



Blacklands Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY341110
Inspection date	08 March 2007
Inspector	Stacey Sangster
Setting Address	Elim Church, Elphinstone Avenue, Hastings, East Sussex, TN34 2DJ
Telephone number	01424 437630
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Registered person	Sharon Reeve
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Blacklands Playgroup opened under the current owner in 2006 and operates from the Elim Church in Hastings. A maximum of 35 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday from 09:15 to 14:45 during school term time. There are 56 children on roll of whom 8 are funded four year olds and 23 funded three year olds. The setting is able to support children with Learning difficulties and or disabilities and English as an additional language but currently no children attend. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup employs eight members of staff. Of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about the importance of healthy eating through a range of activities. They enjoy cookery weeks where they make pizza's, fruit kebabs and pancakes, discussing healthy choices as part of the activity. Visitors such as the dentist, support children's developing knowledge about foods that need to be eaten in moderation and help them to learn about how they can contribute to their own health and wellbeing, for example with teeth brushing.

Children enjoy snack time at key points in the morning and afternoon. They are offered a wide range of fruits, toast, and breadsticks. Children are offered drinks at snack time which help to prevent them from becoming thirsty and are able to help themselves at anytime, to water which they enjoy pouring for themselves. Children staying all day bring in packed lunches from home which are appropriately refrigerated to prevent foods from spoiling. Meal and snack times are sociable occasions.

Effective hygiene procedures protect the children from the risk of infection. Toys and equipment are regularly washed and the environment is clean and well maintained. Children are developing a knowledge of good personal hygiene. They routinely wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet and dispose of tissues and hand towels in the bin provided.

The setting has a well thought out sickness policy in place which protects children from the risk of cross infection. Staff with up-to-date first aid training are always present to administer any medical treatment. There are systems in place to record accidents, which in general are appropriately maintained.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are protected by a range of effective safety precautions in place around the setting, including socket covers, good door security, safety gates and non slip steps in the toilets. In addition, daily risk written assessments are undertaken by a member of staff. These arrangements effectively ensure that children remain safe whilst still experiencing a good level of challenge.

Most of the documentation helps to promote children's safety in some way. However the effectiveness is reduced where it is incomplete, vague or altered.

Children play with a wide range of toys and resources that are well-maintained and appropriate for their ages and stages of development. These are attractively displayed and generally stored at all low levels so that children can access them safely and easily.

Clear fire procedures are in place and evacuation drills take place every day for a week each term. This ensures that all children and staff remember what to do in case of a real emergency.

The manager acts as the child protection co-ordinator and has recently attended advanced training in this subject. This results in her being very clear on the responsibilities of this role.

She has a thorough understanding of the procedures to follow if any concerns are identified and has all the relevant contact details to make a referral if necessary. As a result, children's welfare is protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at this setting. They come into the setting eagerly and are greeted warmly by staff. Staff are interested in what the children do; they spend time playing with them and respond positively to them which helps them settle quickly. Key workers get to know children well and provide them with a range of activities suited to their age and stage of development which are fun and help them to make progress in all areas. The children's individual needs are well met. They are encouraged and nurtured in a positive way, helping to promote their self esteem and helping them to become confident and motivated learners.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Adults working with the children have a sound understanding of the foundation stage and clear systems are in place to assess and monitor children's development. All children are making good progress in the six areas of learning as a result of the good standard of teaching and well planned sessions.

The curriculum is well balanced and monitored to ensure it provides children with sufficient challenge. Teaching methods are positive and staff are skilled at asking children questions to make them think and build on what they are interested in and already know.

The assessment systems to record children's progress is developing well and clearly identifies where children are in their learning and what they need to do next. This is carefully linked to the planning of the curriculum in order to ensure that opportunities to focus on the next steps are not missed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

The setting do not have the required complaint log, which is a breach of the conditions of their registration.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children behave well as they learn to consider others and what is expected of them. The codes of behaviour expected at the setting are clear to children, who on occasion can be heard to remind each other of them. children's comments such as 'don't run' are followed up by an explanation and this demonstrates that through staff discussion children are beginning to learn about the benefits of positive behaviour.

Children enjoy topics such as Chinese New Year and try some new and familiar foods in relation to this celebration. Records indicate that children take delight in the challenge of trying to eat with chop sticks and make links to experiences they have had, such as using them on holidays.

This enables children to look at the differences within societies and cultures and helps them to value diversity.

All children are valued, included and have their individual needs met by adults who work in close partnership with parents and carers. Staff have undergone training to support their knowledge and understanding of how to promote inclusion for children with special needs or those with English as an additional language.

The partnership with parents in relation to education is satisfactory. Parents are given good quality information about the setting, its aims and details of the routines their children will follow. Parents views are canvassed and where possible requests are met. Staff value parents input and maintain friendly, open lines of communication. While children benefit from staff who are kept well informed by their parents, formal records of this in relation to their educational progress is limited.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Staff work well together and are supportive of each other. Children gain security and confidence from the well organised routines and this helps them to relax and enjoy their time in the setting. The staff group are appropriately qualified and staffing rotas ensure that overall the required ratios of adults to children are being met.

The premises are well organised to provide a pleasant play space with pockets of activity and separate areas for quiet and more physical boisterous play. Staff are well deployed and support children effectively during their time at the setting.

Appropriate systems are in place to maintain all of the required records, however in some cases insufficient detail is recorded or information recorded is erased. Examples of this are the medicine book, where not all parents sign to provide consent and the register, which staff record children's names in pencil and then on occasions erase their names after they leave the setting. This result in a breach of regulations, as registers must be kept for a minimum of two years from the date of the last entry. Removing the details of some children results in this not being the case.

Policies and procedures are in place to inform parents and guide the staff and in general most of these are informative and provide adequate detail; but they are not always well organised or updated sufficiently when requirements change. The child protection policy does not record the procedure to be followed in the event that an allegation is made against a staff member, policies had been updated, but the old versions were among the new ones resulting in contradictory information and the owner was unaware of some of the required changes.

The leadership and management of the educational provision is good. Much of the proprietors focus relates to supporting staff to develop the skills and systems needed to ensure that children are provided with good quality education. The setting have a clear vision for the nursery education and this has proved successful although to the detriment of the documentation relating to the focus on care. Continual assessment of the systems to support education ensure

that there is ongoing improvement and the setting makes good use of the links it has made with the Early Years Development team.

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.

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

- keep a record of complaints relating to the national standards and any action taken
- ensure that all records relating to day care activities are retained for the correct period of time, are readily accessible and available for inspection at all times

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):

- record parental contributions as part of the formal assessment process

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