

# Hutton Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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**Unique Reference Number** 310285

**Inspection date** 12 April 2007

**Inspector** Ann Lee

**Setting Address** Hutton Village Hall, Moor Lane, Hutton, Preston, PR4 5SE

**Telephone number** 01772 612 806

**E-mail**

**Registered person** Hutton Playgroup

**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](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?

Hutton Playgroup has been registered since 2001. It is situated in the village of Hutton, on the outskirts of Preston.

The playgroup shares the facility with other groups in the community. However, it has sole use of the facility when in operation. The children have access to a large hall and small room for snacks and quiet activities. There is also an outside play area which is secured by portable fencing.

The playgroup is run by a parent committee. It is registered to care for 25 children between the ages of two and five years. There are currently 28 children on roll and 22 of them are in receipt of funded education. The setting is open each week day morning during term time only. On Monday, Tuesday, Thursday and Friday the opening hours are from 09.00 to 12.30 and on Wednesday from 08.30 to 11.00. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The group supports children with additional needs or disabilities.

There are six members of staff who all have early years qualifications. The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and staff also receive support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in clean and well maintained premises where staff take good steps to keep them free from infection and cross contamination. A cleaner is employed and staff also ensure that areas used by the children are clean and hygienic. They use anti-bacterial spray to wipe tables before snack and encourage children to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. A health professional also visits the group to show children how to wash their hands properly in order to prevent infection. There are posters displayed to remind children to wash their hands and all of the necessary equipment, such as a step up facility and child sized toilet seats are available to promote their independence.

Staff are trained in first aid and there is a fully stocked first aid box to help them to safeguard children in the event of accidental injury or sickness. Children are further protected since all of the necessary documentation and policies and procedures are in place. For example, there are accident and medication records, a sickness policy, sun protection policy and information about infectious notifiable diseases. The policies and procedures are shared with parents. Children are offered two healthy snacks and drinks of milk or water during the session. They make choices about what to eat and enjoy a relaxing time when they can sit and chat to their friends and to staff.

There are many opportunities for children to develop their physical skills both indoors and in the outside play area. They show good coordination as they ride bicycles and scooter boards, climb on the climbing frame, balance on logs and stilts, run, dance and skip. A dance teacher and P.E. teacher also visit the group to involve the children in energetic activities, such as dancing to music, football skills and exercises to keep them fit. Children also practise their small motor skills when painting, drawing, making models and when manipulating dough, puzzles and small world toys.

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

The provision is good.

Children are secure in the setting because staff ensure that they cannot leave the premises unattended and visitors are closely monitored. Staff are friendly and welcoming and they decorate the walls with colourful posters and art work so that children feel that they belong in the group. There are safety policies and risk assessments in place and staff check all areas for hazards, before each session, in order to minimise the risk of accidental injury to children. Children learn how to keep themselves safe because they practise the fire drill, take part in role play and arts and crafts activities. They also enjoy visits from fire fighters, police officers and the 'lollipop' lady who talk to them about safety issues.

There is a wide range of toys and equipment which is regularly checked for safety and cleanliness to ensure that it is suitable for children. The staff set out a good range of toys before each session and they note the ages of the children attending to ensure that the items provided are safe. Staff set out the room before the children arrive and arrange the equipment into different areas, such as creative, mark making and construction. The items are placed within easy reach of the children to enable them to make choices about what they do in the setting. There is a carpeted area where children can look at books and listen to stories but there is no comfortable seating where they can rest and relax.

Children's welfare is safeguarded in the group because staff are trained in child protection and have a good understanding for their roles and responsibilities in relation to protecting children from harm. All of the necessary policies are in place and information is available to enable staff to seek help and advice if an issue arises.

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

The provision is good.

The experienced and well qualified staff have a good understanding of the needs of young children and how they learn and develop. This enables them to plan a stimulating and interesting programme of activities which helps children to make good progress in all areas of development. Staff are friendly and approachable and they develop close, affectionate relationships with the children so that they feel happy and secure in the setting. Parents provide information about the children's family, likes and dislikes and stage of development, so that staff can meet the individual needs of the children. There is a 'key worker' system in place which is well organised to help children to settle in quickly and to promote good relationships with parents. This helps to maintain consistency and continuity of care for children.

Children behave well and they enjoy playing together. They learn to share and to take turns and are helpful and polite. They become confident and independent because they have freedom to explore their environment and make choices about what they do in the group. They also help to tidy away the toys, collect their own snack and wash their hands independently.

Staff devise focused activities based on themes and they invite visitors into the group to talk to the children. For example, as part of the theme 'People who help us' staff read appropriate stories, sing songs, play games and invite visitors from the police and fire service to talk to the children about their work. Staff spend time talking to children, listening and joining in their play. They provide equipment or advice to help children to extend their play and encourage them to develop good language and communication skills. Children enjoy a wide variety of stimulating activities including story time, singing songs, cooking, growing things, arts and crafts and role play.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good and staff use appropriate assessment methods to monitor the children's development. Staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are happy and interested in their play and they confidently explore their environment. Their independence is promoted because they are encouraged to use the toilet and wash their hands by themselves, tidy away the toys, collect their own snack and spread butter and jam on their toast. The key worker system helps staff to develop close relationships with the children and this helps them to feel secure and settled in the group. During planned activities children are grouped well to take account of their age and stage of development. For example, at story time the older children enjoy a story which challenges them while the younger children go to a different room to listen to a story which is shorter and more appropriate to their age group. When children are engaged in self-chosen activities, such as role play or construction staff intervene to challenge them to think and extend their play. The space, resources and time are well organised to support children's play and learning.

Children show curiosity and express their feelings. When painting they show great concentration as they watch paint drip from their brush to make patterns on the paper. They enthusiastically

take part in group activities, such as singing, story time and games. Staff help children to understand about feelings with the use of puppets, books and discussion. There is a friendly, lively atmosphere in the group and children show kindness and consideration towards one another. Children are well behaved and they respond positively to the staff who act as good role models. Toys and equipment are set out within easy reach of children, to ensure that they are given plenty of choice about what they do, and this helps them to become confident and independent.

Children develop good language and communication skills because the staff engage them in purposeful conversation, read stories and encourage them to sing songs from memory. There is a wide selection of story books which children enjoy looking at and they also use books for reference when researching information for themes. There are good examples of writing on display and this ensures that children become familiar with the written word. There are posters on the walls of the play room and food and drink, toys and equipment are labelled using pictures and words. Children practise their mark making skills using a wide range of writing materials. They practise writing their name on their work, use different sized paint brushes when painting and make marks in the sand tray and in the 'gloop' using different implements. Children have fun pretending to be at school in the early twentieth century and they practise writing on slates.

Staff use everyday activities to encourage children to count and to recognise numbers. They count to 10 together at circle time and recognise numbers on cards when they play 'school'. They also sing songs which involve counting, such as 'Five currant buns'. However, numbers are not included in the wall displays so that they become familiar with numerals. Children use magnets and calculators and they learn about weight and volume during cooking activities and during sand and water play.

Children's creativity is promoted through an interesting and varied range of activities. There is a good selection of arts and crafts materials to enable children to create models, collage and paintings. They design and make a 'Stop' sign, Zebra crossing and 'lollipop' which are used to practise road safety. Children also use large cardboard boxes to make a fire engine or an aeroplane. Children play imaginative games using a wide variety of role play equipment to make a house, hospital, travel agents or shop. There are also regular opportunities for children to enjoy listening to and making music, singing and dancing.

Staff devise interesting and stimulating activities which help children to learn about the wider world. They explore many different materials, such as sand, water, wet and dry spaghetti, gloop, custard and baked beans. They also collect pine cones, shells and stones which are used to enhance the sand tray. They conduct an investigation into window cleaning and learn that information can be found in books when they talk about the highway code and why it is a special book. Children learn about different countries and their customs when taking part in themed activities. Visitors, such as the police and fire officer are invited into the group to talk to the children about their work as part of their theme about 'People who help us'. There are good opportunities for children to learn about technology because they have access to a computer and other programmable toys. Children take photographs of one another using a digital camera, examine insects with a magnifying glass and weigh and measure ingredients when baking.

Physical development is well promoted because children have regular opportunities to play outside. They are very active and well coordinated as they run, climb, balance and ride wheeled toys. Indoors they enjoy dancing and exercising to music and playing active team games.

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

The provision is good.

All children are made welcome in the setting including those with additional needs or disabilities. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) works with parents and other professionals to identify, record and plan for children's individual needs. Children learn to understand and appreciate differences through a good range of activities and resources which promote positive images of different cultures, religions and disability. Staff also help children to learn about feelings with the use of role play, puppets, stories and when they talk to them about what makes them sad, angry and happy. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff act as good role models. They are kind and approachable and they follow their behaviour management procedures to encourage children to be well behaved and co-operative. They build children's self-esteem with plenty of appropriate praise and rewards for good behaviour and achievements. Children are well occupied and interested in their play and activities. They play well together and learn to share and to take turns.

The quality of partnership with parents is good. Parents are invited for introductory visits with their children when they complete the necessary documentation, read the policies and procedures and meet the staff. They also provide information about their children which helps staff to care for them according to their individual needs and ensure that they settle in quickly. The committee is made up of parents, and staff make efforts to involve all parents by inviting them to events, open evenings and on social outings. They are kept informed about any changes or issues via the regular newsletter and there is also a notice board where relevant information, such as weekly plans and the complaints procedures are displayed. Parents receive an introductory booklet which provides them with information about the setting and about the Foundation Stage curriculum so that they can be actively involved in their children's learning. Staff talk to the parents after each session to share information and this promotes continuity of care for children. Parents are also invited into the setting to look at their children's development profiles and discuss their progress and development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are protected in the setting because they do not come into unsupervised contact with people who have not been vetted. All of the current staff and volunteers have been vetted and they are experienced and qualified in early years. There are no written procedures in place for the recruitment of new staff. However, there is a thorough induction procedure in place to ensure that new staff understand the policies and procedures and can safeguard children in the setting. The correct adult to child ratios are maintained, so that children are always well supported and supervised and there are contingency plans in place to ensure that staff absences are covered. Staff are well supported through regular team meetings and appraisal. The group's strong commitment to improvement is reflected in the programme of staff training and participation in the Pre-School Learning Alliance quality assurance scheme. This commitment helps to maintain and improve the quality of care and learning for children.

There is a key worker system in place which promotes consistency and helps build effective relationships between staff and children. The system also ensures that parents are able to talk to someone who has a close relationship and better understanding of their children. The space

and resources are well organised to allow children some freedom of movement and easy access to a good range of toys and equipment.

All of the necessary documentation is in place to safeguard the welfare, care and learning of children. The records, policies and procedures are stored confidentially and they are regularly reviewed and updated in line with current guidance.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The committee and the providers work well together to ensure that children are provided with good quality care and education. The group is well organised to provide a warm and stimulating environment where children feel secure and happy. The providers value their staff and have good systems in place to monitor the children's progress. There are good staffing levels in place and staff are encouraged to update their training regularly. The operational plan sets out the aims and objectives of the group and there is a full range of policies and procedures in place to safeguard the welfare of children. Although there is no recruitment procedure in place, all new staff receive induction training and staff know their roles and responsibilities. This ensures that children are safe and helps them to make good progress. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

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

Since the last inspection the staff have improved the safety of children by recording fire drills and obtaining written permission for staff to seek emergency treatment or advice for their children. They have also improved the learning outcomes for children because they have introduced an appraisal system for staff and deploy them well in order to organise activities to meet the needs of the children.

### **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):

- provide comfortable seating where children can rest and relax

- devise procedures for the recruitment of new staff.

### **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 that examples of numbers are included in the wall displays to help children to become familiar with numerals.

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)