

Highampton Area Pre-school Group

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106127
Inspection date	06 March 2007
Inspector	Christine Powlesland
Setting Address	Highampton Village Hall, Church Road, Highampton, Beaworthy, Devon, EX21 5LE
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Registered person	Highampton Area Pre-School Group
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 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?

Highampton Area Pre-school Group was established in 1996. The setting is a registered charity and managed by a committee of parents and interested others. It operates from the village hall and has access to outside play facilities. It serves the rural village of Highampton and the surrounding area.

The setting is registered for a maximum of 26 children at any one time. Children from the age of two to five years attend. The setting operates on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 09:15 to 15:15, during term time. On Wednesday and Friday from 12:45 to 15:15 the setting links with the local primary school to operate 'Tadpoles'. This is an opportunity for children, who are to begin school within two terms, to be introduced to school life by joining the reception class.

There are currently 37 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for early education. The setting currently supports children with disabilities.

Eight members of staff are employed by the setting. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting also employs an administrator. Morning sessions on Wednesday and

Thursday are also open to parents and toddlers. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about the importance of good personal hygiene through well-organised routines. They always wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Effective health and safety procedures are in place and staff maintain good standards of hygiene throughout the premises. Children are well protected from infection because there are good written policies, which are well implemented by staff. However, parents do not always sign to acknowledge they are aware medication has been administered to their child.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. Staff promote healthy eating well by offering children a variety of healthy foods at snack time, for example grapes, kiwi fruit, carrot sticks and French bread. Foods from different cultures are linked with themes and children also enjoy cooking and eating local produce. Children are encouraged to develop an understanding of their needs, for example they confidently help themselves to water throughout the day to keep themselves hydrated.

Children have good opportunities to engage in a variety of physical play experiences. They have daily opportunities for outdoor play, weather permitting, and engage indoors in energetic play, running, jumping, kicking and throwing. Children show good control and coordination when walking on low balance benches. They enjoy taking part in music and movement sessions, which are well organised by enthusiastic staff who interact well with the children and encourage them all to participate.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean, bright and comfortable environment. The good organisation of toys and equipment means that children move around safely and independently to access available resources, which are positioned appropriately at their height. Children can access the adjacent toilets freely, however there is no hot water here for them to wash their hands to help prevent the spread of infection. Children enjoy playing with a wide range of good quality activities, which help them to progress in all areas of their development.

Children are cared for in a safe environment. There is an excellent security system in place for the safe arrival and departure of children, and to protect children from intruders. Staff are well deployed and ensure children are kept safe whilst moving around the preschool by supervising them closely. There are effective procedures for carrying out risk assessments to protect children from potential hazards. Children are encouraged to keep themselves safe by understanding the need for, and taking part in, regular fire drills.

Staff have a good knowledge of child protection issues and procedures, which would enable them to seek appropriate support for children if necessary.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well into the preschool and receive good individual attention from staff. They enjoy each other's company and play harmoniously together in mixed age groups. Staff demonstrate good skills in encouraging and supporting children. This makes children feel secure and increases their sense of well-being. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework effectively to plan for young children's learning. Children happily talk to visitors, enjoy trying on police hats and learning how police radios work. Children make links in their learning and confidently ask questions, enquiring if there are seat belts in fire engines.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards all of the early learning goals. Staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and use this knowledge to plan a stimulating learning environment for the children. Clear daily plans are set out linking activities to the early learning goals and activities are evaluated after each session. Staff use the good information that they obtain from observations to promote children's individual learning. However, there are some minor weaknesses in the use of assessments to direct future planning.

Children are eager and willing to learn. They play well together and have made friendships, taking turns and co-operating well when operating the bridge over the train track. There is a good balance between adult directed and child initiated activities, allowing children to independently select and become engaged in their play. Children take responsibility, tidying away used plates and cups after snack time on to the kitchen hatch. However, older and more able children do not always make use of everyday situations to extend their learning. Children are developing a strong sense of right from wrong, behave well and are fully aware of what is expected of them. They respond well when given instructions to complete activities, or to line up to use the small room for circle time. Children enjoy group story time, as well as using the attractive book area during free playtimes. Their reading skills are further developed through daily routines, such as finding their named place mat at snack time. Children make good use of the readily available writing materials and some children are able to write their own name on their pictures. They show confidence in their understanding of mathematical concepts. They count meaningfully and use language, such as longer or shorter, with accuracy. Children concentrate well and enjoy investigating how their fingerprints are recorded. They have good communication skills and talk confidently to each other and staff in large and small groups. They enjoy craft activities, developing small muscles as they roll and shape play dough. A particular favourite is the floor level whiteboard they use for painting and drawing activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are made to feel very welcome within the setting, as they are greeted warmly upon arrival, and their family lives and individual needs are well known to staff. Children are able to learn about difference and diversity in society through effective teaching and a range of resources. Children are learning quickly to be sensitive to the needs of others, responding well when they are encouraged to be considerate and well mannered.

Children with disabilities receive substantial support from the whole team. All staff are committed to promoting positive outcomes through close working relationships with families and outside

agencies. Children are familiar with the agreed codes for behaviour within the preschool, as well as responding positively to the meaningful praise that staff regularly give. Spending time with the reception class allows the older children to become familiar with the routines of the school, further enabling them to manage their own behaviour well. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. The preschool has an open door policy and parents are warmly welcomed as they are let into the building. They can chat to the staff in the playrooms to exchange information daily. They are involved in the group by helping on a rota basis. Children are encouraged to bring items from home to link with activities in the preschool and parents are aware they can see detailed observations of their child at any time. This contributes to the continuity of care between home and preschool that children enjoy. A parent and toddler group joins the preschool two mornings a week and this helps familiarise them with the premises and the staff. Parents' evenings are offered to all parents when they can discuss their children's progress, including that of children receiving funded nursery education.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy good levels of care as a result of high staff ratios and effective staff deployment. There are effective recruitment procedures in place to ensure that staff are appropriately vetted and qualified. Staff work well together as a team and a key worker system is in place to ensure children's well-being is met on a daily basis. All documentation is in place to meet legal requirements.

Leadership and management is good. There is a commitment to develop the preschool and staff have yearly appraisals to identify training needs to develop their existing knowledge and skills. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use this knowledge to effectively plan activities. They are supported in their work through regular staff meetings. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the preschool was asked to ensure that the organisation and deployment of staff provides clarity of behaviour management responsibilities and effective leadership to meet the needs of all children. It was to ensure parents signed to acknowledge each dose of medicine administered.

Three supervisors now work together with clearly defined individual roles to ensure that organisation of the group and the deployment of staff works well. When the parent and toddler group joins with the preschool it is made very clear to parents that they are completely responsible for their own children and their behaviour, and that parents must supervise their own children closely. This ensures the behaviour of the toddlers does not impact on the care of the preschool children.

Parents do not yet always sign to acknowledge each dose of medicine administered. This could impact on the health of the children attending.

At the last nursery education inspection the key issues raised were to develop the curriculum plans to ensure children have opportunities to link sounds and letters, to make use of ICT and to show how more or less able children are extended and supported. They were to ensure that

the leadership and management is clear, with clear responsibilities, particularly with regard to the management of children's behaviour.

The curriculum plans now show children have opportunities to link sounds and letters and they have access to a computer. Planning shows how younger or less able children will be supported. These improvements have ensured children's learning is supported effectively. Planning is to be further developed to show extension activities for older and more able children. Leadership and management is now clearly organised and there is a named person responsible for managing children's behaviour. This has helped to improve the standard of the children's behaviour.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 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.

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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 one wash hand basin with hot and cold water is available for every 10 children
- ensure parents signed to acknowledge each dose of medicine administered

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 planning shows how older and more able children can extend their learning, in particular by making use of everyday situations.

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