

# Emley Play School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	311282
<b>Inspection date</b>	14 May 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Trudy Scott
<b>Setting Address</b>	Methodist Chapel, Church Street, Emley, Huddersfield, HD8 9SH
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<b>Registered person</b>	Emley Play School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day 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 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?

Emley Play School has been registered since 1993 and operates from a church hall in the village. It is owned and run by a voluntary management committee. A maximum of 20 children may attend the group at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.00 until 15.15, during school term times, with the exception of Tuesdays when it closes at 11.30. Children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The play school is registered to care for a maximum of 20 children from two to under five years. There are currently 36 children on roll. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Nursery education funding is received for 20 children. The group supports children with learning difficulties.

There are five members of staff working with the children. All staff are either qualified or working towards a relevant early years qualification.

The group is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority. The group has achieved a quality assurance award, Aiming for Quality.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children participate in a wide range of activities which contribute to their good health. Daily access to outdoor activities, weather permitting, helps children develop physical skills, such as successfully negotiating space and obstacles when moving around the playground. They show increasing control as they ride wheeled toys, moving forwards and backwards, and climb up and down the slide with confidence. More able children are not always fully extended as outdoor equipment provides limited challenge, although there are good plans in place to address this with the purchase of new resources. Children learn about how exercise affects them because staff encourage them to talk about the changes to their bodies after physical activity, such as how their heart beats faster.

Staff conscientiously follow hygiene routines and monitor the premises during the day to ensure all areas are clean and well maintained, cleaning toilets at least twice daily and regularly checking all areas to minimise the risk of infection. Clear, detailed information about infectious illnesses and exclusion periods is provided for parents, to further protect children from illness and infection. Children learn to keep themselves healthy and are supported in managing personal hygiene independently with air hand dryers, soap dispensers and a step stool so that the smallest children can reach the sinks without assistance. Older children know why they must wash their hands and help the younger children to understand this. For instance, a four-year-old tells a two-year-old 'You need soap to move the germs'.

Children enjoy healthy snacks, such as cheese and pear or apple and carrot, and have free access to drinking water throughout the day. Staff support children's independence by encouraging them to choose when they want to have a snack or a drink. Children's care needs are well met through staff consulting closely with parents about their children's individual needs and routines.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have secure knowledge of child protection issues and keep up to date with the latest guidance and information from the Local Safeguarding Children Board. A rolling programme of training and good support from the person in charge ensures all staff understand their roles in protecting children. There are appropriate procedures in place to ensure persons not vetted have no unsupervised access to children, although required checks have not been carried out on all committee members.

Staff use the available space appropriately to ensure children have space for quiet, relaxing activities and for more active play. Safe, suitable toys and play materials are placed where children can see and reach them easily, in low-level storage and on the floor. This enables them to make choices about their play. Staff regularly check resources, making sure they are well maintained and safe for children's use. Staff consistently follow policies and procedures that contribute to children's safety, such as risk assessments and procedures for safe arrival and departure of the children.

Children are learning safe practice, with support from staff. For example, they know they should wear helmets when riding wheeled toys and how to carry scissors correctly when transporting

them or handing them to someone else. Staff help children understand safety precautions by reinforcing simple safety rules and talking to children about how to keep themselves safe.

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

The provision is good.

Children are well motivated and content as they are cared for by enthusiastic staff who help them enjoy their time in play school. Most children arrive happily and quickly become involved in the activities. Children who are a little upset on arrival are given the individual help they need to feel secure. Staff plan the environment so that children can freely access a varied range of activities that are suitably adapted for children of different age and stage of development. Staff help children to socialise by closely observing children as they play, knowing when to interact to help develop the play or to support children in resolving conflict. Throughout the day, there is a balance of children engaged in solitary play, children working in groups and children receiving support from staff.

The younger children make good progress as they freely explore the environment, reassured by the close presence of familiar adults who respond to their interests and individual needs. For example, a two-year-old engaged in painting toys and printing on the floor, is re-directed and encouraged by staff who provide him with a variety of different objects and materials to print with. Meanwhile, another two-year-old is allowed time and space to become absorbed in watching the trails made by paint dripping down the paper. Staff are knowledgeable about the 'Birth to three matters' framework and make good use of the guidance to support children's development.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress towards the early learning goals because staff have secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They know that children learn best when they are interested and involved and plan a curriculum that is responsive to their needs and stimulates their desire to learn. For example, staff build on children's excitement when they find frogs spawn and bugs in the outdoor area, by providing magnifying glasses and bug boxes so that they can investigate further. They ask relevant, open-ended questions to prompt children's thinking and maintain their interest. Children have good concentration skills as staff organise the environment to allow extensive time to practise. Activities, such as sand, water, paint, construction and role play are continually available which means children return, build their skills and consolidate their learning. Behaviour is very good, which helps create a calm atmosphere where learning takes place.

Children are good communicators and use language well for many purposes. They approach adults and other children to initiate or participate in conversations, ask questions, share information and make their needs known. They are encouraged by staff who show they value what children have to say by listening carefully. This helps staff establish relationships that help children feel confident and secure, and contributes effectively to their personal, social and emotional development. Children show an interest in writing, making marks, squiggles and letter-like shapes; many children recognise and some children write their own name. They have good counting skills and a secure understanding of number. For instance, when playing outside with bikes and petrol pumps, one child holds up five fingers while another child counts them, to show how much the petrol costs. In group activities with staff, children count down correctly from 10, knowing which number comes next in the sequence. They attempt simple problems in everyday activities, such as working out how to share the play dough so that each child has

some. However, opportunities to further promote children's interest by displaying print and numerals clearly throughout the environment are not fully maximised. Children's progress in knowledge and understanding of the world and creative development is well supported as they explore and investigate a range of different materials, tools and textures. They use their imagination well to develop their own stories when engaging in pretend play.

Staff know individual children well as they regularly observe them and interact in their play. They make good use of the information gained to provide a clear record of children's progress, which is shared with parents. They make some use of the information to plan for individual children's learning, although this is not yet consistent as there is no system for sharing the information with other staff, so that everyone is clear of the next steps. This means that although children make good progress, more able children are not fully challenged in all areas. Staff plan to teach the content of the early learning goals by providing core activities that are continually available for children to access independently. They compliment this with new experiences to extend their learning, taking their cues from the children. For instance, staff introduced a topic about journeys, by talking to children about their favourite journeys and writing down what they said about their experiences. Children with learning difficulties are well supported by staff to ensure they are fully included in the pre-school.

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

The provision is good.

Children show a strong sense of belonging to the setting. They are familiar with routines, know where to put their belongings and manage themselves independently in the environment. For instance, they choose when they want to have snack, what they want to play with, and in good weather, when to play outdoors and indoors. They develop confidence and self-esteem through making their own decisions while receiving support from staff. The staff find out as much as they can about the children and their interests, visiting children at home before they start attending and making parents feel very welcome. A variety of information is provided for parents, so that they are well-informed about the play school. Children are encouraged to share information about themselves in group times and incidental conversations. This helps children feel good about themselves and learn to appreciate the lives of others. Staff use children's natural curiosity to introduce them to the wider world through looking at books and using resources with positive images of diversity.

Behaviour is very good and children play harmoniously together. They follow the good models of staff in showing courtesy and consideration for others. Minor squabbles are quickly resolved as children use language to negotiate sharing and taking turns. Staff help children with this by offering explanations as to unacceptable behaviour and comforting children who are upset. Children with learning difficulties receive effective support from staff who work cooperatively with other professionals to plan for their individual needs. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff are able build on children's previous experiences and interests by finding out as much as they can about what the children already know and can do. Parents share their knowledge of their own children through talking to staff and sending notes to play school about what the children have been doing at home. Additionally, there are other methods used to foster good links between home and play school. For example, a soft toy called Mr Potato Head, goes home with the children and returns with notes from parents of what he has been doing on his travels. Information about the children's progress is shared with parents in a variety of ways, including informal discussion, photographs, examples of children's

work and written assessments of children's progress. Parents receive good quality information about activities and learning outcomes in a regular newsletter, which is sent to all parents either by e-mail or in hard copy. This ensures parents and staff work together to provide for children's learning and development.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care and well-being is safeguarded through generally effective organisation of the play school. Comprehensive policies and procedures are shared with parents and staff and underpin the day to day running of the setting. Much information is provided for parents so that they know how the setting operates, enabling them to work together with staff to provide continuity of care for the children. However, some important documents are not clearly displayed or easily accessible. For instance, the certificate of registration and the Ofsted poster are hidden among other documentation on display. Robust recruitment and vetting procedures are in place to ensure children are protected and cared for by staff who are suitable to do so. However, Ofsted has not been informed of changes to the management committee and checks have not been secured; this is a breach of regulations.

There is strong commitment to continuous improvement displayed by the person in charge and staff. Training courses are accessed on a rolling programme, to ensure all staff are up to date with child protection, first aid and food hygiene. Additionally, staff attend other courses, such as 'Listening to Children', to improve their work practice. The self-evaluation form is used well to evaluate current practice and plan for progress. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of the educational provision is good. The staff team are well supported with regular team meetings, development sessions and opportunities to plan, carry out and review the impact of their work on children's learning. The person in charge has successfully identified future developments, such as more focused and consistent use of observations of children to inform planning. There are clear aims in place for children's learning and care, which are understood by staff and reflected in their work practice. Professional development is managed well through regular appraisal of training needs and working together with other professionals, such as the early years teacher.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider was asked to provide drinking water at all times for the children and to ensure the planning and provision of activities was challenging for older and more able children. Drinking water is constantly available through the day, with each child having a bottle with their name on that they access independently. Improvements have been made to the planning system; it is now much more child led and responsive to children's needs and interests. Staff assess children in their key group and plan according to their individual interests and ability, although, this is not yet consistently shared with other staff to ensure everyone plans for the next steps. The changes to the planning system has had a positive affect on the provision and contributes to the good progress children make in their learning and development.

## **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 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 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 Ofsted is informed of changes to the committee and that checks are obtained on committee members
- review the way information is displayed so that the registration certificate and Ofsted information is clearly visible and easily accessible for 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):

- increase children's awareness of print and numerals in the environment
- develop further the use of observation and assessment to consistently inform planning of the next steps in individual children's learning and increase challenge for more able children.

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)