

Happy Faces Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109864
Inspection date	20 November 2007
Inspector	Anne Jeanette Faithfull
Setting Address	Liddell Hall, Old Reading Road, Sherfield-on-Loddon, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 0EZ
Telephone number	01256 880903
E-mail	
Registered person	The Trustees of Happy Faces 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?

Happy Faces Playgroup opened in 1982. It operates from the Liddell community hall in Sherfield-on-Loddon, Hampshire.

The playgroup opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are from 09:00 until 12:00 each day, and additionally from 12:30 until 15:00 on Thursday in the spring and summer term. Children have access to an outdoor play area.

The playgroup is registered for 26 children aged between two and five years. There are currently 43 children on roll. Of these, 38 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions and are from the local and surrounding areas. The playgroup has systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and English as an additional language, although none currently attend at the moment.

There are nine members of staff who work with the children. Of these, four staff hold an appropriate early years qualification. Two staff members are working towards a qualification. The playgroup receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children access snacks that are varied, nutritious and healthy. This promotes children's health and their understanding of healthy eating. For instance, children choose from a large selection of fresh fruit, vegetables and breadsticks every session, they also have the opportunity to help prepare the snacks for the other children. This helps them to become aware of food preparation and hygiene issues. Children can choose a drink of milk or water and are encouraged to pour their own, this helps them to further develop their independence skills. Snack time is a very sociable occasion as the children can access their snack when they require from the 'café'. Children and staff sit together around the table talking about their favourite fruit and where they had gone at the weekend. The dietary needs of children are discussed with parents and recorded well, ensuring that children have their dietary needs met appropriately.

Children's good health is promoted well within the playgroup, as staff follow effective procedures which reflect current environmental health and hygiene guidelines that successfully support children's well-being. For example, they wipe the tables before snack time and ensure toilets are clean before the children arrive. This helps reduce the risk of infection. Children understand daily routines and are becoming independent in their personal hygiene as they receive good support and guidance from adults. For example, they wash their hands before snack times and after using the toilet and are aware to put used tissues in the bin. Children are well cared for when they have an accident or become ill as staff have received appropriate first aid training, however, written permission has not been obtained from parents for staff to seek emergency medical advice and treatment if required.

Children have regular opportunities to be active and thoroughly enjoy the outdoor play area. They are able to develop their physical skills climbing up the steps of the slide, bouncing on the trampoline and playing with the hoops down the slope. The balance board used by the children further helps them to develop their balance and coordination skills. There are also imaginative role play areas indoors such as, the gym where children can participate in aerobics or keep fit sessions if they wish.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well cared for in a welcoming and safe indoor and outdoor environment, which helps them feel secure and comfortable. A full range of written risk assessments are in place and are reviewed on a regular basis, and a visual risk assessment is carried out on the premises every morning, ensuring all hazards are identified and minimised. This protects children from the risk of accidental injury. If children are going on an outing a member of staff visits the venue first and completes a risk assessment to ensure the venue is suitable and safe for the children to visit. Effective policies and procedures in place maintain children's safety. For instance, visitors are given a visitors badge to wear and are requested to sign in and out.

Children use good quality, suitable and safe furniture, equipment and play resources appropriate to meet their different needs. Their independence is actively promoted because resources are easily accessed, enabling them to make good choices and decisions. There are good procedures in place to ensure the resources and equipment remain clean and safe for the children to use for example, the committee help clean the resources on a regular basis and the local garage

owner lets the children use the pressure washer under supervision to help clean the outdoor equipment. Children are learning how to keep themselves safe. They practise the emergency evacuation procedure each half term and benefit from staff reminding them of safety issues such as, not to run down the slope when they go outside and not to climb on the chairs inside.

Children are protected and safeguarded from harm because all staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities with regards to protecting children in their care. Effective systems are in place to ensure injuries children arrive with are recorded. Staff are aware of what action they are required to take if they have a child protection concern about any of the children. They advise parents of their role with regards to child protection issues through information included in the child protection policy and the playgroup prospectus.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the playgroup and develop positive relationships with both adults and each other. Children settle well and are very confident. They arrive keenly and enthusiastically seeking their favourite resources and toys. Children benefit from a stimulating and interesting environment. They relate well to staff and confidently approach them for support, indicating trusting relationships are in place.

Children have the opportunity to participate in a wide range of activities and experiences, which positively supports their development and learning. Children freely move from one play area to another and are spontaneous in their play and interactions with other children for example, a small group decided to change the gym role play area into an airport so the gym reception desk for a while became an airport checking in desk. They readily informed the inspector of the country they were flying to on holiday and the clothes they were taking with them. Children participate well in circle time where they listen to each other's news and enthusiastically join in singing the 'happy faces' song. Staff are enthusiastic and spend time playing with the children, helping them to develop new skills and make progress in their learning. They ask them age appropriate questions and offer lots of praise and encouragement which further helps develop their self- esteem and confidence.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and a clear understanding of how young children learn and progress. As a result all children are included and make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff use a wide range of teaching methods to maintain children's interest. Staff sit with children, ask questions and offer support when needed. Children are well motivated and keen to learn. The playgroup session is organised effectively and children benefit from participating in structured activities as well as being able to initiate their own play and develop their own ideas. Planning indicates that all areas of learning are covered, and the weekly plans in place identify specific learning goals relating to the themes and planned activities, however, the planned activities are not evaluated to see if the learning goal has been achieved and to help inform future planning for the child's next step. Staff record observations they make on children's development and transfer this information to children's profiles. This information is also used to inform parents of the progress their child is making.

Children are well motivated and engaged in their play as they select and carry out the wide range of well-planned activities. Children assume responsibility for their personal care and their

independence is being successfully developed. For instance, they choose whether or not to wear a coat outside. All children are learning to understand between right and wrong and are developing good self-control. For example, all children know to help clear away when a child bangs a drum. Children are learning about different cultures and are developing a good sense of community as local tradesmen come into the playgroup to talk to them about their shop or trade and children enjoy visits from the local community police officer.

Children benefit from seeing print in the environment and show a good interest in books. They concentrate well sitting in the book corner selecting a story to read with an adult. Most children recognise their names on name cards as they self-register in the morning and when they go to the café to have their snack. They attempt to write their names to label their work and older and more able children clearly write recognisable letters of their name, on their art work. They develop good language and communication skills as they share their news in circle time and by staff extending their language by asking relevant questions such as, asking them what they are doing and why? Children readily approach visitors and explain to them the activities they enjoy participating in. Children have a sense of belonging as they are allocated a different job each day which includes helping to prepare the snacks. Children are developing their exploring and investigation skills. They enjoy fitting cogs together, making them turn one way and then another. They access a range of information, communication and technology resources such as, the computer which is loaded with appropriate programs

Children's mathematical development is well supported by staff during planned activities and routines and through effective questioning during their play. They compare size and shape, count the number of children and adults present and recognise numerals. Children explore shape, space and measure in various ways. They enthusiastically measure dried pasta to make their shaker deciding if they need more or less in the plastic bottle. They develop their imagination by dressing up in a range of different uniforms, including a fireman, and they readily take part in aerobics in the role play gym area. Children enjoy playing the receptionist for the gym and write out the membership forms for the children attending the gym. Children enthusiastically join in with songs and they enjoy experimenting with sound when playing musical instruments or items children have bought in from home for example, a microphone and karaoke machine. Children are developing a sense of rhythm as they clap the same beat together and follow a range of beats from another child who is taking the lead.

Effective use of the indoor and outdoor space helps children develop their physical skills. All children move confidently when negotiating their way around the playgroup from activity to activity and when accessing the outdoor play area. They successfully develop their physical skills whilst using the outdoor equipment and kicking footballs to each other. They competently use one handed tools such as, cutters and rolling pins when playing with the play-dough. They also enjoy constructing towers out of Lego bricks. All children are able to express themselves freely through creative activities, using different materials and media. For instance, they enjoy making pictures out of a range of different materials, including tissue paper. They successfully use glue to stick items together or onto their picture.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit enormously because friendly relationships are established between staff and their parents. Information about children's individual needs and abilities are shared with the child's key worker during the registration process and parents are asked to complete a form which includes information all about their child and the progress they have made at home. This

helps to ensure staff meet the child's individual needs. Parents are well informed about the playgroup through informal discussion, information displayed on the notice board and written details included in the prospectus.

Clear, concise policies work effectively in practice to promote equal opportunities for all children. They enjoy positive relationships with the staff and with each other. Children are greeted warmly by staff when they arrive and readily bring in items linked to the themes in place from home, giving the children a sense of belonging. For example, children bring in musical items linked to the music and dance theme. All children are fully included because staff acknowledge and value children's differences. There are very good procedures in place, to ensure children with disabilities and/or additional needs are supported appropriately.

Children's understanding of their own and other cultures is promoted through practical experiences linked to special events such as, taking part in Diwali celebrations, where a parent came into the playgroup to talk about Diwali and their children performed a dance for the other children to see. Children are aware of the local community for example, they take part in a village memorial day where they meet and speak to local war veterans who proudly show their medals to them. Consequently, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children's confidence and self-esteem is being developed well by staff with the use of praise and encouragement. Children are well behaved. They respond well when being reminded by staff to walk and take turns, share play resources and show respect for others. The behaviour policy in place is understood by staff and effective in practice, therefore children's behaviour is managed well, promoting their welfare and development.

Partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents receive clear, concise information about the educational programme provided and the six areas of learning. Parents also receive information about the planned themes and activities, displayed on the notice board. Consequently, parents can fully support their children's learning at home. Parents are also actively encouraged to become involved in their child's learning in meaningful ways. This helps children progress and enables them to make a positive contribution. Parents comment they are sufficiently well informed about their children's progress and achievements. They benefit from being given a yearly report and they are able to speak with their children's key worker at any time.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for well by staff who are experienced, well established and committed to their well-being. Staff work well as a team, providing a stimulating and interesting environment conducive to the care, teaching and learning of all children. Some staff go to the hall on Sunday to ensure all activities and equipment are in place ready for the children to access as soon as they arrive on Monday morning. The ratio of adults to children is good, enabling staff to work closely with children. This helps to establish secure relationships. There is an effective induction process in place for new staff and annual appraisals ensure that staff are fully aware of their responsibilities towards children and highlight any future training needs. There is a training coordinator in place who ensures all staff have the opportunity to attend training courses provided by the local authority or other outside agencies. This ensures staff continually update their child care knowledge and practice, information gained from any course is shared with all other members of staff. A staff notice board displayed in the hall informs staff of their responsibilities of the day, layout of the equipment and the early learning goals they are focussing on for the week. All documentation is in place, however, staff do not record the exact

time if a child arrives late in the register and the complaints procedure for parents does not include the contact address and number of the regulator.

The leadership and management of the nursery education are good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan activities together to ensure the educational programme includes all aspects of the curriculum. Staff are well motivated and have developed a supportive team approach, aiming for good quality education for all children. They also work closely with the reception teacher from the local school to ensure children have the necessary skills to enable them to settle in quickly. There is clear leadership within the setting. The play leader is a good role model and committed to improving the education offered. The playgroup receives good support from the committee; the chairperson regularly visits to meet the children and staff. This gives the staff the opportunity to discuss any ideas or share concerns they may have. 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 were asked to review and update documentation. All documentation is now reviewed and updated on a regular basis and the date of review is recorded this further ensures children's safety, care and welfare are met.

At the last nursery education inspection, three key issues were raised. The playgroup was asked to: evaluate children's development to provide a clear picture of their progress to share with parents, and to secure a basis on which to plan for next stage of learning; develop planning to provide a sound basis for delivery of the early learning goals; and to develop a system to monitor teaching, and appraise staff and support their professional development. Staff now observe, record and evaluate children's development and progress to ensure parents receive a clear picture of their child's progress and observations are used to inform planning towards the child's next steps. Plans in place now provide a sound basis for the delivery of the early learning goals as each learning goal is identified in the plans. An appraisal system has been put in place and all staff receive a yearly appraisal. The play leader now monitors teaching and a training coordinator is in place who arranges courses for the staff to attend and supports their professional development. This further promotes staff knowledge of the foundation stage and childcare.

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):

- obtain written permission from parents to seek emergency medical treatment or advice
- ensure actual times of children's attendance are recorded
- include the contact number and address of the regulator in the complaints procedure

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):

- introduce a system to evaluate planned activities in order to plan the next steps in children's learning

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