



Hopscotch Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY336516
Inspection date	07 March 2007
Inspector	Hayley Lapworth
Setting Address	Church of the Martyrs, 19 Westcotes Drive, LEICESTER, LE3 0QT
Telephone number	N/A
E-mail	
Registered person	Hopscotch Playgroup Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of 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 satisfactory. 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?

Hopscotch Playgroup opened in 2006 and operates from the church hall of The Church of the Martyrs church in Leicester. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open from 09.00 to 12.00 on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday during term time. Children can attend a variety of sessions.

There are currently 24 children aged from two to five years on roll, of these, 11 are receiving funding for nursery education. The setting currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and also supports children who speak English as an additional language. The setting employs 4 members of staff. Of these, 1 member of staff has an appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is mostly assured because hygiene routines are promoted. Children are encouraged to wash their hands before snacks, following messy activities and after using the bathroom. Some children know why they wash their hands and share with the inspector that 'it's to get all the glue off so they can have clean hands for snack time'. This means that they are preventing the spread of infection and learning about personal hygiene. Children are beginning to learn about how to keep healthy. For example, staff encourage children to eat healthily and provide them with a nutritionally balanced diet. For example, at snack time they choose from a variety of fruit, such as, kiwi and banana. Drinking water is available to children throughout the session. This means that they can have a drink when they are thirsty and begin to meet their own needs.

Staff are qualified in first aid. Children benefit through efficient accident and medication procedures ensuring they receive appropriate treatment most of the time. This is achieved through records which detail any action taken and the care they received. Following administration of medication or a child being involved in an accident parents are asked to countersign written records. However, not all parental signatures have been obtained to use in the event of emergency and treatment being required. Therefore, children's medical needs may be compromised.

Children receiving funded nursery education are developing skills in manoeuvring their bodies. They have sufficient opportunities to equipment which promotes their physical development. For example, children have frequent access to jumping on mini trampolines, climbing on frames and balancing on beams. Friends play together using the space around them imaginatively. For example, two children played excitedly at 'follow my leader' and a game of 'chase' steering themselves around furniture and displays of toys. This demonstrates they are at ease and confident in their surroundings which supports them in developing their own ideas.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Toys, resources and appropriate equipment are in place and safely stored. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised. This is achieved because the staff have taken some steps to provide a safe environment. For example, they regularly communicate with colleagues about their whereabouts when they go into the kitchen or bathroom. This means the children are well supervised and adult to child ratios are maintained. The kitchen is made inaccessible to children most of the time and all areas used by the children are maintained in a safe condition. This helps to prevent the children from having accidents and allows them to play safely. Overall, security of the setting is satisfactory and visitors are monitored. However, the security of the setting is less effective at times of arrival and departure of children and their parents. This means that children's safety is not fully promoted and may be compromised during these busy periods.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded by staff who have suitable working knowledge of abuse and neglect. They are aware of local referral procedures and their general responsibilities. There is a child protection policy in place which is made available to parents during the settling in period. Procedures to be followed in the event of a child protection concern are clearly defined. Therefore, children's welfare is effectively promoted.

Children are beginning to learn how to keep themselves safe. For example, they are involved in practising the fire drill. Staff are confident and aware of their roles and responsibilities for evacuating the premises. A written fire drill is available, although, not displayed. Therefore, the safety of parents and visitors in the event of an emergency are not effectively promoted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Most of the children are happy throughout their time in the setting. They arrive eager to play and are pleased to see their friends. One or two children are less settled on arrival, but soon adjust when warmly received and comforted by familiar staff. Many children are independent and make choices for themselves. For example, they browse around the activities which are excitingly displayed and select what they would like to do. This shows they are comfortable in their surroundings and helps them to grow in independence.

Children are building good relationships, they relate well to one another and to the staff. For example, they communicate with their peers during play, initiate conversations with staff and are beginning to develop confidence in speaking in a group. For example, during group time they tell their friends about models they have made. This demonstrates that they are developing language and social skills and are learning how to express themselves. Staff ask the children questions which relate to their play and make them think. For example, when they are creating pictures of houses they are asked 'how many windows does your house have' and 'do you know what shape they are'. Therefore, children are thinking about what they are doing and communicating their understanding.

Children's experiences are enhanced by the interaction of staff and their understanding of child development. As a result, staff organise appropriate activities that relate to children's age and understanding. They are suitably using the 'Birth to three matters' framework as a reference tool to provide a range of activities. This means that younger children access valuable experiences that contribute towards their development.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Senior staff have a very secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and how young children learn. This includes many opportunities for them to be involved and have first hand experiences. Detailed planning is in place, which is effectively implemented enhancing the children's learning experiences. Plans include opportunities for the children to develop in the six areas of learning. The good variety of activities range from being adult-led to children learning spontaneously from one another. Staff consider how to extend learning for more able children. This means that they are beginning to benefit from additional challenge. Children's achievements are monitored by staff who make observations

and link them to the stepping stones. These are then used to inform children's individual assessment records, which show that they are making good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are beginning to develop memory skills and are able to concentrate well. Many three and four year old children experience great pleasure from the wonderful range of books. They regularly access books independently. For example, they make good use of books by reading to themselves and sharing stories with one another. Also during the groups story time they are invited to join in reciting familiar parts of the story and interact by using the props. For example, when listening to the story of The Enormous Turnip they call out 'they pulled and they pulled but the turnip wouldn't come out'. This demonstrates their understanding of the story being told and how they are beginning to show respect for one another by the way they listen when others are speaking.

Children are beginning to develop writing skills. They have opportunities to write for a purpose, this is most evident in the writing area where they are mark making and practising early writing skills.

Children are developing a good understanding of numbers, they can count in order and are showing signs of understanding early stages of calculation. They are encouraged to use number in a variety of ways. For example, they use magnetic books where they count the number of animals from one up to ten. They then choose the correct number to represent the number they have reached which will only fit into the template if it is the correct answer. As a result, children are making optimum progress and having fun with numbers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff are aware of children's individual needs and backgrounds. They work effectively with parents to ensure that the needs of all children are met. This is achieved through the settling in procedure where parents are encouraged to stay and spend time with their children in the setting. This allows the children to become familiar with their surroundings and the staff to form relationships with the parents. Parents receive some information about how the group is run, in the form of policies and procedures. Communication at the start and end of the day ensures parents are kept informed about their child's care and provides a consistent approach. Parents who made comment are generally happy with the care their children receive and the service provided.

Some staff have a good knowledge base and experience of working with children with special needs. They form working relationships with other professionals that contribute to their care. They have secure understanding of monitoring concerns, making assessments, the referral process and the importance of parental involvement at an early stage. This means that they are able to competently support individual needs and provide tailored care.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are beginning to learn about their own lives and others around them. This is best demonstrated through accessing resources which depict positive images. For example, photographs of themselves and

their friends, books, jigsaws and their involvement in celebrating cultural festivals. This enhances their understanding of the world around them.

Children's behaviour is generally good. This is because staff have a suitable understanding of managing children's behaviour. They are suitably confident in implementing the group's strategies to manage children's behaviour. This helps children to learn right from wrong and behave well. Children are praised for good behaviour, for example, when they complete simple tasks set by a member of staff, such as, taking their creative work to a place to dry or lining up nicely to visit the bathroom. This helps to develop confidence and enables them to feel good about themselves.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education is satisfactory. Staff informally discuss with some parents their children's levels of attainment on entry, however, this information is not effectively used to ascertain their starting points and inform planning. Therefore, planning does not always effectively relate to children's level of development and the children's learning is compromised. Information about children's progress is sometimes shared with parents on collection of their children. However, formal consultation meetings with parents to discuss progress are not in place. This means that not all parents are informed of their child's stage of development. Parents receive some information about the Foundation Stage in the prospectus and through the monthly newsletter. Staff make suggestions for parents in the newsletter to encourage learning at home which are linked to the topic they are exploring at playgroup. This allows them to begin to understand what their children are learning. This also enables them to reinforce and contribute towards this learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from an environment that is suitably organised. This ensures they have access to appropriate learning opportunities inside and also outdoors at times. Staff work together as a team and communicate well keeping one another informed about the children's individual care, for example, if they observe progress in a child's development. Staff are deployed effectively into areas, this ensures that the children are suitably supervised at all times and makes them feel secure in their surroundings. The setting has a suitable operational plan in place, made up of policies, records and procedures. This contributes towards the smooth running of the service. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that the staff have suitable experience to work with children. Staff have many years experience and are confident in delivering child care, which contributes to the quality of the setting and provides children with appropriate care. However, at present the minimum requirement of qualified staff is not achieved and there is no named deputy in place to cover in the absence of the manager. Staff are keen to access a range of training and equal opportunities is applied. Which means that all staff have chance to develop professionally. The system for recording staff and children's attendance and visitors to the premises is effective. Records show actual persons present at all times promoting the safety of all.

The leadership and management of children in receipt of funding for nursery education is good. The Leader creates a setting steered by aims, objectives and job descriptions. Staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities within the playgroup. Management and staff are developing

the setting's practise to ensure that all children have access to learning experiences that relate to the Foundation Stage and the early learning goals. Management have devised systems to look at the effectiveness of the provision and are evaluating practise. These are currently being further improved to include an appraisal system for staff to look at their own strengths weakness' and personal development. The leader is involved in delivering all aspects of nursery education, this is achieved through the support she provides to staff and her hands on approach in the delivery of the early years curriculum. Management of staff is effective, they receive regular supervision and discuss practise issues at staff meetings and planning sessions. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the registration 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):

- provide an action plan detailing how the minimum requirement of qualified staff will be achieved and ensure a named deputy is in place to take charge in the absence of the manager
- enhance the security of the provision by effectively using the systems that are in place at all times and make sure that the fire drill is displayed
- ensure that parental permission is obtained for all children to be used in the event of emergency medical advise or treatment being required.

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):

- further develop systems to ensure that information about children's progress is shared with parents so that they can become fully involved in their children's learning and help them to continue to make progress in all areas of their development
- implement a system of children's initial assessments that includes parents to determine their starting points on entry to funded nursery education.

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