

Huntley Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101665
Inspection date	04 July 2007
Inspector	Glenda Sinclair
Setting Address	Village Hall, North Road, Huntley, Gloucester, Gloucestershire, GL19 3DU
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Registered person	Huntley Playgroup
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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?

Huntley Playgroup is a committee run playgroup, operating from the village hall in Huntley, a rural village on the outskirts of the Forest of Dean. The group is open during term time, on Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 09:15 until 14:15 and takes up to 24 children from the surrounding area, aged between two years nine months and five years. The group has 18 children on roll, including 15 funded three and four-year olds. It also supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The group enjoys close links with the local primary school and a rising fives group operates from the school premises during the summer term. The committee employ three members of staff who hold various early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children receive a large amount of adult attention due to the high ratio of staff to children. This results in good relationships and children display confidence and emotional well-being.

They learn about personal hygiene, as staff remind them to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. They use pump soap and paper towels to dry their hands which minimises the risk of infection spreading amongst them. Nappy changing procedures are appropriate to maintain a good standard of hygiene. Children play outside most days and, therefore, have ample opportunities for exercise in the fresh air.

The playgroup is particularly pro-active in encouraging healthy eating. Staff have encouraged parents to provide lunch boxes for their children, which contain a healthy, balanced and appealing selection of foods. Snacks consist of fruit and toast and children are given a choice of milk or water to drink at snack time. Drinks are available throughout the day to prevent any risk of dehydration and children show no hesitation in regularly helping themselves. Lunch boxes are stored in the fridge to ensure that the contents stay fresh.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are bright, clean and child-friendly. The village hall committee is responsible for all cleaning and major maintenance and they ensure that all electrical equipment is serviced and checked as being safe for use. The toys and play equipment are in excellent condition and pose no safety risk to the children. Storage is a problem, so toys cannot be easily accessible to children, but staff overcome this by setting out a large and varied selection for the children to choose from.

Security is tight and the outer door is kept locked during sessions. Visitors have to ring to gain entry. The hall backs on to a very large playing field and staff erect a temporary fence every day so that children can play outside in safety and cannot leave the area unsupervised. Children practise fire drills regularly and smoke alarms are fitted to mains electric. Fire extinguishers are also in place. Staff have a sound knowledge of the signs and indicators of abuse. They are also aware of the procedure to follow if they have concerns about the safety or welfare of any child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff plan each session and adapt activities, when necessary, so that all children are able to participate at their own level.

Nursery Education

Teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones. Planning and assessments are closely linked to the stepping stones but assessment does not drive planning, so plans do not show how individual children can be extended or supported. Staff spend the entire session working directly with the children and are quick to pick up when a change of direction is necessary, for example, when older children become bored with an activity and threaten to become disruptive. Staff are also particularly good at explaining change to children so that they are fully prepared and know what to expect.

Children separate confidently from their parent or carer. They come in happily and quickly settle to an activity of their choice. They play co-operatively together and good relationships exist between children and adults. Children are polite, affectionate and ready to help tidy up, when they hear the musical reminder. They recognise their own names and recognise the sound

of the initial letter. They have many varied opportunities to 'write' from chalking on the path outside to role play in the 'post office'. They listen attentively and ask questions when they want to know what something means, such as a boulder. This helps to extend both their knowledge and their vocabulary. They are able to count competently and some are well able to do simple addition and subtraction. They notice and name shapes around them and are using size and positional language in their play.

They show an interest in the natural world. They are happy to examine bugs with magnifying glasses or study ice periodically to learn about the melting process. They are aware of the passage of time, for example, one little girl said 'I'm four. I'm going to be five after Christmas. On Boxing Day, actually'. They have good small motor control. They can build tall towers and hold pencils and other one-handed tools well. They are equally adept with larger equipment and can run, stopping and starting at will, as well as hopping, jumping and balancing. They respond well to music and show an obvious enjoyment when singing familiar songs and rhymes. They have access to a variety of material and textures and enjoy using recycled materials to make models and collages.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

There is a high ratio of adults to children. This enables the staff to get to know the children well and respond to their individual needs. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. For example, staff show concern for children's feelings and encourage them to show concern when others are hurt. Children celebrate other cultures and they have access to a range of resources and activities which promote a positive picture of the diversity within society. Staff support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities as necessary, working under the direction of other professionals, if required. Children's behaviour is good. They are all happily occupied and are able to move freely between activities without constant adult intervention. Staff use praise freely to reward and encourage both good behaviour and achievement.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are happy with the way their children settle and comment that children are involved and happy. They also comment that they find the staff very approachable. However, they are not fully involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good. The playgroup's aim is to provide a safe, secure and stimulating environment, which is warm and welcoming and permits children to learn through play. Staff achieve this aim by working closely as a team and providing the resources and activities to allow children to enjoy their play and develop across all areas of learning. Staff are experienced in the field of childcare and ensure that their documentation, policies and procedures are both appropriate and up-to-date. The register records the actual times of children's arrival and departure and the medication and accident records are filled in, as required. There is a loss of confidentiality, as parents are able to read about previous accidents to other children. All necessary parental permissions are in place.

The playgroup meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the playgroup was asked to ensure that they recorded the actual times of children's arrival and departure. This system is now in place, ensuring that an accurate historical record is available, if required at any time. The playgroup was also asked to include Ofsted, and its contact details in their complaints policy. The new policy is now in place containing all the necessary details.

The playgroup was asked to improve the link between assessment and planning showing how individual children can be supported or extended. This link is not yet sufficiently robust, which could mean lost opportunities to help children reach their full potential. Lastly, the group was asked to improve resources to increase children's awareness of technology. Children now have access to a variety of everyday technologies from keyboards to hand blenders.

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.

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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 that accident records are kept in such a way as to maintain confidentiality

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):

- devise ways of linking planning with assessment so that planning shows how individual children can be supported or extended.
- devise ways of involving parents more in their 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