



Healey Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	311327
Inspection date	22 January 2007
Inspector	Paula Fretwell
Setting Address	West Park Road, Batley, West Yorkshire, WF17 7EL
Telephone number	01924 502813
E-mail	
Registered person	Healey Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, 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.

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?

Healey Playgroup has been operating for approximately 26 years. It is managed by a committee and is registered to operate as full day care. It operates from the hall in the community centre within the Healey area of Batley and serves the local area. There is a small outdoor area which can be accessed directly from the hall.

There are 35 children on roll including three who are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with disabilities and learning difficulties and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens four mornings and one afternoon a week during term time. Sessions are from 09.00 until 11.30 and 12.30 until 15.00, with lunch club from 11.30 until 12.30.

There are five staff working with the children, as well as a parent volunteer on a rota each session to assist with supervision. Staff have recognised early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority and from the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well in a clean, well-maintained environment. Effective routines ensure children are aware of their own personal hygiene; they are developing a good understanding of why they need to wash their hands and they proudly show them afterwards. Practitioners promptly attend to nappy changing and they discuss this with children to help them understand their needs. Antibacterial gel is used in addition to hand washing to ensure hands are as clean as possible. Sick children are not accepted in order to minimise the risk of cross infection and a clear policy about this is explained to parents. Children who become ill during the session are comforted whilst parents are contacted to take them home. Accidents are recorded clearly and parents are kept fully informed.

Children enjoy a wide range of snacks and light meals which are attractively presented, with fresh fruit a daily feature. Children enjoy guessing what might be for snack and they sing a song about it. Children enjoy simple choices, such as milk or water, and they talk about the food they are eating. Children sit down together to enjoy their food and this is a very social occasion with plenty of conversation and chatter taking place. Practitioners are very aware of children's special dietary requirements and a list of any restrictions is posted in the kitchen to ensure all staff are reminded.

Children enjoy many opportunities for physical play indoors and outdoors. They enjoy choosing whether to play inside or outside during the free-play session and they engage in a range of activities, such as climbing on the slide cube or bouncing on the trampoline. Children move in a range of ways and they are learning the names of their body parts in the topic 'all about me'. They enjoy moving in time to music and some children dance spontaneously around the room. Children practise using small equipment, such as pencils and scissors, and they develop their physical skills through the repetition of activities that encourage their hand-eye co-ordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their free choice of available activities in safe surroundings and they access a variety of good quality toys and resources which meet their developmental needs. Activity areas are set out to encourage children's development in all areas. However, the book corner, although well resourced, does not encourage children to use it as the presentation of the books is not inviting to them. Risk assessments and daily safety checklists are carried out to ensure the environment is safe for children to use. Practitioners are vigilant about children's security and they ensure only authorised people have access to the premises.

Children's awareness of safety is developed through practitioners giving good advice and gentle safety reminders, such as asking children to take care with their fingers near doors, or not to stand on chairs. Good explanations are given to children about why some things are not safe. For example, practitioners explain that putting too much food in your mouth might make you choke and they demonstrate how to eat smaller bites of food. Fire drills are regularly practised with the children to develop their awareness of fire safety and details are recorded. Children are closely supervised to ensure their safety and practitioners are fully involved in their play to monitor the safe use of all toys and equipment.

Children are safeguarded because most practitioners are aware of the signs of possible abuse and they are clear about what to do in the event of a child protection concern or allegation. However, not all staff have had sufficient awareness training to be able to identify possible concerns. There is a detailed, up to date child protection policy in place for staff reference and this is accessible to parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the setting and they are sociable and happy. They have very positive relationships with each other and with practitioners. Children benefit from a fun environment in which they enthusiastically join in with a wide range of activities and they include practitioners in their play. Practitioners are friendly and caring; they are interested in what the children do, fully interact well with them, and use skilled questioning to encourage them to think. Children use their imaginations well as they enjoy their play and they are given plenty of time to play uninterrupted. Children engage in purposeful play and practitioners are skilled at managing the different needs of the children, ensuring that they all receive individual attention.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Practitioners understand the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones to children's learning and they use good questioning techniques which encourage children to think and extend their learning across all areas. Observations and assessments of the children's progress inform the planning and practitioners ensure there are appropriate challenges in place to meet children's individual needs. Practitioners maximise everyday opportunities to encourage children's learning as they join in with their play.

Children confidently separate from parents and demonstrate that they feel safe and secure in the setting. They enthusiastically approach developmentally appropriate tasks, although their independence at mealtimes is limited as practitioners always serve them with snacks, meals and drinks. Children's communication, language and literacy is developing well and they particularly enjoy interactive story sessions with puppets to enhance their understanding. For example, children listen attentively to the story of the 'Three billy goats gruff' and then later become engrossed in acting out the story again for themselves. Children show an interest in a range of texts, although opportunities for them to recognise their own names are limited and the presentation of books does not promote their enjoyment of reading. Children enjoy plenty of music and singing activities to develop their language and counting skills and they confidently sing to themselves in play.

Children's mathematical development is continuously promoted through planned and spontaneous activities; children count reliably and understand that numbers carry meaning, such as when they talk about their ages or count the number of body parts they have. Children enjoy measuring with a large tape and they compare how tall they are against a height chart. They use positional and mathematical language accurately in their play. For example, they bounce on the trampoline and say, 'I'm going higher than you' and, 'I'm going on first, you can go after me'.

Children are curious and show an interest in why things happen and how things work. For example, they are fascinated by climbing on and off the weighing scales and watching the numbers change. Children join construction pieces together as they design and make models and opportunities to extend their learning are promoted well by practitioners. Children are developing a sense of time and they can explain what is happening in the daily routine. For example, they say that when they have tidied up and washed their hands they can have their lunch.

Children become absorbed in small world play as they create a story with farm animals. They enjoy dressing up and the role play area is used to good effect; children fly around with fairy wings or put on builders' helmets to act out their chosen roles. Children enjoy exploring activities using all their senses; they creatively take part in making a collage and smell the coloured petals as they stick them onto paper. Children enjoy play experiences with a range of different textures, such as gloop, jelly and spaghetti as well as play dough, sand and water. Practitioners reinforce children's recognition of colours and more able children are able to identify different shades of colour.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are happy with the level of information they receive about both care and education. Information is given to parents of children who receive funded nursery education, and planning is displayed on the noticeboard to help them feel involved in their child's play and learning. Practitioners inform parents about the activities their child has been doing, with the intended learning. All parents are encouraged to participate in the parents' rota on a regular basis and they enjoy this opportunity to be involved in their child's activities. Parents are made very welcome at each end of each session; they enjoy warm and friendly relationships with staff and they are given good information and reassurance about their child.

Children's behaviour is good and they are given meaningful praise for what they can do. Realistic expectations of children's behaviour are gently reinforced by practitioners. Effective strategies encourage children to behave well and staff use positive tones of voice when speaking with children. Children are learning to take turns and share and any minor disagreements are sorted out promptly, with sensitive explanations given by practitioners. Younger children are distracted if unwanted behaviour occurs and practitioners are good role models for desirable behaviour. Children are asked to apologise if they have hurt their friend and they do so with a hug. Friendship is encouraged through all activities and children learn to play co-operatively together.

Children are encouraged to appreciate each other's differences through the provision of positive images throughout the setting. Different cultures and festivals are explored through planned activities to develop children's understanding of the needs of others. Children gain a clear and positive view of their own and the wider world because they are able to access resources that increase their awareness of diversity. Practitioners understand how to support the needs of children for whom English is an additional language and those with disabilities or learning difficulties. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Practitioners receive clear direction to ensure they are clear about their roles and responsibilities, and they work well as a team to meet the children's needs. Strengths and weaknesses are identified accurately and there are systems in place for monitoring the effectiveness of the provision. Recruitment and vetting procedures are in place and clearly understood by management to ensure children are well protected. Staff training needs are identified in appraisal meetings. The setting works well with the advisory teacher from the local authority.

A well-detailed organisational plan is in place for the efficient running of the setting. Practitioners communicate well with one another to ensure the children's needs are met and staff to child ratios are maintained well throughout the sessions. Policies, procedures and planning support the practice well and illustrate how children's welfare and education is promoted, and these are available to parents to keep them well informed. All required documentation is in place, although the registration system does not clearly show children's arrival and departure times. Parents are assured of confidentiality and all documentation is filed securely.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of care there were two actions set for the provider: to ensure good hygiene practices are in place regarding hand washing and to obtain written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. These actions have been fully addressed to ensure children stay safe. There were also several recommendations relating to the organisation of the setting. There has been a change of committee and playgroup staff since the last inspection, which has resulted in all of the recommendations being fully met, and so the organisation of the setting promotes outcomes for children.

The last inspection of funded nursery education also occurred before the election of the new committee and the recruitment of new staff. The provider was asked to plan and provide opportunities for children across three areas of learning. These have been addressed and children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas. The provider was asked to identify how challenges are set for more able children and use assessments to identify the next stages in children's learning and link this information to the planning. The planning and assessment system has changed and improved since the last inspection due to the recruitment

of new staff and this now meets the children's needs. The provider was asked to improve parents' knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and how this links to their child's progress. Parents now have access to detailed information on the noticeboard and also when their child is eligible for nursery education funding. The provider was also asked to improve the planning for outdoor play. This is ongoing; children have sufficient opportunities to experience outdoor play and practitioners continually discuss ideas for enhancing their experiences outdoors.

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 the registration system shows the hours of children's attendance
- ensure all staff are able to recognise potential child protection concerns
- develop the book corner to ensure it is attractive to children (also applies to education).

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):

- develop opportunities for children to recognise their own names
- extend opportunities for children's independence, for example, at snack time.

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