



## Elvington Under Fives

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	321546
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 January 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Rosemary Beyer
<b>Setting Address</b>	Dauby Lane, Elvington, York, North Yorkshire, YO41 4HP
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<b>Registered person</b>	Elvington 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?

Elvington Under Fives has been registered since 1992 and is managed by a committee of parents. It operates from a self-contained portable building, which has an enclosed outdoor area. It is sited at Elvington Primary School and the village is located approximately seven miles from the city of York. A maximum of 26 children may attend the group at any one time. The group operates each weekday from 09.00 to 11.30 and from 12.45 to 15.15 Monday to Thursday, during term time only.

There are currently 36 children aged from two and a half to under five years on roll. Of these, 23 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the village and surrounding local rural area and the group welcomes and supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and those who speak English as an additional language.

Overall seven staff work with the children; two have a recognised level 3 childcare qualification and two have a level 2 qualification; the others are unqualified but very experienced. They receive support from the development workers at the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and the Pre-School Learning Alliance. The group is also a member of the local village Partnership with the school and local childminders.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for on premises which are clean and well maintained, with toilets checked regularly by staff during the sessions. Good hygiene practice is effectively implemented to prevent the spread of disease. The children learn to protect themselves by using tissues, covering their mouths when they cough and washing their hands after personal care or before food. Most children remember to wash their hands, although some of the younger ones do need reminding, but staff are vigilant. The older children know germs can make them ill and have learnt about the need to take exercise and eat healthily to stay fit and well.

Equipment is checked regularly to ensure it is clean, and the water and sand trays are emptied to prevent children picking up infection. When the children wash the dolls and their clothes they use antibacterial cleaner. They discuss the need to keep clean and develop the cleaning activities by putting the clothes on the line and discussing the wind, with books and pictures.

Healthy eating is promoted at snack time and during growing topics. The children have the choice of fruit and raisins at snack time, also toast or a plain biscuit as some children will not eat fruit or toast and the staff think that they need something to eat during the morning. They also can have milk or water to drink, with drinks available on request during the sessions. Staff ensure food is stored appropriately, whether in the fridge or an airtight tin, and any use-by dates are checked when ingredients are provided for baking sessions. In the summer the children grow vegetables in the garden and they then prepare them, either making soup or eating them raw in salads. They also try different foods when celebrating festivals and learning about food in other cultures.

Children are protected from infectious diseases by the implementation of the written sick child policy, which is respected by parents. If children are taken ill during the sessions parents are contacted to collect them. While waiting the children sit with a member staff in the book corner where they can be quiet. Parents give written permission for any medication which is administered, and acknowledge it when they collect their children. Most children who use inhalers self-medicate, but this is also recorded. Staff have written permission to seek medical help or advice in an emergency. They all have current first aid certificates and ensure the first aid box is well stocked. All accidents are recorded in order to keep parents informed.

When the weather is fine the children have fresh air, either in the enclosed outdoor area or on walks in the village. They have a good range of outside equipment to help them develop their physical skills, balance and general fitness. The ground is currently waterlogged so they are

doing their exercises indoors. During the summer children have access to resources both inside and out, choosing freely where they wish to play.

Children's physical development is good. They use a wide range of equipment to balance, move around and develop their strength. The older children do exercises each week, during which time they are developing the ability to dress and undress themselves independently when changing for the sessions. Most need little help, and if they put clothes on inside out, they can take them off and put them on again. They are developing a good sense of balance through the range of exercises they thoroughly enjoy. After the warm-up session, they do actions to music and move around the room safely and with excellent control. They have to listen to instructions and follow them. After the session they feel their chests to see how their hearts are beating, and discuss how they feel. One child was fascinated to see how his stomach moved when he breathed in and out. The children were keen to have a drink after their exercise as they were all hot and thirsty.

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

The provision is good.

When children are on the premises, the building is secure and the external doors locked. Staff admit parents and visitors, ensuring they sign the visitors' book on admission. A register is completed on arrival and departure of the children and the time noted of any late or early variations.

Fire drills are completed each half term and recorded appropriately, with staff and children's attendance monitored to ensure they are all familiar with the procedure. The fire evacuation procedure is displayed on the noticeboard for parents and visitors to see. Fire equipment is checked annually, as is the electrical equipment used on the premises.

Staff check resources each day to ensure they are safe, and remove items for repair, disposal or cleaning if necessary. Everything is checked at the start of the term and then cleaned. Suitable toys and equipment are available to meet the needs of all the children who attend, with small chairs and tables and a comfortable book corner with cushions for children to sit and read. Children help themselves to toys, which are easily and safely accessible from shelves and boxes. The children use the resources and the space with care. They move around with consideration and are careful not to hit each other when exercising. They know young children must not have access to small pieces of games and ensured a baby visiting did not get hold of puzzles. The children move chairs around with the legs downwards to prevent accidents.

Children are also protected by the comprehensive child protection policy and procedure in place, of which staff have a very good knowledge. Staff are very conscious of the need to include parents wherever possible, and know they do not undertake investigations themselves. Some have undertaken training to ensure they have up to date knowledge, although the procedure has not been updated to take account of recent changes.

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

The provision is good.

Children have access to a wide range of resources and equipment, suitable for their needs, and can help themselves to, or ask for, other things not immediately available. The room provides a child-friendly environment which is decorated with posters and well-displayed artwork, of which the children are very proud. They have created snowmen, paintings of rainbows and sparkly cobwebs as part of their winter topic. Relevant story and reference books are also on display for the children to use.

The younger children enjoy a good range of activities which are adapted to meet their development needs. Staff do not use the 'Birth to three matters' framework but do take account of the fact children are under three years of age when planning the day's programme. The children enjoy stories, singing and craft activities and very imaginative role play. They used the caterpillar climbing frame as a bus to go to Scarborough to the seaside. Their speech and vocabulary are developing very well due to conversations among themselves and with staff, who ask open-ended questions to make them think. All the children are settled and comfortable with the staff, and are becoming confident and independent in the positive environment provided.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage and use the stepping stones to monitor the children's development. They do not, however, give parents any information about it. Staff have recently introduced a new system of recording progress and concerns, which covers all the areas of learning. The key workers are responsible for feedback to parents on an informal basis, whether to discuss particular achievements or any concerns which may have arisen. They also maintain the development record, which parents can see on request. The record is kept in an individual file for each child, with special pieces of work, and is taken home when the children leave the group.

Most children in the group have previously attended the local toddler group in the village hall and also sessions for younger children run in the pre-school building, so the staff know them well when they start to have funded places. The children are familiar with the surroundings, are confident staying with the staff and leave their parents happily. They enter the setting very enthusiastically and are keen to try new things. They have very good relationships with both the staff and other children, chatting, taking turns and co-operating well in their games. During the sessions the children are developing confidence and independence, pouring their own drinks, choosing their own resources and also participating in adult-led focused activities. Most persevere to complete the task they have chosen. Some of the boys spent a great deal of time patiently working together, using the small construction pieces to create their own model cars, which they then used in the garage.

Children enjoy books and stories, both those read by adults and the ones they choose for themselves in the book corner. They like to participate by anticipating what will happen or speculating on what might happen if the story is unfamiliar. The older children use the listening centre to listen to CDs, either alone or with their friends. Mark-making materials are available

all the time for children to help themselves. They all recognise their names and most try to write them, with name cards available if they do not know how to do so. They also help themselves to paper and materials when role playing in the café or shop, to make lists or take orders.

Mathematics is part of each session, with everyday activities used for counting opportunities, such as chairs for drinks or cars on the floor. The children can count the number of people present and most can recognise the written numbers. They also sort objects into colour or size groups. Their mathematical language is developing well. They enjoy table-top games, such as dominoes, and are able to develop solutions to problems when pouring liquids or building models.

The children have produced some excellent artwork to support their current theme of winter weather, including sparkly frosty cobwebs and snowmen. They have also learned about ice floating on water and melting, and were very disappointed the recent snow did not settle. They then developed the role-play corner into an ice cream shop where they discussed different flavours and colours, ordering more supplies by telephone. The zoo was changed by two of the children into a winter world with cotton wool, penguins and other creatures.

During the spring and summer terms, the children grow plants in the garden outside or on the window sill. They know plants need water, warmth and light to grow, and enjoyed comparing the height of the sunflowers they grew last year. They also discussed the vegetables which they were able to eat. The children are learning about the need to eat healthily and to have exercise to stay fit and well. They thoroughly enjoy the exercises to music and are all developing good control and balance.

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

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They are kept informed on an informal basis of their children's development by the key workers, but do not have any information about the Foundation Stage nor do they receive suggestions about activities to do at home to support their children, unless staff have concerns. Children take home their individual files when they leave the group, which include the record of achievement staff maintain and also samples of work. A wide selection of photographs is available which shows the children enjoying activities both at the setting and on outings.

Staff and parents have good relationships and they are encouraged to be involved in the group through committee work, fundraising or helping at sessions if they wish to do so. When they express an interest they are encouraged to visit the group to see how it runs and discuss what they expect and what the group can offer their child. Parents complete a registration form before their children start to attend with all the required information. Children are able to settle at their own pace, with parents welcome to stay as long as needed. Newsletters and notices keep parents informed of future activities, for which they may be able to supply resources or information, future fundraising events and also any changes. A suggestion box is also available for any parents to make comments anonymously. Staff ensure the parents are aware of the complaints procedure, which is also included in the policy file for them to see.

Both the parents and children consulted like the group. They are happy with the excellent care and support staff provide. The parents feel confident their children are safe and happy in a welcoming environment, and are able to discuss concerns with staff should they arise. The children like the staff and enjoy the activities available and playing with their friends.

The group has a written equal opportunities policy which takes account of the relevant legislation and is made available to parents. Staff have undertaken considerable training to support their practice and to provide an anti-discriminatory environment. All children and families are welcome and included. Families from different backgrounds are consulted to help staff inform the children about festivals they celebrate and customs, and some have visited during the activities chosen. The children have used different crafts, music and cookery when learning about other cultures, and thoroughly enjoyed celebrating Chinese New Year and Divali. Parents and children with English as an additional language are supported and encouraged to become involved in the group. Children have the use of a good range of resources which reflect society and promote positive images of those often discriminated against.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are welcome in the group, as the premises are suitable for those less mobile. Staff have experience of caring for children with different needs, in line with the Code of Practice, and of creating individual learning plans. They have good contact with the Partnership Special Needs Co-ordinator and outside agencies for additional support.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. They learn about right and wrong in a positive encouraging environment, where they behave well. They have clear guidelines for behaviour and are very considerate of each other. The older children are very supportive and patient with younger or new children, helping them to reach things or complete tasks. All the children are developing good manners, both among themselves and when speaking to staff, who provide good role models. They are all treated with respect as individuals and with equal concern.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management of the setting is good. The group has clear user-friendly policies and procedures in place which support the safe and efficient management of the setting. The staff have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities, working well as a team to ensure the children have good care and a stimulating environment in which to play and learn. The registration certificate is on display and the conditions respected.

Robust systems are in place for employment of new staff and an effective induction procedure has been developed. Most of the staff are qualified, some working towards further appropriate qualifications and all have experience. Any person present without clearances is not allowed unsupervised access to the children. Staff are encouraged to participate in training to support their own personal development and to widen their knowledge, while improving their practice.

Staff record and effectively monitor children's development and achievements, as well as any concerns they may have. The recently introduced recording system ensures all the areas of

learning are covered and the children are making good progress through the stepping stones. During staff meetings information is exchanged to keep records up to date. Staff plan the activities at the start of the term and then weekly, and afterwards evaluate them to decide whether they need to modify or change things in the future. They share the responsibility for preparing and supporting the activities chosen.

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, the inspector requested that the electrical appliances were checked for safety. These have been tested annually and a record maintained. The inspector also asked that arrival and departure times of the children were noted, and the staff now include a record of any late arrivals or early departures.

For nursery education, the inspector asked the staff to develop activities to help children learn about the passage of time, features of the local environment and the weather. During registration time the children learn the days of the week, the months and the seasons. They also discuss the weather each day. Their knowledge of the local environment is supported by walks in the local community, and discussion of any local events. Staff were also asked to improve the management of baking activities to ensure all children had the opportunity to participate, and their interest was maintained. Staff now bake with smaller groups and are careful to include everyone.

### **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):



- ensure the child protection procedures take account of recent changes including the Local Safeguarding Children Boards.

### **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):

- make information about the Foundation Stage and suggestions for activities for children to develop their knowledge at home, available to parents.

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)