



Holton St Peter Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251520
Inspection date	06 March 2007
Inspector	Susan Smith
Setting Address	Holton & Blyford Village Hall, Lodge Road, Halesworth, Suffolk, IP19 8PL
Telephone number	07979 746 476
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Registered person	Holton St Peter Pre-School
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?

Holton St Peter Pre-school is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school and members of the local community. It was registered in 1973 and operates from the Holton and Blyford village hall in the village of Holton on the outskirts of Halesworth in Suffolk. A maximum of 24 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open from 09.15 to 11.45, Monday to Friday. In addition, it provides a lunch club from 11.45 until 12.30 and afternoon session from 12.30 until 15.00 on Monday, Wednesday and Friday during term time only. The pre-school provides a holiday play scheme in the Easter and summer holidays from 09.00 to 13:00. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 31 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 25 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local and surrounding area.

The pre-school employs five full-time members of staff and two part-time staff. Of these, four hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the Local Authority and 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 to understand the importance of good health and hygiene practices through the regular routines of the session. For example, staff ensure children wash their hands thoroughly after using the toilet and that they clean their hands with anti-bacterial foam before snack time, explaining the need to 'wipe away the germs'. Children receive appropriate care if they are ill or have an accident because staff are aware of individual children's health care needs and all the required documentation and consents are in place to support this. In addition, most staff have current first aid and food hygiene certificates to ensure they are aware of the correct procedure to follow to maintain children's health and prevent the spread of infection. A well stocked first aid kit, the contents of which are checked regularly, is easily available in an emergency.

Children benefit from a nutritious, balanced diet with the setting and parents working in close partnership to provide children with food that is healthy. All snacks are provided by the parents, and staff encourage parents to provide fresh fruit and vegetables for the children. Children staying for the lunch club are encouraged to bring in healthy packed lunches and they enjoy the opportunity for social interaction, talking with their peers and staff. Children's individual dietary needs are met well with good recording procedures in place to ensure all staff are fully aware of children who have special dietary requirements. Children are learning about healthy eating, they are encouraged to talk about healthy foods they like to eat. Children have free access to drinking water throughout the session to ensure they are not thirsty.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Children enjoy taking part in ring games indoors. They have daily access to the outside and the fresh air, where they are provided with a range of activities and resources. Children skilfully manoeuvre whilst pedalling on the bikes and engage in imaginary play such as 'filling their vehicles with petrol'. Staff have recently introduced an outdoor activity box which is very popular with the children and allows them the opportunity to read books and mark make outside. Children demonstrate increasing control while using tools and equipment such as, construction kits, scissors, and mark making tools to help develop their hand to eye coordination. Children are beginning to learn about their own bodies, for example they know they have to wear their coats to keep warm, showing an understanding of keeping themselves healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment where well implemented policies and procedures promote their safety. The hall used as the main playroom is laid out so that children can move around safely under staff supervision. The main entrance to the building is kept

locked during sessions to prevent unauthorised access, with an accurate register maintained of children and adults present. All the required fire safety precautions are in place and staff practise emergency evacuations with the children so that they know what to do in the event of a fire.

Children have access to a good amount of space indoors and outdoors and a good range of high quality toys and equipment which are well maintained. Children are able to access these independently from tables, trays and boxes situated at their height. This enables children to make many of their own choices, increases their independence and helps them to organise their own play. Children are beginning to understand about keeping themselves safe because staff talk to them about walking inside and about sitting on their chairs properly so they do not hurt themselves or others.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded and promoted as most have completed a child protection course and the group has a policy in place available to parents. Staff have a clear understanding of their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary to protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Parents and children settle themselves in the registration area chatting happily as they wait for everyone to arrive. They are encouraged to feel settled and confident by the warm and welcoming environment and friendly staff. Children are eager to take part in the broad range of activities provided by staff that stimulate and interest them. They make positive relationships with each other and look forward to playing with their friends. This helps them to develop a real sense of belonging. Staff are supportive and caring towards the children and take time to listen to them, this helps children develop their sense of self-worth as they know staff value their contributions. The organisation of activities and routines of the session encourages children to initiate their own play as they freely choose to spend their time engaged in activities that interest and motivate them.

There are only a few children aged under three at each session and staff informally adapt their practice for these children. Most staff have attended 'Birth to three matters' training to continue to develop the children's care. Currently, they are implementing records of progress for children aged under three in line with the framework to identify their interests and achievements to help staff plan to meet their needs.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Teaching provides realistic challenges for all children. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage which they use to provide a broad range of stimulating play and learning opportunities to help children make good progress. Planning covers the six areas of learning and is linked to the stepping stones. Staff use a good range of teaching methods to motivate children so they are interested and keen to learn, for example, encouraging them to find out 'which car is the fastest?' when playing with the cars and positively engaging in games initiated by the children, such as what's 'hiding in the

compost?'. Staff use effective questioning skills to extend children's learning and promote their curiosity. For example, responding to a child's interest by asking 'what else do you think lives in compost?' and deliberately asking 'can I put this bear in the yellow one?' when holding up a green bear. This promotes children's thinking skills. Staff are interested in what children say and do and manage children's behaviour well. Focussed activities take place with identified learning intentions and observations are made of the children's achievements and transferred to the children's assessment records. However, robust systems are not in place to evaluate the effectiveness of activities in meeting the learning intention and to detail the next steps in individual children's learning.

An effective key worker system is in place with staff knowing their key children and their families well. Subsequently, children's individual needs are effectively met and they develop confidence and self-esteem. Staff use successful strategies to engage children, for example, encouraging children to listen by clapping hands. The use of time and resources are good. The sessions are mostly balanced to enable children to experience group time, outside play and to pursue their own interests. Children cooperate with the routine, such as helping to tidy up and eagerly go and get their coats on so they can play outside.

Some children enjoy sharing books with staff and each other relishing the close interaction and attention this affords them. This helps children to appreciate books, recognise that print has meaning and seek comfort from staff when needed. Most children are confident communicators and they are encouraged to socialise during the session and particularly at snack and meal times, when they chatter happily with staff and each other. Most children recognise their own names and the more able children competently demonstrate their early writing skills during planned and spontaneous activities.

Children have many opportunities to sort items into different colours and count them. Staff use the everyday routines to good effect to promote mathematical thinking. For example, matching the colour of the plates to the same colour cup at snacktime and counting children as they line up to go outside. Children use mathematical language during their play, for example children proudly compare the size of their big spades to the other children's small ones. Children are beginning to learn about capacity as they use different size containers when exploring sand, water and soil. This helps them to understand different mathematical concepts.

Children work together well while using construction kits, for example, cooperating and negotiating while building with the train set. This helps them to understand sharing and helps them to build harmonious relationships. They enjoy operating simple equipment such as a 'microwave oven' in the home corner and the 'leap frog' programmable toy. Some children enjoy using the computer to develop their mouse skills. However staff do not monitor the use of the computer to ensure all children have access.

Children handle a range of tools and objects with increasing control to help develop their hand to eye coordination. They have opportunities to listen and respond to music, for example, when moving like 'aeroplanes' in a music and movement session. They negotiate roles in their play by clearly talking to each other especially in the home corner when enacting familiar scenarios from home such as using the washing machine. This enables them to form meaningful relationships with each other. Children engage in many imaginative role play experiences, for

example dressing up as doctors, mending the washing machine and making pancakes with the playdough. They mix colours at the easel and take part in regular adult-led and self-initiated activities which allows them to explore their own creativity.

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 all children are able to play with toys and equipment which meet their individual needs. The provision has effective arrangements in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and staff work 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 responsible behaviour because staff are good role models and their calm and consistent manner and use of sound strategies helps children understand the rules of the group. Children are developing confidence and self-esteem and are learning to manage their own behaviour and to know right from wrong. They have a clear understanding of their place in the community and share information about their homes and how they live. They take part in planned activities to gain an understanding of festivals such as Chinese New Year. They are beginning to develop an understanding of people's differences through access to resources, such as books and puzzles, reflecting a positive view of the diversity of society.

All the required documentation and consents are in place to ensure children are cared for according to their parents' wishes. Parents are able to see the operational policies and procedures, however, the complaints procedure does not reflect current regulations.

Staff have built a good rapport with parents and exchange information on a daily basis regarding any issues that may have arisen; this ensures continuity of care. Children and parents appreciate the lunch club which runs three days a week. This helps the children to socialise and to feel safe and secure in the setting.

The partnership with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education is good.

Parents receive good quality information about the setting, including the provision for nursery education, via the prospectus and regular newsletters. The group are becoming more proactive in encouraging parents to share and contribute to their children's records of progress. Parents feel comfortable to stay with their children at registration time and staff use this time effectively to give parents information on coming events such as the Easter playscheme. The group actively seek the views of parents through a suggestion book. Parents regularly participate in the parent's rota, which helps them to gain a better understanding of the activities that their children join in with. Parents speak highly of the group, they find staff friendly and approachable and are very pleased with their children's progress since joining the group.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by suitable and appropriately qualified staff with a sound knowledge of child development. The group are aware of changes to staff vetting procedures and these are reflected in recruitment and suitability procedures for new staff. Staff work well together and are aware of each other's roles and responsibilities. Most operational policies and procedures are in place to support the successful running of the provision. However, some need updating in line with current regulations.

The appropriate organisation of time, space and resources and effective staff deployment positively supports children's care, learning and play. The group have sound procedures in place to ensure adult to child ratios are met. Overall, children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of nursery education is satisfactory. Recently, the group has undergone changes in senior staff and committee members. The staff are motivated and committed to improving the quality of care and the provision of nursery education and their work is supported by the committee. Satisfactory systems are in place for monitoring and evaluating the provision and identifying areas for future development. Annual staff appraisals are to take place to identify strengths and weakness and areas for professional development. Staff are actively encouraged to attend further training to update their knowledge and skills.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the group was asked to record details of any difficulties encountered when carrying out fire drills. This has been met as the group has implemented a system of recording the details such as time, date and any difficulties encountered of all the fire drills they carried out. They intend to expand the information recorded to include the number of children and adults who took part and to evaluate the effectiveness of the fire drill to ensure the safety of the children.

At their previous nursery inspection the group agreed to reflect on training attended by staff to improve their existing good practice. Effective systems are in place for staff to share any information and review their current practice with a view to continuous improvement of the quality of play, care and learning they provide to promote children's development. For example, a member of staff recently attended a course on using singing effectively within the setting. She shared the information from the course with her colleagues and they were able to immediately introduce new rhymes into their music and movement session. This provides children with new learning opportunities and promotes their development.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the 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):

- continue to update and review operational policies and procedures in line with current regulations.

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 activities are evaluated against the learning outcome and the next step in learning is identified for all children.

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