

Hedge End Village Hall Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110521
Inspection date	26 September 2007
Inspector	Lisa Jane Cupples
Setting Address	Village Hall, St Johns Road, Hedge End, Southampton, Hampshire, SO30 4AF
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Registered person	Hedge End Village Hall Pre School
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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Hedge End Village Hall Pre-school is managed by a parents committee. It opened in 1971 and operates from a community hall in Hedge End, a residential area in Hampshire. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09:20 to 12:00 during school term-time only. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 23 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for early education. It is the pre-schools policy to accept children from the age of two years and nine months. Children come from the local community and attend a variety of sessions. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs four members of staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good self-care skills through daily routines. They are actively encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times. Staff implement hygiene procedures well to help prevent the possible spread of infection. For example, all tables are cleaned before snack-time and staff wear disposable gloves when dealing with bodily fluids. Staff also wash their hands before preparing snacks for the children. Staff have an understanding of the procedures to follow regarding accidents and the administration of medication, helping to protect the children. Parents are required to sign the records to acknowledge they have been informed and also give written parental consent for staff to seek emergency medical treatment or advice. Children will receive appropriate treatment if an accident occurs on the premises because three members of staff hold current first aid certificates and a fully stocked first aid kit is stored in the main hall. The supervisor checks the contents regularly to ensure they are up-to-date.

Children benefit from a nutritious diet because all staff have an understanding of healthy eating. Staff prepare a selection of fresh fruit and vegetables for the children and provide milk or water at snack-time. Children are beginning to learn about the importance of healthy eating through discussion and they talk about the types of food that are good for them. Staff discuss the needs of the children with the parents and information about allergies, dietary, medical and cultural needs are recorded on the children's registration forms to ensure their needs are being met. Children have many opportunities to develop their large muscle skills, during indoor and outdoor play. They ride wheeled toys, use space hoppers and travel over, under and through the indoor apparatus. Children's hand to eye co-ordination is promoted through catching games and they learn to understand group rules during games like 'What's the time Mr Wolf?'

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are clean and well-maintained and children have ample space to move around freely during the sessions. Staff ensure the hall and the activities are set up before the children attend, to enable the children to free-play as soon as they have self-registered. Children have access to a wide range of resources, materials and activities that are suitable for their age and stage of development. The resources are safe, clean and well-maintained; staff check the safety of the resources as they are set up and put away daily. Any broken or damaged items are removed and fixed or replaced as soon as possible, providing a safe play and learning environment for the children.

Children's safety is promoted because staff are vigilant and remove any possible hazards. For example, the hall and the outdoor play area is checked each morning before the children arrive, because other people use the hall when pre-school sessions are not running. Alarms have been fitted to the hall doors to prevent children leaving the building unnoticed and all plug sockets are covered. Safe arrival and collection procedures are in place to prevent the children leaving with unauthorised people. Parents are required to come into the hall at the start of the session and to collect their children at the end of the day. A member of staff is on door duty to ensure no children leave without their parents or carers, helping to keep them safe. Children are beginning to learn about keeping themselves safe through routines and discussions. For example, children know they must not go on to the stage area unless they are with an adult and they

are able to explain the fire drills, showing an understanding of the procedures to follow in an emergency. Fire drills are practised at least once every half term and more often at the start of the academic year, when the children are younger, helping to familiarise them with the drills through repetition.

Staff are aware of the child protection procedures and would recognise the possible signs and symptoms of abuse to safeguard the children. The written policy is shared with parents and includes the procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff. All existing injuries and incidents are recorded and the supervisor would contact the relevant agencies if concerns were identified to protect the children who attend.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settle quickly on arrival, they leave their parents and carers with confidence and ease. Staff greet the children warmly as they self-register making them feel comfortable and part of the group, before they go off to see what activities are available during the session. Most children head for the physical activities and enjoy climbing and balancing on the combination climbing apparatus. Children know the routines and are able to follow simple instructions, such as lining up by the stage at the start of circle time. Staff include differentiation in the curriculum planning to ensure the youngest children can participate fully in the activities. Large group activities at the start of the session are extremely well organised and all children are fully engaged during circle time. Staff make the activity interesting as children sit quietly, listening well, and then enjoy moving around as they sort themselves into different groups.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning are satisfactory. The staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan a well-balanced curriculum for the children. Key workers observe the children during their play and record their achievements in their individual progress records. The information gathered is used effectively to plan their next steps of learning, helping them to make sound progress through the stepping stones, towards the early learning goals. Staff set up a wide range of activities and resources inside the hall to help promote the children's learning in all areas. However, children do not fully access the available learning opportunities and experiences because the timing of the sessions is not organised well. Children spend almost an hour of the session outside with limited opportunities that do not cover all areas of learning. Physical activities are provided outside, with reading books and mark-making resources. When the children come in for the rest of the session the wheeled toys and physical activities are brought into the hall and many children spend the rest of the session riding bikes and climbing, even though their physical development has been promoted well during the first part of the session. As a result, many learning opportunities are missed because children are not participating fully in the well-balanced curriculum and range of activities that the staff have planned to help them progress.

When children do move away from the physical games and take part in the other available activities the quality of teaching is good, however, these opportunities are limited. Staff interact well with the children, asking open-ended questions and challenging the children during activities such as threading, sorting and sequencing. Other activities are not as well organised due to the timing of the session. For example, the baking activity has too many children and they do not benefit fully from the experience, as the recipe needs to be completed quickly to ensure the gingerbread men are cooked before the end of the day. Children miss the opportunity

to talk about how the ingredients change when they are mixed, what the textures feel like or the smell of the ingredients. Staff all have a clear knowledge and understanding of the planned learning intentions and when children access the other activities, staff promote their learning well.

Children's social skills are developing well. They understand the rules of the group and are beginning to co-operate with each other, completing puzzles together, role-playing and sharing the resources. During circle time the children work well together, sorting themselves into groups, counting and listening carefully to the staff and other children. They concentrate well and answer the questions with eagerness, keen to learn more. Children have many opportunities to develop their emergent writing and use text for different purposes. Mark-making resources are available throughout the session and children write letters to each other and post them in the box. They recognise their names in print and are beginning to link the sounds and letters during circle time, as they talk about the days of the week. Children handle books independently and turn the pages correctly. Children count confidently up to and sometimes above 16. They count the number of children at circle time and laugh and giggle as they play counting games, such as 'What's the time Mr Wolf?' Children recognise numerals and have access to numbers around the room. Children are beginning to calculate using groups of objects to work out which group has more and they use mathematical language to describe shape, size, quantity and position during free-play.

Children have access to a range of everyday technology and use the digital camera with ease. They are developing a good sense of time; children know the routines of the group and are able to explain what is going to happen next. Children recall past events and talk about the future using the correct tense. Children use their imaginations well during role-play and are beginning to negotiate characters and roles with each other. For example, children play doctors and work out who is going to be the patient. Then the game changes and they are pretending to be Mums and Dads. Some children are the parents and send the children to bed, they find blankets to cover them and then use the play equipment to make dinner. Staff are invited to join in and the home corner quickly fills up as other children join in the game and the storyline grows. Children enjoy painting and are able to freely create their own ideas. Staff ask the children about their paintings, valuing their work, as they hang them on the washing line to dry. Children sing a range of songs from memory and confidently match actions to the rhymes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff have an exceptionally clear understanding of equal opportunities and spend a great deal of time getting to know the children and their families. For example, talking about the parents who are at work today, and knowing the ones that are at home with siblings. This helps the children to feel valued and they settle into the group well, building strong relationships. Staff ask about the children's individual likes and dislikes and talk to the children about their favourite things to help settle them into the pre-school. Children have equal access to the activities and resources and are able to choose freely from the selection available. They have access to a selection of multi-cultural resources and the supervisor plans to extend the provision further. Children are beginning to learn about the world around them through topics, themes and activities about other cultures and beliefs. Children are beginning to show consideration for others as they pass the resources to each other and ask if they want to join in their games. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

The pre-school special needs co-ordinator (Senco) has just taken on the new role within the group. She has attended training and has a clear understanding of her responsibilities. Staff talk to the Senco if they have any concerns about the children and make observations before approaching the parents. Good policies and procedures are in place to ensure staff work closely with the parents and if necessary, other agencies to ensure all children are fully supported and included in the group. Staff implement the behaviour management policies effectively and ensure the clear rules and boundaries are consistent. Children behave extremely well because they know exactly what is expected of them. Staff are positive role models and treat the children with respect and affection, earning their trust and building strong relationships. This ensures the children feel valued and helps to develop a real sense of belonging. Staff continually recognise and praise the children's efforts, focusing on the positive behaviour, further developing the children's understanding of right and wrong.

Parents feel the staff go out of their way to make themselves and their children welcome on a daily basis. They are always greeted with warm, smiling faces, asking how they are and how the children are; developing good lines of communication throughout the pre-school. Parents are invited to spend time in the setting, on the parents' rota or coming in to share their skills and expertise with the children. Staff have a clear understanding of the regulations regarding complaints. A comprehensive complaints policy is in place and includes details of how to contact Ofsted. The policy is displayed in the entrance foyer, although parents are not aware of the procedures or what to do next if a complaint is not resolved within the setting.

The partnership with parents of children who receive funding for early education is good. Parents receive a detailed prospectus which includes information about the Foundation Stage. The short-term curriculum planning is displayed for parents, informing them about the planned learning intentions for the week. This provides opportunities for parents to build on their children's learning at home. Parents have access to their children's records of achievement and are able to talk to the children's key workers at any time. Staff meet with the parents every half-term to discuss the children's progress and together they agree the children's next steps. Parents have the opportunity to make written contributions to their children's records, helping them to be involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The committee are responsible for the recruitment and vetting of new staff and clear procedures are in place to ensure all staff working with the children are suitable to do so. New staff complete an induction programme and are monitored during their probation period. Staff deployment is very good and staff are skilled at overseeing the whole room. They are vigilant and move around as necessary to fully supervise and support the children at all times. The daily routines are well-established and children know what to expect, they are able to move around freely and are busy and occupied throughout the session. Although the timing of the sessions limit the children's opportunities, the sessions do run smoothly and children are never left waiting around for something to do. Children's health, safety and general well-being is promoted because staff implement the policies and procedures effectively and they have a clear understanding of the registration and inspection process. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. All the required documentation is in place and most is well-maintained. The daily attendance register is accurate and up-to-date. However, it is completed in pencil, so a permanent record is not being maintained adequately.

The leadership and management of the setting are satisfactory. The pre-school is managed by a parents committee who employ a fully qualified supervisor to oversee the day to day running of the group. Clear roles and responsibilities are defined and the staff team work exceptionally well together. Annual staff appraisals are completed to monitor staff performance and contribution to the group. The chair person attends the sessions to observe practice while the new supervisor settles in.

The staff all play an active role in planning the curriculum for the children, ensuring their individual needs are catered for. The daily activities are well-balanced and provide many experiences for the children to make progress in all areas of learning, although the timing of the sessions limits the children's opportunities to access them fully. The activities are monitored and evaluated individually, although the staff team did not identify the impact of so much physical play on the overall session. The whole staff team are enthusiastic and are extremely committed to improving the quality of care and education for all children. Children benefit because the staff team work together effectively, providing a consistent approach throughout the setting.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to ensure all staff and officers of the committee are police checked. To ensure all staff are aware of behaviour management policy and implement it consistently. To ensure that the child protection policy includes a procedure for allegations made against staff and ensure that the contact details for Ofsted are added to the complaints procedure. They were also asked to ensure fresh drinking water is freely available to children at all times. The committee have clear procedures in place to ensure all staff and committee members are police checked, helping to safeguard the children. Staff implement the behaviour management policies consistently throughout the pre-school and children behave well because they receive the same message from all staff, helping to develop their understanding of acceptable behaviour. The child protection policy now includes procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff and the complaints policy includes the contact details for Ofsted, although not all parents are aware of this. Children have access to fresh drinking water throughout the session. A jug of water is provided on a tray and children help themselves using disposable cups, developing their independence effectively.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to provide parents with more information about the stepping stones and early learning goals, and how this can be used to extend children's learning at home. They were also asked to evaluate the organisation of all activities to encourage children's independence. Parents have access to the short-term curriculum planning and their children's records at any time. They meet regularly with the staff to discuss their children's progress and information about the Foundation Stage, stepping stones and early learning goals are included in the prospectus, helping to keep them well informed. Children's independence is developing extremely well and is encouraged by all staff throughout the session. Staff provide a wide range of activities for the children, although they are not able to benefit fully from the learning opportunities and experiences due to the timing of the sessions.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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 satisfactory.

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 the register is completed in ink, to provide a permanent record of children's attendance
- ensure all parents are fully aware of 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):

- further develop the use of the outdoor play area, to include all six areas of learning
- re-organise the timing of the sessions to enable children to fully access the wide range of learning opportunities and experiences that are available.

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