

# Henley Pre-school Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	251517
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 March 2007
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<b>Registered person</b>	Henley Pre School Centre
<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?

Henley Pre-school Centre is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the pre-school and members of the local community. It opened in 1986 and operates from one large room within the community centre in Henley, a village near Ipswich. A maximum of 25 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open each weekday during school term time from 09.00 to 11.45, in addition, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays there is a lunch club until 12.45 and afternoon sessions from 12.45 to 15.30. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 28 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group currently supports a small number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs five members of staff, who all hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted because detailed information is obtained from parents about their individual health care needs and staff follow stringent procedures to take account of allergies and children's individual dietary requirements. All staff have current first aid certificates and have attended training in administering an 'Epipen' to ensure they act appropriately in a medical emergency. Procedures are in place to obtain parents' written consent to administer medication and records of medication administered are maintained. However, the format is unclear and open to misinterpretation and more than one entry is recorded on a page so records are not confidential. All staff have attended food hygiene training to ensure appropriate health and hygiene guidelines and procedures are followed.

Children's dietary needs are met through the provision of a mid-morning snack, when they sit down together to enjoy items such as sliced apple and pitta bread or sliced banana and muffins. Children who stay to the lunch club enjoy the social occasion as they sit with staff to eat their packed lunch. Drinking water is available for children to access independently throughout the session to ensure they do not become dehydrated. Staff remind children to wash their hands before meals and after using the toilet, although they are given few explanations as to why they should wash their hands. The taps are very stiff so staff often fill the basins with water for children but this is not always changed between individual children to reduce the risk of cross-infection.

Children have regular opportunities for physical activity. They enjoy daily access to the outdoor area, but only have free access throughout the session during warm weather, because restrictions imposed by the community centre management committee only allow them to leave the doors open when it is warm enough to go outside without coats. Children skilfully manoeuvre bikes and scooters and engage in imaginary play with staff while filling their vehicles with petrol. They develop control of their bodies while practising climbing and balancing and joining in with ring games. In wet weather the group sometimes have use of a large hall within the community centre. Children demonstrate increasing control while rolling and cutting playdough, practising their threading skills and using a variety of mark making tools to help them develop their hand eye coordination.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in safe and secure well-maintained environment, where staff take sound steps to minimise risks to children. For example, carrying out daily safety checks and monitoring arrival and departure times to ensure children do not leave without an authorised adult. Fire safety precautions are in place and staff practise emergency evacuations with the children to ensure they know what to do in the event of a fire. Appropriate procedures are in place to keep children safe on outings.

Staff spend considerable time preparing the room before children's arrival to create a stimulating environment with suitable facilities to promote children's independence. The room is organised to provide children with space to move around freely and safely. Children have access to a broad range of safe and suitable toys and equipment that are well maintained and meet safety standards.

Children are cared for by staff who are vetted and have the relevant experience, knowledge and skills to promote their welfare. Children are protected because all staff have attended safeguarding children training and an appropriate policy is in place, staff understand their responsibilities to protect children and the procedures to follow if they have a concern.

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

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settle well, or are supported by staff to do so, in the welcoming and stimulating environment. Children spend their time playing purposefully with a balanced range of toys and activities that motivate and interest them. Toys and resources are well-organised to enable children to select activities, initiate their own play and follow their own interests. Children make positive relationships with staff who join in with children's play to promote their interest, for example, while playing with the playdough.

Staff are aware of the differing needs of the small number of children aged under three years on roll. They have just started to include 'Birth to three matters' in their planning and children's records of progress. Staff informally adapt activities and their interactions to encourage younger children's participation, but they are not fully familiar with the framework to enable them implement it effectively in their practice.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. After a period of upheaval with many changes of manager the group are now implementing a series of measures to improve the provision of nursery education. The new manager is in the process of establishing her own system of planning which will involve all staff, to ensure they are aware of the learning intentions in planned activities. She has just introduced a new format for adult-focused activities, based on appropriate stepping stones, showing adaptation and evaluation opportunities. Staff have a generally sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn and use this to provide a broad range of interesting play and learning opportunities. They are in the process of accessing workshops on the advice of the support teacher to further develop their knowledge of the Foundation Stage.

Staff are interested in what children say and do and respond to their interests. They make some use of open-ended questioning, for example, when involving children in helping to make up the paint. However, sometimes questioning does not provide children with appropriate challenge to extend their learning. Staff manage children's behaviour well, they are good role models and they thank children for being helpful. Children's progress through the stepping stones is recorded in their records of progress and includes observations and photographs of children's play and achievements. However, these are not reviewed to identify children's next step in learning and used to inform future planning.

Children make positive relationships with each other and staff, they play together well in pairs or small groups interacting and negotiating during their play. For example, while operating the remote controlled bugs to make them follow each other. They proudly show adults and the other children their creations, such as paper flowers for Mothers Day, so developing a sense of pride in their own achievements. Children develop their self-confidence when they stand up during circle time activities to describe photographs they have brought for the interest table.

Children enjoy their time at the pre-school and they have a positive attitude to learning. They are confident and self-assured and eager to offer their own ideas, such as when completing the 'weather board'. Most children confidently recognise their own name and are able to sound out and name the individual letters. Children have many opportunities to practise their mark making and early writing skills and staff encourage them write their own names and label their own work. Children enjoy stories in a whole group and but they do not routinely access the book area independently to share books with each other and staff.

Children use mathematical language during their play, identifying shapes and learning about capacity while playing with the sand and water. They have some opportunities to recognise numerals and most children can count confidently to 10 and beyond. However there are missed opportunities during everyday situations to extend children's counting skills and develop their use of simple calculation. Outings are arranged for the oldest children before they start school, for example, to Ipswich Museum or to the docks, so helping them learn about the local and wider environment.

Children use the computer competently to support their learning and they enjoy helping each other complete simple programmes. Most children show good levels of curiosity and they learn about living things when growing bulbs and watering the flowers in the garden. Children handle a range of tools and objects with increasing control to help develop their hand to eye coordination. Children use their imagination well in planned and spontaneous events and they act out familiar scenarios in the home corner, such as taking orders for food and having spaghetti bolognaise for tea. They share ideas and negotiate roles in their play, for example, when following another child's suggestion to play 'There was a princess long ago'. Children have good opportunities to develop their creativity while accessing the interesting range of craft resources and they are given time to explore and experiment with their own ideas. They access the easel freely, exploring colour and describing their pictures to others. Overall, children make good progress given their capability and starting points

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

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the setting. They are valued by staff who respect their individuality and ensure children are able to play with toys and equipment which meet their individual needs. Children enjoy sharing laminated books made from photographs of them and their friends, such as them with 'Calypso Bear' or on the 'Rising Fives' outing, which helps them develop a sense of belonging to the group. Effective procedures are in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and the group works in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure children's specific needs are met

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are learning right from wrong and to show concern for others. Staff are good role models and their calm and consistent manner and use of sound strategies help children understand the rules of the group. For example, children understand to use a sand timer to share popular resources such as the computer or the bikes. Children are learning about their own cultures and those of others as they take part in planned activities to celebrate Chinese New Year and Easter. They are beginning to develop an understanding of people's differences through access to resources, such as books and posters, reflecting a positive view of the diversity of society.

The partnership with parents and carers is good.

All the required documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are cared for according to their parents' wishes. Parents are provided with a comprehensive parents pack containing copies of the group's policies and procedures and information explaining the Foundation Stage. They complete an 'All about me booklet' when their children start and know they can ask to see their children's records of progress, which staff encourage parents to contribute to. These, together with a written report containing information about children's achievements, are passed onto their next provision or school with parents' consent. The group seek the views of parents via a suggestion book. Parents share information verbally on a daily basis to ensure their children's changing needs are met.

Parents form an active committee and they regularly participate on the parents' rota, which helps them gain a better understanding of the activities their children enjoy at pre-school. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with the running of the group and they are provided with information about weekly topics, so they can encourage their children to contribute to the interest table. Parents speak highly of the group and how their children's self confidence has developed since they started attending.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The good organisation of time space and resources ensures children's needs are met and helps them makes good progress. Robust recruitment, appointment and induction procedures are in place to ensure that children are protected and cared for by qualified staff with a sound knowledge of child development. Children benefit from good adult to child ratios, especially during afternoon sessions as attendance figures are currently low. Effective staff deployment contributes to children's care, learning and play.

The strong committee have just reviewed and updated the operational policies and procedures to ensure they reflect practice and meet current regulations to support the care and welfare of the children attending. All the required documentation is accurately maintained to ensure children receive appropriate care. Overall, children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. The group have experienced a period of instability with many changes of manager over a short period in time, resulting in a lack of consistency in monitoring and overseeing the provision for nursery education. The new manager is committed to building a strong team to work together to re-establish high quality nursery provision. The group have been following the advice of their support teacher and the committee have been very supportive of staff to help them make improvements. Detailed staff records of training are in place and appraisals take place to identify areas for professional development. The group have a good partnership with the local primary school, the reception teacher visits the pre-school to meet the children and staff take the older children on visits to the school to help ease their transition.

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

At their last inspection the group agreed to improve the system of recording children's attendance. Children's sessional attendance is recorded in the register showing any variation in times, in addition parents record their children's time of arrival and departure so enhancing children's welfare. They were also asked to provide children with further opportunities to access toys and equipment of their own choosing. In response they bought a 'tech unit' to provide

further child accessible storage facilities to improve opportunities for children to self-select resources to support their learning and play.

The nursery education inspection asked them to consider reviewing planning to further improve the use of the outdoor area. This has not been fully implemented, outdoor planning identifies daily resources but does not include any learning intentions to ensure children are provided with effective learning opportunities. They are in the process of developing the range of resources to support outdoor play and a member of staff is attending training to develop the learning environment.

### **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.

## **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):

- review children's hand washing procedures and develop their understanding of the importance of good hygiene practices
- improve the system for obtaining parent's written consent to administer medication and recording medication administered
- improve the outcomes for children under three by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters'.

#### **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):

- provide more opportunities for children to count and calculate in everyday situations
- develop a system of monitoring children's records of progress to identify their next step in learning and use to inform future planning
- extend staff's use of effective questioning skills to provide all children with appropriate challenge.

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)