

Netherthong Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	311298
Inspection date	25 June 2007
Inspector	Ann Law
Setting Address	School Street, Netherthong, Holmfirth, West Yorkshire, HD9 3EB
Telephone number	07808 005095
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Registered person	Netherthong 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.

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?

Netherthong Playgroup has been registered since 1991 and is a voluntary organisation managed by a committee of parents. It operates from a portable building in the village of Netherthong, near Holmfirth. A maximum of 20 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open five days a week, in school term time only, from 09.00 to 11.30 Monday to Friday and 12.45 to 15.10 Monday, Tuesday and Thursday. A lunch club operates on a Tuesday and Thursday from 11.30 to 12.45. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 60 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 19 receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup employs six members of staff who regularly work with the children, five of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean and hygienically maintained setting. Staff pay good attention to ensuring that any spillages are dealt with straight away to minimise any risk to the children. Children are very aware of the routines of the playgroup and understand the reasons for them. For example, they ably explain that they have to wash their hands before having their snack to make sure they are clean. Children are well nourished by healthy snacks, which include fresh fruit and vegetables, and occasionally children are involved in making their own snack, such as pizza.

There is a very attractive outdoor play area for the children to explore the natural world, enjoy gardening activities and to use sit-and-ride toys. The nearby play area is also used by the children to develop their physical skills in rocking, climbing and sliding. Staff ensure that children receive good levels of physical exercise in their day, and employ a flexible approach when inclement weather prevents outdoor play. Children enthusiastically move to music combining and repeating movements, such as stretching, wiggling and jiggling. They develop balance and coordination as they gallop like ponies and hop like robins.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming and safe environment which is organised into clearly defined attractive areas for play. Many measures are in place so that children can move around freely and in safety. These include a gate to prevent access to the kitchen area, guards on all the heaters and a high bolt on the door to prevent children leaving the premises unsupervised. As a result, children are very confident and independent in the playgroup, accessing all areas of the provision in their play.

Staff ensure that any new resources are appropriate for the children. For example, the computer desks were built by a joiner to ensure they are just the right height for the children to access in comfort and safety. Children's welfare is effectively promoted in the playgroup. The majority of the staff hold a first aid qualification, and all of the required procedures and documentation for child protection are in place to ensure that children's welfare is safeguarded. However, the child protection policy does not include the correct contact details for the regulator. Accidents are well managed and the records are shared with parents to facilitate continuity of care for children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the friendly environment of the playgroup. They demonstrate security as they snuggle up on the sofa with staff and share story books. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is effectively used in the playgroup, to plan activities for the younger children so that they suit their age and stage of development. For example, a sticking activity is enjoyed by the children as they experiment with the glue and observe it dribbling from the glue spreader onto the box they are sticking materials to. Staff appreciate the value of this exploratory play and allow children to investigate the different effects and develop their creativity. Staff help children to learn a sense of what is right and wrong. The

routine of reciting the daily rhyme encourages the children to be, 'kind and good and to grow more loving every day'.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and are aware of the general learning opportunities for all areas of the provision. However, the planning systems have few references to the learning intentions of most planned activities to ensure a broad and balanced curriculum is offered. Regular meetings are held where children's key workers identify their next steps in learning. For example, a recent identification was that some children were not meeting the stepping stones for making relationships in personal, social and emotional development. As a result, activities to promote sharing were planned for the children. By identifying gaps in children's learning and being pro-active in addressing these, children are assured of receiving a curriculum which is individually tailored to meet their needs.

Children enter the playgroup confidently and show good levels of motivation as they quickly settle into self-chosen activities. The well organised setting allows them to be totally independent in their self-care routines, including using the bathroom. They listen to stories with increasing attention and accurately predict their favourite stories, such as 'Dear Zoo'. Children show curiosity in the print and ask what the words mean that are printed on the crate. They use mathematical language correctly when describing the big elephant and the tall giraffe. During the water activity, children demonstrate an awareness of space as they pass small divers through a gap in the water tray, but they know that a large octopus will not fit through.

Staff arrange for visitors to attend the playgroup and visits into the local village, to allow children to experience a sense of time and place. Recent visitors have included a piglet who the playgroup have adopted. Children competently operate simple information and communication technology and are adept in using a mouse to navigate a basic computer program. They confidently use the resources in the role play area to support their play. For example, the home corner is currently a hairdressing salon and the children delight in having their hair 'washed' and their nails 'painted' by the 'salon staff', who imitate adults as they wrap hair in towels and hold fingers to paint nails. Children are very creative in their artwork and draw a detailed picture which they imaginatively describe as a 'hairy butterfly'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy outings into their local community to observe where they live, such as a walk around the village observing the different houses. Children are becoming aware of the wider world because staff provide children with positive images of diversity and disability and plan activities which encompass a variety of celebrations, such as Easter and Chinese New Year. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff adapt some activities to ensure that younger children can take part. For example, giving one-to-one support at story time with younger children who are not able to sit through the whole story. Instead, they are encouraged to recognise familiar items on a poster, which still achieves the aim of improving their communication, language and literacy skills. However, not all activities are effectively adapted. The routine of snack time encourages children to recognise their own name on a written name card before sitting down. This practice does not enable all

children to achieve, as some younger children cannot recognise their name in the written form yet.

Relationships between the children are good and they are learning responsible behaviour. For example, staff give adult support to help children to learn respect for each other and not to frighten anyone when dressed as a dragon. The partnership with parents is good. Parents are provided with a variety of information regarding the setting, including clear information regarding the Foundation Stage, however, the information regarding 'Birth to three matters' is limited. Although the welcome leaflet informs parents that they can help at the sessions and experience their child's learning first-hand, they are not provided with regular information regarding how to extend children's learning at home. Children have individual records of achievement which are cross referenced to their birth to three and stepping stones records, giving parents a clear picture of the progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The playgroup is well organised and all of the legally required documentation is in place. A broad range of policies and procedures underpin the good care and education provided for the children. However, some require attention to ensure that they fully reflect recent changes. The majority of the staff team have worked in the playgroup for many years and this allows both children and their parents to experience a sense of familiarity and security from the stability provided.

Very positive links are held with the school. Playgroup staff and the school work effectively together to arrange visits between the settings, to give children the opportunity to familiarise themselves with the Foundation Stage unit and the school staff. This helps to ease the transition process and promotes children's emotional well-being.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The playgroup are very pro-active in identifying areas for development and this evidences their commitment to continually improve the service that they provide. The playgroup work with their local authority advisory teacher to monitor the effectiveness of the delivery of the nursery education curriculum, and yearly appraisals are undertaken to monitor the effectiveness of the staff. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the playgroup was asked to make improvements to policies and procedures and to increase the positive images of disability in the provision. Although many improvements have been made to the policies and procedures, and this enhances the organisation of the group, there are still updates to be made to ensure that all are fully effective. Resources in the group now reflect the diversity of our society and provide children with positive images of disability.

At the last nursery education inspection the playgroup was asked to make improvements to the systems for planning and assessment and to increase the use of numerals in the setting. The group have made very good improvements to children's assessment records and these now clearly show children's progress towards the early learning goals. There has been some increase in the use of numerals, however, the group are aware that these can still be increased further so that children can become fully aware that numerals have a practical purpose.

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

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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):

- devise a system to ensure that all children can successfully self-register at snack time
- review all documentation to ensure that the contact details for the regulator are correct and that all reference to child protection reflects the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

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):

- extend the systems for planning to include reference to the learning intentions in planned activities, in line with the 'Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage' and the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- develop opportunities for parents to extend their child's learning at home.

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