

Horsford Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254125
Inspection date	06 June 2007
Inspector	Susan Cox
Setting Address	Horsford Village Hall, Holt Road, Horsford, Norwich, Norfolk, NR10 3AQ
Telephone number	01603 890811
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Registered person	Horsford Pre-School Committee
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 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?

Horsford Pre-school Playgroup opened in 1968. It is run by a committee of parents and carers and operates from two rooms within the village hall in Horsford, a large village to the north of Norwich. The pre-school mainly serves the local area.

A maximum of 34 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.00 to 11.30 and then 12.30 to 15.00 during term time only. The group is closed the first Wednesday afternoon of each month. Children attend for a variety of sessions. All children share access to a secure, enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 106 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 66 children receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs 14 staff; of these seven members of staff, including the supervisor, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

The pre-school receives regular visits from an Early Years Support Teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's medical needs are met as staff gather relevant information from their parents to be able to respond appropriately. Accidents receive prompt treatment as qualified staff are always on duty and the first aid box is readily available so children are cared for appropriately. Older children are learning how to manage their personal hygiene well. They independently use the toilet and understand the need to wash their hands. All children enjoy using the hand washing unit in the hall and do so confidently before they have a snack, being supported by the staff if needed. However, some of the little ones are unable to reach the taps in the cloakroom, despite using the step provided, and after messy play children wash their hands in a shared bowl of water. As a result, children's health and hygiene is not always promoted.

Children enjoy a variety of snacks to promote healthy eating. When the snack bar is available they choose when to have their snack, sit with friends and serve themselves using small spoons, from an attractively arranged dish of fruit, cereals and bread sticks. This encourages them to try a variety of foods including those that may be less familiar such as kiwi and fresh apricots. Children preparing to move to school often sit as a group and have a similar snack but served to them on individual plates. Staff are aware of children's dietary needs and a list is readily available to ensure children only have food and drink that is appropriate for them. Children who come for the afternoon session bring a packed lunch prepared by their parents to meet their individual needs.

Children have regular opportunities to be active inside and in the fresh air. They ride bikes, often in a protected area of the hall, learn how to manoeuvre around each other, play parachute games and practise climbing on the climbing frame. Balancing on low beams, crawling through a tunnel and exercising to music provides other enjoyable ways of being active. This helps them develop a range of physical skills and learn how their bodies work. When they are tired they relax comfortably on cushions in the book area.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a hall that has been made attractive with a range of activities set out for them. This encourages them to settle quickly and start to play. They confidently use the toilets and understand that they need to take care when they go with the staff to the outside play area, as they have to cross a corner of the car park. Staff are mindful of safety and have taken relevant action to help minimise risks. They make sure the premises are secure so that children cannot leave without supervision and are vigilant at collection times to ensure this is appropriate. However, they have not made sure the fixed outside play equipment is in good repair and safe for use. Consequently, there is a potential risk to the children as the condition of the equipment is deteriorating. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe. They talk about and practise road safety as they ride their bikes, listen to and follow instructions about the safe use of the bodkins and take part in fire drills. Staff are very aware of the need for an effective evacuation plan. They practise this regularly so that all children and staff attending are competent in leaving the premises safely in the event of an emergency. To further protect children staff have all taken training from a local fire officer in the use of extinguishers. Children use a good range of resources set out for them and access items from a trolley and

storage boxes. Staff monitor the safety of resources as they are used and ensure a good balance is available to the children each session.

Children's safety is promoted as staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues. All staff understand the part they play in keeping children safe and they know what to do if they have concerns. An appropriate procedure is in place to guide staff and this is available to inform parents. Consequently, children are protected in the event of concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and get on well with the staff who are organised and ready to work with them giving support as is needed throughout the session. As a result, children are developing confidence, becoming independent and enjoy playing with a range of activities. Staff join in with the children in a relaxed and friendly way and often ask good questions to help them think and remember. They frequently talk about what is expected of the children, for example, where they may play, taking turns with the bikes and how to hold on to the rope if leaving in an emergency. This helps children manage their behaviour effectively and gentle reminders from staff support this well.

Children enjoy a good balance of activities. Much of their time is spent in free play where they confidently choose resources and work together with friends. For example, they paint freely at the easel, explore water in a tray, mould the dough and ride bikes. They organise their own play at times such as carefully moving the book case to create a little area behind it and sit and share the books happily together. Staff are ready to help and support as necessary. Children understand when it is snack time and generally sit together for the start of the session and for group story time. Physical play, often in the outside play area, enables children to be active. Staff are currently looking at how they can further develop opportunities for playing and learning in the fresh air to benefit all children.

Nursery Education

Quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress as the staff understand how they learn best and support them well as they take part in a range of planned and free play activities. Staff have a sound knowledge of the early learning goals, observe what the children are doing and use this to plan for further learning based on the children's interests. They feel this new system of planning is working well and better meets the needs of the children as it is more flexible. Each child has a key person who makes up their learning story file and identifies the next steps required in their learning. These are discussed at staff meetings so all are aware and able to support the children and help them to make the required progress.

Children are confident, settled and learning to be independent. They organise their own play at times and most cooperate well as they help to tidy up. Children manage their personal hygiene well and changing for physical activity sessions helps them learn how to manage and take care of their own clothes effectively. They play happily together often sharing and taking turns, for example, as they ride bikes around they look at the sand timer to know when it is time for friends to have a go. They are learning about the wider world as they take part in projects and celebrate a range of festivals. Children often recognise their name at registration and as they get ready for their snack. However, they do not always recognise their own name on pictures as it is not written large enough and in a style that is consistent and familiar to them. Children practise emergent writing as they make marks and some can recognise familiar letters when

they see them. Phonics sessions help them link sounds and letters but there is a lack of encouragement to do this in everyday activities. Children chatter freely as they play and many are confident to talk in a group. They listen to and enjoy stories and realise the pleasure that comes from sharing books with others.

Children are learning a range of early mathematical concepts. They consider how much water there is in containers in the water tray and how heavy they are. They weigh ingredients for cookery and happily work at shape puzzles and games. Although there is some counting and calculating there are insufficient opportunities developed to practise this with the children in their free play to enable all to become competent. Children are finding out about the natural world as they plant and grow seeds, study bugs, collect leaves and consider the weather. They are considerate and inquisitive as they meet a new baby or want to find out what a visitor is doing in their group. Many are confident to use the computer and some explain to others how to use it. They make models with construction sets and find out how the interactive globe works with interest.

Children enjoy being active. They ride bikes, play action games, learn how to climb safely on the climbing frame, dance and most join in physical activity sessions happily. They are developing a range of skills with tools as they paint with brushes, use glue spreaders, cut with scissors and use bodkins to sew. Children's creative development is progressing well. They paint, draw, model and make a range of cards and gifts for special events. Children try different foods at snack time and as part of projects, for example, tasting curry. They listen and dance to music, play instruments and sing together. Role play sees them dressing up and acting out real and imaginary experiences.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children receive a warm welcome. This is because staff know them well and treats each according to their individual needs and respecting their personality. Children are learning about the wider world as they play with a range of resources and take part in activities that introduce them to our multi-cultural society. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported as staff have a clear understanding of their needs. They work effectively with the children's parents and take advice and support readily from other professionals involved in their care. As a result, children with additional needs are fully integrated and enabled to make appropriate progress. Children are learning how to manage their behaviour effectively. They listen to guidance given by staff who implement the positive behaviour management policy consistently. Incidents are recorded and shared with parents so they are aware and may support their children accordingly. Consequently, children's behaviour is generally good. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive clear information when they join the group and this is supported by a flexible settling-in procedure to meet individual needs. Parents are consulted about children's likes and dislikes and this helps staff get to know them well and form a foundation on which to build a working relationship to support the children. Parents are encouraged to help on the rota and this gives valuable opportunities for them to join in with their children and develop a better understanding of what they are learning to support them at home. Planning is displayed and newsletters help inform them of current issues. Accompanying their children on outings gives parents further enjoyable experiences to share and talk about. Children's learning stories are attractive files. Parents are encouraged to view

these frequently and contribute information if they wish. In discussion, many parents express their satisfaction with the group.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's safety and welfare is supported as they are cared for by staff who have been vetted and persons who have not been checked are supervised to ensure contact is appropriate. Staff are well-organised and ensure all is ready for children's arrival creating a child centred environment. This enables children to settle quickly to play and staff to be available to work with them as is needed. Many of the staff hold relevant qualifications and all are experienced at working with children. They work well as a team and use their training and experience to support the children in their play and learning in a relaxed and friendly manner. All the required documentation is in place to make sure children are cared for appropriately and according to their parent's wishes. Overall children's needs are met.

Leadership and management is good. The manager is experienced and has a very clear understanding of her role. She often works with the children and plays a full role in planning sessions and writing up observations for them as part of the staff team. The manager has a sound knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals and supports the children and staff in the way they work towards meeting them. Children benefit from a commitment to continue to develop the service that is provided. Staff willingly take advice that is given whether it is from the support teacher or other professionals involved with children with additional needs. They are taking part in the Norfolk Quality Assurance Scheme and this is causing them to reflect on and consider how their practice benefits the children. The committee is supportive of the staff and ensures they are aware of what is happening in the group, to make sure children's welfare and educational needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was asked to amend the complaints procedure to include the correct contact details for Ofsted and to ensure the contents of the first aid box remain sterile. The provider has updated the complaints policy in order that parents may contact Ofsted so that issues regarding their children may be dealt with appropriately if required. The first aid box is now maintained to ensure contents are sterile. This enables staff to treat children appropriately in the event of an accident.

At the last inspection of nursery education there were no significant weaknesses to report but the provider was asked to consider the positioning of the number line to enable children to refer to it when using number in a practical way. The provider has placed the number line within children's reach so they may use it if they wish to help them with number work.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted received a concern on 04 April 2007 regarding staff management of a child. This related to National Standards 1 (Suitable person), 2 (Organisation), 11 (Behaviour), 12 (Working in partnership with parents and carers) and 13 (Child protection). Initially, this concern was referred to an outside agency who took no further action in this matter.

Ofsted then conducted an unannounced visit on 17 April 2007 to investigate this concern in relation to these National Standards. At this visit there was no evidence that these National

Standards were not being met, however, there was evidence that National Standard 14 (Documentation) had not been met. The provider was given an action as follows: National Standard 14: ensure Ofsted is notified of any changes or significant events as soon as possible and no later than 14 days after the event occurs. A satisfactory response to this action was received on 23 May 2007 and this will improve the safety of the children. The provider continued to be suitable for registration.

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 provider has kept a record of this complaint.

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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):

- further promote children's health and hygiene by ensuring all can wash their hands appropriately after using the toilet and taking part in messy play
- make sure the outside play equipment is in good repair and safe for use.

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):

- develop further opportunities for children to recognise familiar letters and their sounds and to count and calculate in planned and free play activities.

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