



# Holbrook & District Pre-school Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	251518
<b>Inspection date</b>	23 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Gill Thornton
<b>Setting Address</b>	Holbrook Primary School, The Street, Holbrook, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP9 2PZ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Holbrook & District Pre-School Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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?

Holbrook and District Pre-School Playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children at the preschool and members of the local community. It opened in its present form in 1977 and has been running for over 40 years. It operates from one large playroom within its own premises in the grounds of Holbrook Primary School. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday during term time only from 09.15 to 11.45, with a lunch club from 11.45 to 13.10. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 27 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 20 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the Shotley peninsula area.

The pre-school employs five members of staff, of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one member of staff is working towards a further qualification. The group 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 the importance of good health and hygiene practices through the regular routines of the session. For example, they learn to sing a hand washing song and older children explain to staff that using soap helps to wash away the germs. In addition, staff remind children to cover their mouths when they cough. Consequently their risk of cross-infection is minimised and children stay healthy.

Children receive appropriate care if they are ill or have an accident because staff are aware of their individual health care needs and all the required documentation and consents are in place to support this. However, the system for requesting consent to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is open to misinterpretation and could result in children not receiving appropriate care in an emergency. All staff have attended first aid and food hygiene training to ensure they are aware of the correct procedures to follow to maintain children's health and prevent the spread of infection.

Children's dietary needs are met through the provision of a mid-morning snack that takes account of their individual dietary needs and preferences. Children sit down together in a group to enjoy items such as crackers, fruit and cheese, with a choice of milk or water to drink. Children are reminded at registration that they can ask for a drink of water at any time. Children who stay to the lunch club enjoy the social occasion as they sit down together with staff to eat their packed lunch. Once a month the children and staff are invited over to the school to join them for a school dinner, which gives them a good opportunity to become familiar with lunch time routines to help ease their transition into school.

Children enjoy a good range of physical play activities which contribute to a healthy lifestyle. In the pre-school's outdoor area they use a range of toys and equipment such as wheeled toys, bats and balls, tunnels and small climbing frames. Sometimes they practise their climbing and balancing skills on the school adventure playground, go for walks around the school field or play parachute games on the school's all weather court. Children demonstrate increasing control while using small hammers and tacks, a variety of mark making tools and while practising their threading skills 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 a safe and secure environment where staff take sound steps to minimise risks, for example, excluding children from the kitchen area 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.

Staff create a very welcoming and stimulating environment. The building is attractively decorated with posters and examples of children's own artwork which they proudly point to. The layout of the playroom provides children with space to move around freely and safely and encourages their independence, for example, children confidently access the child-friendly toilet and hand washing facilities. Well-organised child accessible storage facilities enable children to freely self-select from the broad range of safe and suitable toys and equipment that are well-maintained and meet safety standards.

Children develop a good understanding of safety rules, for example, they understand not to run indoors in case they fall and hurt themselves. Their welfare is safeguarded because all staff have attended child protection training and they are aware of their roles and responsibilities in protecting children.

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

The provision is good.

Most children arrive happy and settle well or are sensitively supported by staff to do so in the welcoming environment. Children form good relationships with each other, they eagerly greet their friends as they arrive and excitedly show them what they are doing, saying 'watch, watch'. Children are confident and can play well on their own or with others. 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 encourage children to initiate their own play and follow their own interests, as they freely choose to spend their time engaged in activities that interest and motivate them.

The group are developing the use of 'Birth to three matters' in their practice with this age group. They use a good system of sharing photographs from home to help younger children settle. The framework is beginning to be reflected in their planning and staff informally adapt activities to ensure younger children are able to participate and make progress. For example, when talking to the children about what they are doing with the figures in the dolls house. Children understand the routines of the group and come together happily for group activities such as 'show and tell', when staff effectively split them into to groups to ensure everyone is able to join in and contribute. However, children would benefit from a review of the organisation of snack time to avoid them becoming restless while waiting for the other children to finish.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. A good balance of adult-led and child-initiated play ensures children are motivated and engaged in a broad range of developmentally appropriate activities. Staff use their sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn to provide a stimulating environment which reflects most children's background and the wider community. Staff use an effective range of teaching methods to motivate children so they are keen to learn and make progress. They use successful strategies to engage and interest children,

for example, at story time splitting the children into two groups and using props to encourage their interest and participation. Staff join in with children's play to extend their learning and they adapt activities to provide children with realistic challenge. However, children's learning opportunities at snack time are not always fully developed.

Planning is based on topics and is balanced across the six areas of learning, although it sometimes reflects the early learning goals instead of appropriate stepping stones. Assessment is based upon meaningful observations recorded in children's records of progress and staff informally consider children's next step in learning. However, they have not yet devised an effective system of evaluating these records to formally identify children's next step in learning to use as an aid to future planning. Staff manage children's behaviour effectively and provide them with good strategies to help them learn to manage their own behaviour.

Children enjoy their time at the setting. They have a positive attitude to learning and become confident and self-assured in their play, negotiating and interacting well with their peers to share ideas and experiences. They develop their self-esteem and take great pride in recording their achievements on the digital camera and showing their creations to others. For example, excitedly showing their parents their constructions made from wooden blocks. Children play together well cooperating and offering their own suggestions such as in the large well-resourced role play area. They have good pencil control, for example, when drawing pictures inspired by the story of 'The Bear Hunt' and making excellent use of descriptive language when explaining what they had drawn.

Most children confidently recognise their own name and they make good use of the well-resourced graphics area. They use mathematical language during their play and practise their counting skills. Children enjoy activities such as 'pop-up targets' to develop their number recognition and some children demonstrate simple calculation skills when adding together their scores. Children competently display their skills when using the computer and operate everyday technology during their play. For example, they enjoy talking to each other on the working telephone in the home corner.

Children take part in activities to learn about living things, they show curiosity when discussing changes in the seasons and enjoy growing vegetables such as tomatoes in the pre-school garden. They make good use of their imagination in planned and spontaneous role play situations both inside and out. They explore their creativity while experimenting with a range of media and materials, such as when making Chinese dragons. Overall, children make good progress in their learning and achieve well given their capability and starting points.

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

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into the setting. Staff value their individual personalities and ensure all children are able to play with toys and equipment which meet their individual needs, so they can become confident and independent. Photographs of the children and displays of their art work help them develop a good sense of belonging. 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 right from wrong and to show concern for others through the use of effective strategies. For example, 'kindness notes' are read out praising children's helpfulness and kindness to others, children respond well to this and ask to take the notes home to show their parents. Children are learning effective strategies to manage their own behaviour, such as using timers as an aid to sharing. Children understand the rules of the group and explain them to others, for example, why they must not push on the steps and they cooperate with each other at tidy up time. Children have meaningful opportunities to learn about the wider world and other cultures. They take part in festivals such as Chinese New Year, when the room is attractively decorated to support the celebration and they explore artefacts from other cultures on the interest table.

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 invited to view the groups' policies and procedures to inform them about the running of the group and they receive a welcome sheet containing staff photographs. Children benefit from the good relationships fostered with their parents. Information is exchanged verbally on a daily basis to ensure children's changing needs are met and to provide continuity of care. Parents are asked to contribute to their children's records of progress, which are sent home each term and they are invited to make an appointment with their children's key person to discuss their progress. Parents are very complimentary about the care and education provided and the good progress made by their children. They comment on how children remember the playgroup rules at home and how children learn to appreciate other cultures.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are relaxed and happy in the setting. They are safeguarded as recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are well-protected and cared for by staff with a sound knowledge and understanding of child development. The well-organised environment and effective staff deployment enhances children's enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting. Sessions are well-organised with clear routines which help children settle and become confident. Staff work together as an effective team to support children's care, learning and play.

Operational policies and procedures generally work in practise to promote children's good health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. However, these are not organised to form a cohesive operational plan, detailing the running of the provision, which is available to parents. The required documentation is in place to promote the welfare of children attending. Overall, children's needs are met.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The staff are a strong team who compliment each other's skills. The supervisor is in the process of initiating a system of staff appraisals to identify areas for professional development, however there is no clear system in place to monitor and evaluate the provision for nursery education and not all the key issues from the last inspection have been fully acted upon. The group have good working relationships with the school, children benefit from being able go across for school dinners once a month to familiarise them with the school environment. Their records of progress are shared with the reception

teacher who visits the pre-school to meet the new intake of children to ease their transition into school.

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

At their last inspection the pre-school was asked to develop induction procedures for new staff. These are now in place and have been used to induct work experience students to ensure they are aware of their roles and responsibilities within the setting. The group also agreed to improve staff deployment. All staff spend the majority of their time supporting and interacting with the children to enhance children's care, learning and play.

The nursery education inspection identified key issues regarding improving Foundation Stage planning. The group has introduced a new planning format based on the areas of learning, showing links to the early learning goals and stepping stones. In addition, they now use adult focused activity sheets which show learning intentions, adaptation and evaluation. However, these are not always fully completed to benefit from the improved format. They also agreed to develop children's records of progress to include their next steps in learning, this has yet to be fully implemented and remains an area for improvement.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection 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):

- improve the system of requesting written consent from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment
- review the organisation of snack time to provide children with further learning opportunities (also applies to nursery education)

- develop and review the operational plan and make available to parents.

### **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):

- devise and implement a system of monitoring and evaluating the provision for nursery education
- devise and implement a system of evaluating children's records of progress to identify their next step in learning and use as an aid to future planning.

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)