

Heslington & Badger Hill Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	321542
Inspection date	14 November 2007
Inspector	Linda Cook
Setting Address	Lord Deramore's Primary School, School Lane, Heslington, York, North Yorkshire, YO10 5EE
Telephone number	07708 155 484
E-mail	hbhpreschool@gmail.com
Registered person	The Trustees of Heslington & Badger Hill 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 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?

Heslington and Badger Hill Pre-School opened in 1992. It operates from one room and associated facilities based in Lord Deramore's Primary School and serves the local area. There is an enclosed outdoor play area and the group has access to the school grounds.

There are currently 33 children from two and a half to five years old on roll. This includes 23 children who receive funded nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting offers support for children with learning difficulties or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions are variable between 9.00 to 12.00 and 12.00 to 15.00. There is a parents and tots group on Monday afternoon and Wednesday morning which feeds the playgroup.

There are five staff who cover various sessions, of which three hold a recognised childcare qualification at level 3.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a warm clean environment where they learn about good hygiene practices. They learn to wash their hands before eating, after taking part in messy activities and attending to personal care needs. The procedures minimise the risk of infection, as the clear sick child policy is shared with parents. Children are provided with individual means of drying their hands and faces.

Accidents are recorded in an accident book and parents sign entries. Parental consent is obtained before medication is administered, however, parents are not required to sign medication records which means children's good health is not fully protected.

The children are well nourished and are developing an appreciation of healthy eating. They enjoy a varied range of healthy choices, such as fresh and dried fruit. They choose either water or milk to drink at snack time. However, children can not independently access fresh drinking water throughout the session. Children's dietary needs are adhered to and staff ensure parents' wishes are respected.

The children are encouraged to enjoy being active in the outdoor area. Whilst there are some limits on the availability of the outdoor area, it is used regularly. Children develop their physical skills as they use the wheeled toys with increasing strength and accuracy. They develop their climbing and balancing skills on the fixed play equipment. Indoors they move with control, enjoy taking part in physical exercise and completing action rhymes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children use a wide range of good quality equipment which is clean and well maintained. A range of toys and resources are made accessible to the children for self selection, safely within their reach. They are clearly labelled, helping the children to identify resources and associate print with meaning. Displays of children's art work are bright and attractive and this gives them a sense of belonging. Children move independently and confidently around the setting and make good use of the areas and play opportunities provided.

Risks of accidental injuries to children are minimised because staff are vigilant in their supervision of the children and risk assessments are completed to reduce potential hazards. Staff also ensure children are given clear and age appropriate explanations as to the reasons behind the boundaries which are in place. They have regular opportunities to practise emergency evacuations. This ensures children develop an awareness of danger and learn how to protect themselves from harm.

Children are effectively protected from harm because the staff have a sound knowledge of child protection issues. All staff attend child protection training which is regularly updated. A clear child protection policy ensures they are aware of the procedures to follow, should they have concerns and relevant information is kept on file for reference.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very well cared for in a warm and welcoming environment, where staff are aware of their individual needs. Children enjoy a wide range of planned activities that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. All children enter the pre-school confidently and settle quickly. They are eager and keen to learn and soon become engrossed in their chosen activity. For example, when they paint pictures or play with small world resources in the role play area. Children are confident and self assured to work and play independently or in groups. For example, they play with the range of small world vehicles independently and they share the resources in the sand tray and on the dough table. The close and caring relationships that staff have with children helps them develop confidence and build positive self esteem.

Children play happily together as staff encourage them to take turns, share equipment and respond to each other. They enjoy looking at the books together and make up their own stories. Children become confident communicators as they share ideas in their play for instance, as they go shopping at the greengrocers, cook the dinner and go off to catch bad people and fight dragons. All children are improving their communication skills, as they talk to staff about what they are doing, other members of their family and their experiences away from the setting.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching is good. Staff have a good understanding of the early learning goals. Activities are planned by the staff, which covers all areas of learning. Staff observe children's achievements in their play experiences and complete assessment records. They use informal conversational questioning techniques very skilfully, to extend children's thinking and to support the children's learning. A variety of teaching styles are used effectively from individual, to small and whole group work.

Children are very confident and are eager to take part in all the activities throughout the session. They know the routines and what is expected of them and join in appropriately. For example, they are happy to help with tidy up time in readiness for their snack. Children are developing their independence skills as they put on their own shoes and coats before playing outdoors and wash their hands before snacks.

The children speak increasingly well, as staff offer them additional vocabulary to talk about their play or to talk about liquidising vegetables to make soup. They enjoy books, use them very well and begin to understand about print carrying meaning and this is supported by the clear labelling of resources. They all begin to recognise their names in print as part of arrangements for registration and snack time. Older children and more able children, can write their names and all children demonstrate emerging writing skills, as they begin to form recognisable letters. They begin recognise letters and their corresponding sounds, as they sound out the letters of their name.

The children develop a good understanding of numbers. The staff develop strategies to help the children to count and complete simple problem solving exercises through the daily routines. For example, the children count the number of boys and girls on their table at snack time and then work out how many children there are altogether. They begin to recognise numerals, as staff work with flash cards in small groups. They confidently use simple mathematical language to talk about position and learn to recognise simple shapes as part of the planned activities.

The children have strong exploratory senses and they confidently talk about the root vegetables they used to make soup and how they grow under the ground. They monitor the seasons and have collected leaves and seasonal fruits for the interest table for their Autumn topic. Children have access to a computer and other resources such as small world cash tills, which increases their awareness of information technology.

Children are developing their creative skills and they enjoy the free expression painting and the planned craft activity. Although at times, these are too adult led with pre-cut shapes and children's independent access to a range of craft resources does not fully support them being spontaneously creative and limits their opportunities to develop their own individuality.

The children develop very good manipulative skills, carefully using tools for the play dough and craft activities. The older children show considerable strength and dexterity as they manoeuvre wheeled toys and they have fun increasing their gross motor skills balancing and climbing on the various outdoor play equipment.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children behave very well. They learn to take turns to share toys and they show care and consideration for the needs of others. Staff effectively support children to help them begin to understand right from wrong and to talk about their feelings. Staff use effective methods to manage children's behaviour. They provide age appropriate explanations, to help children understand the reasons behind behaviour boundaries and to intervene sensitively, when minor disputes erupt. Children constantly receive praise and encouragement from staff to reinforce positive behaviour and develop positive self esteem.

Children are highly valued as individuals. They are treated with equal concern and staff use the registration forms and they talk with parents, to gain all the information needed to meet each child's individual care needs. Children begin to develop respect for people's similarities and differences, through the planned themes and topics and they learn about the wider world and community. They celebrate festivals from their own and other cultures, have visitors to the setting and can access a range of resources that promotes equality of opportunity. The children benefit greatly from links forged with the two local schools. The children attend school events and the reception class teachers visit the children in the pre-school, helping the children to prepare for a smooth transition to school. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Systems are in place to ensure children with learning difficulties and or disabilities receive the support they need to fully participate in all the activities and make good progress. Staff have a positive approach to working in partnership with parents and other professionals to ensure the children's needs are fully recognised and met.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are given information about the setting through newsletters, notice boards, a welcome leaflet and chats with staff. The children benefit as parents and staff build positive relationships and the key worker system provides parents with a point of contact. They are kept well informed of the planned activities, which are displayed and included in news letters, suggestions are also made how children's learning can be continued at home. However, although written information is available on the areas of learning, not all parents are aware of this and the complaints policy has not been updated to reflect current procedures. When children leave, parents are given a folder which includes samples of their

children's work, photographs and a written report outlining their children's achievements in the six areas of learning. Parents who contributed to the inspection process, state they are very happy with the care and education provided by dedicated staff. They state that their children are happy, settled, look forward to coming to the pre-school and they make good progress in their all round development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Effective recruitment and induction procedures are in place, to ensure children are cared for by suitably qualified and experienced staff, who have been subject to appropriate vetting procedures. Staff work effectively as a team and are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. Children benefit from well deployed staff, who consistently interact with them and provide good support and encouragement, which enables them to settle and become confident in their surroundings and the regular routines.

Most requirements of the National Standards for documentation and record keeping are in place and stored appropriately to maintain confidentiality. These include attendance registers, a record of visitors and clear policies and procedures. These are available on the premises for parents to access at any time and these safeguard children's health and welfare.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the associated stepping stones. They have regular opportunities to attend training to increase their knowledge and skills and they demonstrate a positive approach to the ongoing development of the provision and the inspection process. All staff are involved in the planning process through the weekly meetings. Planning documentation shows how the children access the whole curriculum during their time at the setting and activity plans clearly show the intended learning. Assessment records are completed for each child to monitor their learning and development. However, while the small key worker groups ensure that staff know the children very well and they instinctively plan for the children's individual next steps in learning, the system of planning and assessment does not always clearly show these. 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, the setting was asked to increase the range of healthy options provided at snack time and to extend the opportunities for more able children to complete simple mathematical problems.

Since the last inspection, the range of healthy snacks has been extended. Each day the children are provided with healthy options and enjoy fresh or dried fruit and savoury items, such as bread sticks.

The opportunities for children to complete simple problem solving tasks have been successfully incorporated into the daily routines, for example, as they count how many boys are present and how many girls and then calculate how many children there are all together.

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 complaint 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 medication records are signed by parents
- ensure drinking water is accessible to the children at all times
- update the complaints procedure to reflect the revised National Standards.

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):

- strengthen the links between planning and assessment to clearly identify how children's individual next steps in children's learning are planned for
- increase the opportunities and available resources for children to initiate their own play and learning, particularly in relation to creative activities.

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