

Horam Community Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109443
Inspection date	25 June 2007
Inspector	Sue Taylor
Setting Address	Horam Village Hall, Horam, East Sussex, TN21 0JE
Telephone number	01435 812192
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Registered person	Horam Community Pre-School
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?

Horam 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 opened in 1977 and operates from two rooms in the village hall. A maximum of 30 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 09:30 to 12:30 or 13:30, Thursdays from 09:30 until 12:30 for 38 weeks of the year. Wednesday is a Rising Fives session. 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, 22 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs four members of staff, all of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications. The supervisor is working towards a higher qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in clean and airy premises, with access to good natural light. Staff follow daily routines that help keep children healthy. For example, there are paper towels for hand drying, except for messy play when communal towels are used, and staff wipe the table surfaces with antibacterial spray. However, the practice of children washing their hands in a communal bowl before eating and cooking activities does not promote good hygiene practices.

There is clear written information about the care of sick children and effective recording for medication and accidents. This helps maintain a healthy environment, ensures children receive the correct medicine and that parents are kept informed. The staff ensure children are protected from the sun, during outdoor play, with parental permitted sunscreen and the use of a gazebo, when necessary.

Children receive a healthy snack, taken in small groups during the session. This allows children to make some choice about when they have their snack. The snack menu varies over the week and includes fresh and dried fruit, crackers and spread or rice cakes. Children occasionally have a plain biscuit or birthday bun. Each child has their own water bottle that they can access throughout the session. This allows them to control their own thirst needs. Children bring packed lunches for an optional lunch club. Appropriate storage is provided to prevent food from spoiling and parents are informed about healthy options.

There is an enclosed outdoor area, with easy access from the hall. The children use this area daily, weather permitting. It offers good opportunities for physical play. Children develop skills as they play skittles or learn to balance and have control as they use the balls, hoops and bucket stilts. The regular use of small tools and equipment such as scissors, pencil sharpeners and a hole punch enables children to extend their fine motor skills, promoting their hand-eye coordination. The Rising Fives benefit from using the public playground where they can extend their abilities as they use the slide and climbing frames.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises used by the children are secure during the session. Hazards are minimised, for example, the radiators have covers and the kitchen has a safety gate. This means children can explore the environment safely and access the toilets when they need to, gaining some independence as they do. There are effective procedures in place for the safe arrival and departure of children. Detailed risk assessments, that are reviewed regularly, help keep children safe.

Children and staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire because these are practised well, ensuring all children and staff take part. The equipment and play materials, used by the children, are of good quality. Children make their own easy, safe choices from the resources and activities put out by staff. The staff ensure there are sufficient toys available to enable children to make their choices, although sharing is encouraged and practised.

The staff have a secure understanding of their role and responsibilities for child protection. Some staff have had recent training and guidance is available to ensure they recognise when

there may be concerns about a child in their care. This ensures that the children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and settle in quickly. They spend good levels of time at play, concentrating well and making choices from the resources put out. They are able to ask for other play materials from the store cupboard. There are limited objects or natural items that children can freely investigate. The staff are directly involved with the children and their play. Each child has a named keyworker who takes a special interest in them.

Observations are recorded and used to help promote the next steps in children's learning. However, there is no specific planning or progress records for the two-year-olds in line with the Birth to three matters framework. The staff have a daily routine and planned activities, although this is flexible and advantage is taken of spontaneous learning opportunities. For example, children go outside and explore the snow or watch the recycling lorries at work.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are progressing well, supported by the staff's secure knowledge of how children learn. Planning is in place and provides for a good range of interesting activities. The planning system ensures that children's progress to the early learning goals is encouraged. The observations that the staff make help complete the assessment profiles, showing where children are in their learning. From these, children's next steps under the areas of learning are noted and used to inform future planning. This ensures that children's individual learning needs are met. Weekly focus activities have a learning intention that relates to the Foundation Stage. However, the activity tends to be craft based, which can limit learning opportunities. In addition, the plan itself does not always clearly identify where the learning intention relates to the Foundation Stage.

The staff ask open questions that help develop children's thinking and language skills. They move around the different areas of the room, motivating children to get involved in the activities. All staff are involved in the planning process and they meet regularly to discuss how children's individual needs can be promoted through play or planned activities. Children benefit from visitors to the group, such as the dental hygienist and a bagpipe player. They participate in playing musical instruments and had fun using African drums.

All children are keen to get involved in their choice of play. They play well, whether independently or with friends. Good relationships are developing between children and staff. Children communicate confidently, most with clear speech. They are happy to talk during show and tell time, sharing details about the item they have brought or about events in their lives. All children have daily access to pencils and paper to practise 'writing'. The older children have more opportunities to explore letter shapes and letter sounds. All children listen well to stories and enjoy sharing books with staff or their friends.

Most children are counting to beyond 10, with understanding. They are beginning to recognise numerals, supported by some fun and good quality resources and games. Action songs and interactions from the staff help children gain an awareness of simple calculation. They are noting shapes and patterns around them. Children enjoy the computer and have good mouse control, able to complete a simple educational programme on their own. They use magnifying

glasses to look for minibeasts in the garden. Children have fun investigation. For example, they find out the effect of adding water to the sand tray. They gain some awareness of the wider community during set topics.

Children have very good opportunities to freely use a wide range of materials and tools to create their own collages and models. For example, a child uses the sellotape dispenser as he makes a magic wand. They use their imagination well as they play with the puppet theatre or construction resources. Talking happily to the staff about what they are doing. They explore different textures such as cornflour and water, soap flake slime and pasta. Children enjoy singing, with most joining in enthusiastically.

The pre-school has a weekly Rising Fives session where activities are more structured and offer further challenge for the children going to school.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff obtain relevant information to ensure that children's individual needs are met. The pre-school has a trained special educational needs coordinator who ensures that the children, who require specific support, are fully included. Children develop self-esteem and confidence as they make choices, assisted by the positive relationships they have with the staff. There are some resources that positively reflect the wider world but these are not always accessible. This limits children's growing awareness of and the acceptance of differences.

Behaviour management is good. The staff know the children and use appropriate approaches. They use praise that helps children understand what they did well. Children treat others with respect and are polite, as the staff are good role models themselves. Most children willingly help tidy up, this enables them to learn responsibility. Children are happy and relaxed. Their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

A positive relationship develops with the parents. They are welcomed into the session, where they are able to settle their children or talk to staff. They receive good information about the pre-school. They have easy access to the pre-school's policies and procedures. However, a complaints process, in line with recent changes to the registration requirements, is not available. This is a breach of a required regulation. All children have a pre-school to home contact book where children's achievements are noted. Each child receives an end of term report and a folder with written observations, relating to achievements and examples of their work.

Partnership with parents of nursery education children is good. Details about planning and activities are on show and parents can view the current intended learning intentions for the week. In addition to the assessment profiles, the regular reports and work folders include children's identified next steps, under each area of learning. As a result, parents are well informed about how their child is progressing. Parents are able to contribute to the progress records, although only a few do. They do not routinely receive information on how they can support their own child's learning needs at home. The information they have includes an overview of the Foundation Stage that outlines what children are expected to learn and how this will be achieved. This ensures parents understand that play has an important role in developing skills for the next stage of learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most of the required policies and procedures are in place. However, the complaints policy is not up to date. An effective recruitment and induction process helps ensure the suitability of staff. All staff are aware that unvetted adults are not to be left alone with children or be involved in personal care. This helps protect the children. All the staff are qualified, which is above the minimum requirement. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities, enabling the session to run smoothly. Training is encouraged and staff's professional development is supported with regular appraisals.

Children benefit from the well-organised session with the daily opportunity for outdoor play. By having the quieter activities at one end, children are less disturbed by the noisier play at the other end of the hall. There is a good ratio of staff to children, enabling some one to one or small group attention.

Leadership and management are good. There is good communication between the committee and the staff enabling them to work together. All are committed to improving the provision, with ideas for future improvement. There is an effective system in place that ensures each individual child's learning needs, across the curriculum, are closely monitored. The planning systems ensure balance across the six areas of learning. The pre-school integrates care and learning well. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Good progress has been made with the key issues raised at the last nursery education inspection. Alongside two of the recommendations made at the last care inspection, the group have reviewed and improved the use of the available space and resources. As a result, there are more opportunities for children to be able to make choices in their play and extend their learning. As requested the accident record contains all relevant detail, helping to safeguard children's wellbeing.

Little progress has been made with the recommendation that toys and materials promoting equality of opportunity are available at all times. The group have a selection of resources, though these are not routinely out for children to access easily. Similarly, the environment is not overly reflective of the wider world and remains a recommendation at this inspection.

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.

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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):

- ensure hand washing practices promote good personal hygiene for children
- develop planning and development records for the two-year-olds in line with the Birth to three matters framework
- further develop ways to ensure the environment, resources and activities positively reflects the wider world
- ensure the complaints policy and process meets current guidelines

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):

- encourage parents to contribute to the assessment records and actively support their child's learning at home
- consider extending the focus activities to provide a broader selection of activities and ensure the learning intentions clearly show the links to the Foundation Stage

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