in place with other agencies to ensure the children are cared for according to their needs.

Children's behaviour is very good and reflects the staff's inspiring approach. Children understand clear and consistent boundaries, demonstrating care and respect for each other. They share, negotiate and take turns when playing games and using equipment, for example, helping each other playing a card game in a co-operative manner. Children follow superb role models in staff, showing care and consideration for others.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. This significantly contributes to the education of the children. Staff work consistently to ensure parents are kept well informed about what the children are doing at pre-school. They share information on a daily basis and have an open door policy, encouraging parents to settle the children in if necessary. Parents and staff work very well together to meet the children's needs. For example, the staff have prepared a 'jargon busting' sheet to fully explain the terminology around early years issues and the Foundation Stage. Parents receive good quality information about the setting and in turn share their knowledge of the children. Parents confidently approach staff and demonstrate a high level of satisfaction with the setting. This is further enhanced by the staff speaking various community languages and enabling parents for whom English is not their first language to confidently discuss information with staff.

Parents are warmly welcomed into the setting and positive relationships are encouraged. The pre-school provides parents with many useful leaflets relating to children's education and welfare, plus they encourage parents to use the suggestion box in the lobby area. Parents state that they can discuss their children's progress with the staff and feel that the pre-school actively promotes a sense of community, particularly in fundraising successes for the new building and liaison with the local school.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is outstanding.

Leadership and management is good. Very effective organisation and high quality leadership and management of the educational provision ensures that children's care and learning are well supported. Knowledgeable staff demonstrate a consistent understanding of their roles and responsibilities and ensure that all children's individual needs are successfully met. Expectations for both children and staff are high, with the manager of the pre-school taking positive action to cultivate an atmosphere of listening, learning and respect. The staff make exemplary use of observations and assessments to monitor children's progress and identify gaps in the provision.

An experienced, cohesive staff team work well together in conjunction with the local authority early years teacher to follow effective procedures, monitoring and evaluation of the provision.

The staff demonstrate a strong commitment to personal and group training and development, from induction to ongoing training, to consolidating practices and further enhancing the

pre-school. Staff are required to attend compulsory training sessions including first aid, food hygiene, curriculum and safeguarding children. Many members of staff also undertake further training in their own time and at their own expense to further benefit the children.

An excellent range of policies and procedures is in place to support expert practice and offer an effective service; these continue to be reviewed to meet changes to legislation and working practices. The staff team use opportunities to meet together and share information, sharing practice, concerns and objectives.

Staffing ratios are maintained and space and resources are consistently well managed to ensure significantly enhanced levels of care and learning for the children. All relevant children's records are maintained in an exemplary manner and are freely available to be shared with parents.

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

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

Not applicable.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since registration 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 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 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 the children have free access to drinking water at all times
- ensure that all lighting appliances conform to safety requirements and do not pose a hazard to 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):

- ensure the children have increased access to resources which promote everyday technology and use information and communication technology and programmable toys to support their 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)