

# Netherton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	311301
<b>Inspection date</b>	11 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Jill Lee
<b>Setting Address</b>	Chapel Street, Netherton, Huddersfield, West Yorkshire, HD4 7ES
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<b>Registered person</b>	Netherton Pre-School
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Netherton Pre-School playgroup was registered in 1980. It is managed by a voluntary management committee of parents and operates within the Methodist church hall in the centre of Netherton village, near Huddersfield.

Children have use of one large playroom. There is a secure, enclosed area for outdoor play to the rear of the building.

The playgroup is registered to care for a maximum of 24 children, aged from two to five years. It opens each weekday during term time from 09.30 to 12.00. They are currently caring for 36 children of whom 21 receive funding for nursery education. The playgroup supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

There are five staff employed to work directly with children, of whom four hold an appropriate early years qualification. The playgroup is affiliated to the Pre-school Learning Alliance and receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are able to choose to play outdoors for a large part of each session. They love playing in the fresh air, organising car races and group games, like 'Simon says'. They enjoy activities to practise their balancing skills. They play games with hoops and quoits and learn to throw and catch balls. Physical play is well planned to help children use their bodies in a variety of ways but there are limited planned opportunities to climb and build larger structures outdoors.

Children are protected from infection as staff consistently implement clear health and hygiene procedures. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication effectively protect children. Staff use daily routines well to help children learn how to keep themselves healthy. For example, they understand that they must wash their hands to 'get rid of germs' after using the toilet or digging outdoors. They get tissues independently to blow their own nose and understand why they need to wear sun hats when it is hot. They learn to attend to their own personal care.

Staff liaise very closely with parents to find out about children's health and dietary needs. Children are introduced to different fruits and vegetables at snack time, encouraging them to try new tastes. They decide for themselves when they are ready to stop playing to have their snack. They sometimes help to prepare their own snack and can access drinks independently throughout the session. Staff do not routinely plan to use daily opportunities, like snack time, to raise children's awareness of healthy eating. They introduce some conversations with children about healthy foods, although this is not enhanced by accessible books and posters.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children develop a very good understanding about safe behaviour within everyday activities. They are cared for by staff who confidently provide opportunities for free exploration within the safe limits of a very child-friendly environment. They routinely remind children about safe practice, for example, the need to hold the banister as they go down the stairs and to walk carefully up the cobbled slope to the outdoor play area. They learn to keep the cars and bikes to one side of the cones, so that they do not run into other children. Planned activities are introduced to raise their awareness of road safety issues. Children are well supervised and encouraged to behave in responsible ways.

Appropriate risk assessments are conducted to ensure children's safety in the shared building and staff carefully monitor collection times. Staff ratios are monitored and staff deployment ensures appropriate levels of supervision at all times. A well balanced range of resources is stored at child height, so that children can select them freely and independently. Evacuation procedures are practised routinely with children.

Children are cared for by staff who skilfully help them to share their feelings and make their needs known. Parents are clearly informed about the role of staff in the protection of children. All the staff have an awareness of child protection issues, although they are not fully informed about their responsibilities within the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Staff have identified the need to access training relating to the safeguarding of children and the child protection policy is to be reviewed, so that it fully reflects recent requirements.

There are clear systems in place to record any concerns, although the parents' countersignature is not recorded where existing injuries are noted.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children love attending the playgroup. Staff get to know them very well, helping them to be settled and secure. All activities are child led and based around children's observed interests. The environment is bright and warmly welcoming. It encourages children's active participation and free exploration. Staff are very relaxed and allow children time to be absorbed in activities for long periods without interruption, so that they fully follow through their own ideas and exploration. Children are motivated and concentrate well. Warm interactions support younger children's play and the relaxed routine enables them to engage in activities at their own pace. Staff integrate use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework actively into their planning.

Children freely explore lots of different media like sand, water, paint and dough. They fill and empty containers, roll and shape the play dough and make delightfully 'gluey' collage pictures. Their imaginary play is stimulated well by their own experiences. They go on holiday, dress up, make cakes, care for the dolls, walk the dog and go shopping. They make up their own stories. For example, they build a multi-storey car park with the large blocks, using the cars and small world people, and extend the play to issue parking tickets.

#### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and children's learning is good. Staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children enjoy a broad range of appropriate experiences in all areas of learning. The daily environment is richly resourced and well planned to enable children to consolidate experiences and develop new learning. Children are lively and interested; they learn to concentrate and persevere very well with activities they enjoy. Planning for the outdoor environment does not as consistently promote challenge and opportunities for new learning.

Children communicate confidently. They use language well to share their own ideas, to make observations and to describe what they are doing. They love stories, listen attentively and enjoy reading quietly to themselves. Staff introduce books in planned activities but do not consistently enhance children's opportunity to use books for varied purposes within all areas of their play. Children write for real purposes in their role play. They learn to recognise and write their name and staff promote their interest in letter sounds and rhymes in everyday conversations and activities.

Children become familiar with number concepts and shapes in everyday activities. Block play is used extremely well to stimulate opportunities to calculate and estimate, to compare, sort and order. For example, children assess shape and size, as they build a multi-storey car park, ensuring the roof is secure and access for the cars large enough. They begin to use mathematical language with understanding. Children learn about the natural and wider world, as they observe 'mini-beasts', learn about life cycles, grow runner beans and collect leaves for the interest table. They access the creative workshop freely to explore their own creative ideas. Opportunities to design and build using a range of tools and construction materials are planned, but not freely accessible.

Staff continually monitor and evaluate children's interests and their access to resources in the continuous provision. This helps them to plan enhancements to their independent play choices.

Staff clearly identify what children are intended to learn, so that the focus of teaching is defined. Staff interactions support children's play and help to consolidate their learning. They model skills and reinforce expected behaviour, so that children work cooperatively and use activity areas productively. Assessments of progress are clearly linked to the stepping stones and are used to inform planning for the next steps in children's learning. This helps to ensure appropriate levels of challenge are promoted for children within the everyday environment.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children are very familiar with daily routines and show a strong sense of belonging to the playgroup. Staff model use of activities and show children how to access resources, so that children quickly learn how to use them well. They are confident to make choices about what they want to do next. Staff involve them in decision making, like converting the stepping stones into 'speed bumps'. Relationships with staff are warm and affectionate and good behaviour is warmly praised and rewarded. Children learn to care for their environment, as they sweep up spilt sand and tidy away their snack dishes. Staff help children to find ways to resolve difficulties independently, like waiting in the queue until the mechanic is ready to mend the car.

Children use lots of books and resources which show positive images of other cultures and abilities. Staff make best use of parents' knowledge and experience, for example, encouraging an Indian grandmother to make chapattis with the children. They help children to enrich their role play with their own experiences, valuing their individuality. They plan activities to raise children's awareness of their local community and the wider world, for example, the people who help us. They are helped to think about how things make them feel, to participate actively and make choices about their play. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Parents' relationships with the staff are very relaxed and comfortable. Staff welcome parents' active involvement in playgroup, for example, helping on rota. Parents receive an informative welcome booklet and policies and procedures are displayed, along with the Ofsted poster for parents. They are confident to raise any concerns. The complaints procedure clearly reflects current requirements, although the address of the regulator is out of date. There is a system in place to keep a record if a complaint is received.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. They are well informed about both the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents help staff to be well informed about their child's needs by completing an 'All about me' book. They are encouraged to share information from home, like holiday photographs. Staff talk daily with parents, so they feel well informed about how their child is progressing. Photographs are used well in development records to share children's experiences. Parents are able to access their child's development record at any time and staff are looking at ways to increase parents' opportunity to contribute to it. Newsletters promote parents' awareness of the half-termly themes, along with ideas for activities to do at home.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Staff plan effectively and organisation within the playgroup helps to promote children's welfare and safety. Careful consideration is given to staff deployment and child-led daily routines help to ensure that children's varying needs and interests are supported well.

The leadership and management of children's care and education is good. Planned use of space and resources very effectively promotes children's independent participation. Staff work together well as a strong and cohesive team. They meet regularly, both formally and informally, to monitor and review their practice. They work closely with the advisory teacher and are becoming more skilled at using self-evaluation to enhance their practice. Staff have developed clear systems to observe children and monitor their progress and there are systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on children's learning. This helps to ensure children make good progress in their learning. Children's experiences are enhanced, as staff access well planned training and development opportunities.

Required policies and procedures are in place and implemented effectively, so that children's welfare is safeguarded. Procedures are in place for the regular review and updating of policies. Recruitment systems are robust, ensuring that staff are suitably skilled and experienced to work with children. Documentation is accessible and stored confidentially, although documentation relating to the vetting of committee members was unavailable for inspection, as it is not stored on site. Appropriate induction procedures and systematic appraisal of staff development needs help to ensure staff are able to meet children's individual needs. Parents' wishes regarding their child's care clearly influence day-to-day practice and clear written agreements are recorded.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, with regard to children's care, the playgroup was asked to ensure that the regulator is informed of changes and develop a key worker system to support children in small group activities. In relation to nursery education, they were asked to improve the challenges set for older and more able children, to ensure all areas of learning are taught in a systematic way, to achieve a balance between child-initiated and adult-led activities and to review organisation of the use of time in the session.

Staff have worked energetically to improve all areas of practice and have made very good progress. The management committee is well organised and aware of its responsibilities with regard to reporting significant events. The chair of the committee works very closely with the person-in-charge to ensure all requirements are met. A key worker system has been established, which is helping to support children's development and enhance links with parents.

The planning structure for nursery education is clearly defined and experiences in all areas of learning are consistently offered within the planned environment. Staff systematically observe children's activities and use this information to assess their individual needs and plan for the next steps in their learning. This information helps them to differentiate activities within planning, so that staff effectively support the needs of younger children and provide challenge for older and more able children. Staff continuously evaluate the effectiveness of planning for the use of time and space within each session, so that children's development is effectively promoted.

### **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):

- involve children more actively in preparation of snacks and find more ways in everyday activities to promote their awareness of a healthy lifestyle
- ensure all staff are fully familiar with the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board and update the child protection policy and procedures to reflect current guidance
- ensure all required documentation, like records of committee members, is available for inspection.

#### **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 the resources to encourage large scale construction outdoors and enhance opportunities for children to 'design and make' in the continuous provision
- plan to introduce a wider range of books into different play areas to stimulate interest and extend challenge in activities
- ensure planning for the outdoor environment consistently promotes opportunities for new learning and challenge.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)