

# Hawkesbury Pre School and Toddlers

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	136003
<b>Inspection date</b>	18 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Karen Elizabeth Screen
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Village Hall, High Street, Hawkesbury Upton, South Glos, GL9 1AU
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<b>Registered person</b>	Hawkesbury Pre School and Toddlers
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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 satisfactory. The registered person meets 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?

Hawkesbury Pre School and Toddlers opened in 1970. They operate from the Village Hall, in Hawkesbury Upton, South Gloucestershire. The outside play facilities include fixed play equipment and a field. A maximum of 24 children may attend at any one time. The group provide sessional day care. They are open each school term between 08.45 and 11.45, except on Tuesday. There are currently 16 children on roll aged between two and a half and five years old. Of these, 15 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The provision care for children with learning difficulties. Three members of staff are employed, two of whom are qualified to Level 3. The remaining member of staff has almost completed her Level 3 qualification. The pre-school undertake local outings to places of interest such as to a farm, and to places further away, for example to the theatre in Bath to see the pantomime Cinderella.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Young children who require assistance in completing personal tasks such as visiting the toilet, receive a good level of support. Children are aware of the importance of personal hygiene and remember to wash their hands after using the toilet. However, their health is compromised because they share a bowl of water, in which to wash their hands before eating their snack. Staff demonstrate a clear understanding of the treatment of minor accidents and the administration of medicines, although staff do not always follow good practice and ask parents to sign accident records.

Children are very independent and confidently pour themselves a cup of water when they feel thirsty. Staff keep good records of children with particular health requirements, and details of food allergies are known to staff. However, these are not displayed for parent helpers to use if they prepare the snack. They rely instead on remembering to share the information verbally. Children enjoy the range and variety of healthy foods and snacks provided and understand which foods are good for them. They are involved in growing, harvesting, preparing and serving vegetables such as parsnips and potatoes to their peers and families. For example, they invited their families to eat Christmas lunch with them. Staff work hard to ensure that even those children with allergies and food intolerances are able to eat the foods presented. This is achieved through very careful planning to ensure that the snacks are suitable for all of the children attending that day.

Children have a very positive attitude to exercise. They are able to enjoy daily exercise because staff make regular provision within their planning to offer a choice of energetic indoor experiences, such as dancing to music and undertaking refreshing walks in the adjacent field. Children recognise when they are cold, for example a young child remarks that her feet are "fee...zing" and quickly puts on her socks, after enjoying a planned session in Hawkesbury Primary School gym.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Overall, children are adequately protected because staff have a sound understanding of child protection issues and undertake regular training. At present however, the written statement of the arrangements in place for the protection of children, does not include the procedures to be followed in the event of allegations of abuse or neglect being made against a member of staff or volunteer. This is a breach of regulations. Discussion with the new chairperson of the management committee, revealed a willingness and resolve to quickly rectify the situation.

Children are able to move safely around the well-maintained premises because they are carefully supervised, but procedures for preventing unauthorised adults entering the premises are not consistently applied. Staff and parent volunteer deployment on the weekly visits to the local primary school, are excellent. Children demonstrate their sound knowledge of how to cross roads in safety. They all pay keen attention to the sounds of the environment, in order to check for approaching cars. They only start to cross when they and the staff are certain that the road is clear, and keep listening and looking around until they are safely across the road.

Children are interested and want to play with the available toys and resources, which are safe and in good condition. The bare church hall is quickly and expertly transformed by staff into a warm and welcoming environment. Children's favourite resource is the 'forest' which they played a large part in making. Children engage in long and involved imaginative play, which over the course of the session, extends to all areas of the hall. They draw in other resources too, for example foods from the home area in order to "take a picnic into the forest".

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from staff who are interested in what they say and do. Their confidence and self-esteem are raised by staff who are sensitive to their needs and know them well. They make friends with their peers and develop excellent relationships with the well-established staff team. They learn to take turns and cooperate well. Children are happy and keen to attend. They quickly settle, helped by staff who gain the children's attention and quickly involve them in the group, for example "we have got the farm out today, you know all about farms don't you?" "Are you going to help me to set it out?" Children make confident choices from the activities provided and are interested and enjoy their play. However, although children may ask staff for further materials with which to extend their own creative designs, they do not tend to do so.

The plans and patterns within the day are well-established. Children predict what will happen next and extend their skills in a secure environment. Planning is undertaken for pre-school children and is used as a basis for the day. These are not rigid however and are subject to change according to the children's interests and needs. Although staff recognise that the Birth to three matters framework is a useful tool in planning appropriate experiences and tracking children's progress, they do not currently use it to support their work with young children.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff are well qualified and have a secure understanding of the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. They meet regularly to discuss the term ahead, and to review short term planning. Staff know the children very well and make many informal assessments, which feed through informally to the planning for the following week. They are able to identify the particular needs of the group, and of individual children. However, the system for recording observations is not clear, such as for use by a temporary member of staff. This impacts on their ability to easily identify the particular learning style of individual children, in order to plan for their future development.

The leader ensures that the team provide children with helpful and timely adult interaction to promote their development. Staff use effective questioning and prompting, to reinforce children's learning. They are proactive in finding ways of including children in activities, at a level suited to their individual needs. Good support is given to children with learning difficulties. For example, observations are used as the basis for initial discussions with parents and professionals, who are involved at the earliest opportunity. Strong links with Hawkesbury Primary School ensure that this support is carried through into the reception class. Staff are committed to undertaking any relevant training needed in order to support children's individual needs, such as the use of the sign language Mackaton. Group sizes for planned activities are suitable and allow children to participate fully. Whole group gatherings are too lengthy, with the result that some children lose interest. This affects the ability of others to contribute and express their feelings about personal or significant events.

Plans are subject to review and are open to change according to the children's interests and needs. For example, last week one of the children believed that a giraffe was in fact a zebra. This week, staff helped children to identify features of the giraffe, zebra, lion and tiger with the children, and to decide whether the animals move quickly or slowly. They encouraged children to pretend to be the animal of their choice, with the result that many children "ran as fast as a tiger" around the hall.

Children show a strong sense of self as a member of the group and as part of their own families. They respond well in a caring environment where they learn to consider other people's needs as well as their own. For example, an older child helps a much younger child to do up her coat ready for the walk to the nearby school for their gym session. Children are encouraged to be independent and too persist with difficult tasks such as dressing themselves after gym-time. Younger children endeavour to listen to group discussions, even when the subject matter is too lengthy or demanding for them.

Children confidently participate in discussions and demonstrate very good speaking skills, for example an older child volunteers information about his holiday. They talk activities through, reflecting and modifying what they are doing; and use talk well to connect ideas, explain what is happening and to anticipate what will happen next. Resources for role-play do not always include materials to promote independent and spontaneous writing, such as pencils, paper and envelopes. Adult-led activities such as making hedgehogs, are not sufficiently exploited to promote writing for a purpose, such as encouraging children to write their own names on their work. Very good examples of printed materials such as posters, are hung on the walls. For example, a diagram of the solar system, a map of Britain and a diagram of a child with body parts clearly labelled.

Children's understanding of numbers is reinforced as children take part in everyday tasks such as working out the date during circle-time. However, the group size is too large for this to be effective for all children. Older and more able children are able to independently use number names spontaneously. For example, an older child instructs his friend to "take those two" horses and "put them in the farm". Children are gaining a secure understanding of calculations through practical activities, such as finding out if they have enough seats for all the children to sit down at snack-time.

Children benefit from excellent opportunities to learn about the world in general, their place in their own rural community, and about the natural environment. Children's awareness of features within the local environment are fostered through their many outings, such as to the post office to post letters by recorded delivery. Children thoroughly enjoy examining objects and living things to find out more about them, for example digging in the earth in the pre-school 'garden', in order to prepare it for the seed potatoes and parsnips. Children learn how to cook and finally eat their harvest. They are also encouraged to learn about the natural world through direct involvement, such as visiting the play leader's farm at different times of the year to help feed the animals and visiting Westonbirt Arboretum in the autumn to examine the fungi. Children use technology to support their learning such as correctly programming a toy mouse to move in different directions over a map marked into squares.

Children learn how to dress and undress themselves though the weekly gym sessions in the primary school hall. They show a well developed awareness of space, themselves and others and move with control and co-ordination. For example carefully avoiding others taking part in physically demanding and challenging activities, such as negotiating ramps and ladders, and climbing, swinging and pulling themselves up knotted ropes. Children competently use a range

of small and large equipment and receive good support to learn new techniques, such as threading wool through holes in pre-punched card, and sewing small bags with a needle and thread.

Children enjoy adult-led craft activities such as making models of homes from 'rock' plaster. They also work well together to help to build a wall from real bricks and mortar, and competently design and build their own wood sculptures, from the materials provided by the staff. However, they do not often take the initiative to select resources, or explore and develop their own ideas. They engage well in imaginative play such as building 'dens' from chairs and large blankets, and act out cooking a roast dinner and washing up afterwards. Children respond positively to what they see, hear, taste, touch and feel, such as the smell of lavender oil added to playdough.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about the different activities and the people involved in their rural community. They take part in visits to the wider community, such as visiting a local retirement home and joining in with the Christingle Service in the local church. Children are valued as individuals and the staff work hard to ensure that all children can choose to be involved in any activities on offer. The staff and committee have a 'can do' attitude towards finding solutions to any difficulties affecting the inclusion of all children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn to appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences. For example, staff encourage children to reflect on and appreciate differences in language, culture, ethnicity, and social diversity in society. This is achieved through discussion and through use of books, resources and activities, such as making flags from around the world.

Children behave well. They are encouraged to negotiate solutions to conflicts and to explain how they feel. Staff provide good role models through their calm and polite manner and have reasonable and realistic expectations of children's behaviour. They set and maintain clear and consistent limits, using positive behaviour strategies. Children respond well to guidance about rules and boundaries. For example, children enjoying their gym time in the nearby primary school, all stop to listen when they are told "last turn on the equipment before you have to get changed".

Partnership with parents is satisfactory.

Positive relationships between the staff and parents, contribute to the children's confidence in the staff. Parents speak positively about the settling in procedures and the good relationships enjoyed between staff, parents and children. They also highly value the "exciting range of activities, such as building a wall and cooking a roast dinner". Parents receive general information about the group when they register their children. They also receive regular newsletters, information about events, some prior information about planned activities, and suggestions for items to bring from home, in order to support the activities. However, parents report that they receive little information about the Birth to Three matters framework and the foundation stage of learning; or sufficient explanations about the purpose of the activities and experiences, and how these help children to learn. There are effective informal channels of communication, and opportunities for formal feedback on children's individual learning. Parents feel able and welcome to discuss their observations of their children's learning at any time, but many are unaware that they can add their own comments and observations to their children's files. This means that the records are not quite as full and accurate as they might be and that parent's

knowledge of their children is not fully explored, to support and develop the learning opportunities provided by the group.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides. Personal information and specific permissions are obtained before the children attend. The form recording children's details has recently been up-dated and exceeds the expected requirements. However, the safe and efficient management of the provision is compromised because some policies and procedures have not been updated in line with current legislation and good practice; and the system for recording children's and staff's attendance is not robust. Further, pre-school practice to ensure that a stranger's identity is confirmed and recorded, is not always followed. In addition, arrangements for health care are not sufficiently rigorous. Good organisation of staff rotas and supply cover, helps to ensure that qualified, familiar, trusted adults, care for the children in the event of staff holidays or sickness.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Although management review the quality of their practice and provision, they are less successful in addressing the areas identified for improvement through inspection, namely policies, planning and organisation of resources. In addition, children are not always able to participate fully during whole group times, such as circle time, because the leader is less skilful in her approach to staff deployment and organisation of children. Staff and committee are clear about their roles and responsibilities; achieved through clear job descriptions, and through staff appraisals which are completed every six months. Children profit from the committee's commitment to supporting staff training and development; and staff are committed to undertaking any relevant training needed in order to develop their own practice and to support children's individual needs. The pre-school team work very well together and have developed a particularly strong team spirit. Staff have effective links with the management committee. For example, they seek and receive good support to make significant purchases, such as a much needed new computer.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Variable progress has been made in addressing the issues raised at the previous care and nursery education inspections. The care inspection recommended that the setting expand child protection, behaviour management and lost and uncollected child procedures. Not all documentation is totally up-to-date with current legislation and guidance, and impacts unfavourably on the organisation of the setting.

As a result of the last nursery education inspection, the setting were also asked to: make a broad range of resources accessible so that children can spontaneously and independently design, create, and attempt to write; to provide children with opportunities to solve mathematical problems, using simple mathematical concepts; and to further develop planning to ensure that the learning intention is clear for the activity and for how children's assessments inform planning.

The group's attempts to improve the organisation of resources, to enable children to extend activities for themselves and to develop their own ideas, have not been entirely successful, with the result that children do not routinely attempt to write or add to their own work.

Children solve mathematical problems through everyday activities, such as helping to set out enough cups for all of the children at snack-time. They also build on their knowledge and

understanding of addition and subtraction, for example by singing songs such as 'Five Little Ducks', using their fingers for visual and physical re-enforcement; bending their fingers down in turn, as the 'ducks swim away'.

The learning intentions for the activities are not clearly set out. This means that although permanent staff have a good understanding of the learning intentions of the activities, they find it difficult to aid parent helpers in understanding how best to support children's learning during the sessions. Staff know the children very well and make many informal assessments. However, children's developmental records do not clearly record the steps to be taken to support children to move on the next stage in their learning. This means that staff rely on their knowledge of individual children.

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

Since 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 satisfactory.

### **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):

- take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection, with regard to facilities for children to wash their hands before eating
- ensure that the written statement of the arrangements in place for the protection of children, includes the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff or volunteer
- ensure that accurate records of attendance are kept, and review and update required policies in line with current legislation and good practice

#### **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 children are grouped appropriately to develop their listening skills according to their individual needs (applies to care also)

- continue to improve the organisation of resources, to enable children to extend activities for themselves and to develop their own ideas (applies to care also)
- pay particular attention to ensuring that the learning intention for the activities are clear for staff and parent helpers; and that children's developmental records clearly indicate how best to support children's learning (also applies to care).

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