

Egton Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	400306
Inspection date	24 September 2007
Inspector	Sandra Davies
Setting Address	Station Buildings, Egton Bridge, Whitby, North Yorkshire, YO21 1UX
Telephone number	01947 895563
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Registered person	Egton 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 satisfactory. 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?

Egton Playgroup is a limited company. It registered in December 1992 and operates from four rooms converted from the old station waiting rooms at Egton Bridge Station. There is a covered outdoor play area and a garden.

A maximum of 30 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open five mornings a week from 9:00 to 12:00 for older children. Younger children are included on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. It serves mainly the parish of Egton and Grosmont. Children also attend from a wider area if places are available. There are currently 26 children on roll, aged from two to four years, of these, 13 three-year-olds and one four-year-old receive funding for early education. The group receive support from the local authority.

The company employs six staff to work directly with the children. All hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

The playgroup premises are clean and well maintained. Health and hygiene guidelines are in place, including a sick children policy and written permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. Older children become increasingly independent in attending to their own personal care, as they visit the toilet independently and usually wash their hands. However, children are not always reminded to wash when returning indoors for their snack, resulting in children not being fully protected from infection. Staff are first aid trained and a first aid box is readily available. There are systems in place for recording accidents and medication. However, the medication record format does not include parent's signature to acknowledge the entry.

Children are well nourished and enjoy snacks of fresh fruit, plain biscuits and sometimes bread with various spreads. Healthy eating is discussed at snack times and reinforced by displays of fruit and vegetables posters and resources. Children are able to express their likes and dislikes and make choices of which fruit they want. Children have a choice of milk or water with their snack. However, fresh drinking water is not readily available at all times.

Children's physical development is well supported, with daily opportunities to use the covered outdoor play area and the garden. They confidently ride trikes and other wheeled toys. There are good opportunities to explore and extend their physical skills. For example, on the slide, swing, climbing frame, trampoline and when throwing bean bags into hoops on the floor. Indoor physical activity includes musical movement using scarves and streamers. Children can rest and be active according to their needs. For example, a child happily sits, relaxing on the big cushions in the book area, looking at the books.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm, safe environment which contributes to their well-being and sense of security. However, not all the toilets are enclosed. This does not fully support the privacy and dignity of children. Safety procedures are in place, allowing children to play freely. Risk assessments are carried out and recorded, and are reviewed. The outdoor areas are checked before children go out. Children choose from a good range of play equipment and resources which are developmentally appropriate. The equipment is clean and checked regularly to ensure it remains safe for children to use. Resources are suitably organised in child height furniture to encourage independent access.

The door is regularly left open to allow children free flow access to the outdoor play area. Staff are vigilant and ensure children are well supervised. Fire drills are carried out on a regular basis and recorded. Children are protected by having suitable policies and procedures in place. For example, a lost children's policy and a written record of who can collect the child.

Child protection procedures are in place and staff have a sound understanding of child protection and who to contact should they have any concerns. This protects the welfare of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in the setting and are interested and enthusiastic about what they do. They have developed good relationships with their peers and staff, and approach them confidently. Staff respond well to the children, effectively supporting them. Praise and encouragement is given, developing the children's confidence and self-esteem. For example, praising a child when she sings a song by herself.

Children purposefully move around the rooms, choosing from the good range of resources and activities which are readily available. There is a good balance between child-led and adult-led activities. Children happily join in or choose solitary play in the home corner or with the train set for example. They delight in sensory exploration, making bubble pictures, painting leaves and 'baking' with play dough.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn. An interesting and varied range of activities are planned by the staff. Assessments are used to inform planning and make sure there are no gaps in learning. Teaching methods promote learning and staff use appropriate questioning to extend children's thoughts and ideas. The rooms are well arranged to include all areas of play and learning with labelling, number and letter posters, friezes, and children's artwork displayed, promoting a stimulating, learning environment. There is a good balance of child-led and adult-led activities, resulting in children having opportunities to make their own decisions about their play. Children are well motivated and well behaved.

Children show high levels of involvement and concentration. For example, as they make leaf prints, are engrossed in construction play, or join others in a table top game. They sit quietly and are attentive for extended periods of time as they listen to a story. Confidence and self-esteem are developing well as children happily separate from their main carer and go off to play. Children are making good relationships with their peers. They are confident to approach staff who praise and encourage them. Children are developing their independence as they select activities and resources and are beginning to manage their own personal care. For example, putting on aprons and coats, and hand washing.

Children respond to instruction well. For example, when asked to go through for snack time or to go outdoors to the play area. They sustain attentive listening, responding to what they have heard with relevant comments and questions, during story time. Talk is used in imaginary situations in the home corner and when acting out stories, such as Red Riding Hood and the Three Little Pigs. Children enjoy rhyming and rhythmic activities, initiated by staff members, such as 'Five currant buns in the baker's shop'. Children hold books correctly and handle them carefully. Older children are beginning to recognise some letters and familiar words, for example, their own name card. Children have opportunities to draw and paint, and engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination. They use one handed tools and equipment, such as paint brushes, scissors and pencils, and manipulate objects with increasing control.

Children show an interest in numbers and counting. For example, children help to count marbles into a jar to see how many they could count before the train went out of the station; they help to count the number of currant buns when joining in the rhyme and count the number of skittles

they knock over. Children have some opportunities to calculate, measure and consider shape and space. For example, when using construction resources, play dough and water play.

Children have good opportunities to explore and investigate. They examine objects and living things to find out more about them. For example, when watching caterpillars turn into chrysalis and then butterflies, watching and touching snails, digging for worms, growing potatoes and visiting the local farm. They smell and touch herbs and flowers in the garden, and experiment with water flow on a purpose made drain pipe system. Children develop their designing and making skills, joining construction pieces together to build and balance. There are milk crates available for large construction outdoors and a work bench and lots of wood available indoors. This gives children the opportunity to begin to try out a range of simple tools and techniques competently and appropriately. There is a computer and remote controlled cars available, giving children the opportunity to operate programmable equipment. Children develop a sense of time and place as they talk about past holidays and weekend events. They have opportunities to find out about their own culture. For example, through visits to the local farm, being involved in village events and carrying out Christmas and Easter activities. They gain an awareness of other cultures and beliefs when joining in activities about the Chinese New Year and using ethnic musical instruments.

Children move freely with pleasure and confidence. There is a very good outdoor play area and garden available to the children offering excellent large equipment to extend their physical development. This includes a slide, swing, trampoline and climbing frame. Children show increasing control using equipment as they climb, scramble and ride. Children are able to use movement to express feelings when taking part in musical movement, using scarves and streamers.

Children are able to explore colour, texture, shape and form, using the vast array of craft materials available. For example corks, silver paper, bottle tops, wood shavings, pasta and leaves. Children explore and learn how sounds can be changed as they play the musical instruments fast, slow, loud and quiet. There are lots of opportunities for imaginative play both child-initiated and adult-led. Children take part in imaginative games and role play as they play in the home corner with the train set or the farm. They play cooperatively as part of a group to act out a narrative, such as Three Little Pigs and Little Red Riding Hood.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the playgroup and their individual needs are well met. Planned activities and resources are available, reflecting other cultures and races. For example, making a dragon and using chop sticks for the Chinese New Year and accessing appropriate books, dolls and role play equipment. This helps increase children's awareness of diversity and develop a positive attitude to others. The setting has systems in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities and children are included in the group well. Staff are proactive in accommodating children with specific needs and work closely with parents. This positive approach means that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Behaviour in the playgroup is good. Staff gently explain about acceptable behaviour and are positive role models. The importance of sharing and being kind to each other is promoted. For example, encouraging 'please' and 'thank you' and turn taking. Children receive lots of praise which helps to raise their self-esteem.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff work with parents to meet the needs of the children well. Lots of information for parents is displayed. They receive a booklet containing information including an admission policy, behaviour, child protection and the complaints procedure. It also includes good information on the educational programme. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress as they access their individual files and progress records. Parents are able to access the inspection report that is displayed on the notice board. Parents are happy and comfortable in the setting and made to feel welcome. They are able to talk to staff about their child when dropping off and collecting them. A good relationship is evident and this has a positive impact on the children's wellbeing.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for by staff who hold appropriate qualifications and have a knowledge and understanding of child development. There is a vetting and induction procedure in place. However, this is not sufficiently robust to ensure that children are always fully safeguarded. There is an appraisal system in place and staff have opportunities to attend further training.

Adult to child ratios are maintained and staff work well together as a team. Space is well organised, both indoors and in the outdoor play areas, and most resources are stored at child height, allowing children easy access and encouraging independence.

Required documents are available and are stored confidentially. A satisfactory range of policies and procedures are in place and these are shared with staff and parents.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The staff have a sound understanding of their roles and responsibilities in developing children's learning and are committed to this. Procedures to appraise staff development needs are in place and access to training is encouraged.

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 provider was asked to further clarify how they would handle any allegations made against staff. A member of staff has attended a course on allegations and a policy has been put in place. The contact number for Ofsted is now included in the complaints section of the parent's booklet, as recommended.

A recommendation to provide additional privacy for children when using the toilet was also made. This has not been fully addressed and remains an outstanding recommendation.

At the last nursery education inspection, the provider was asked to ensure resources for the children to label their own work are easily available. Children have opportunities for mark making and pencils are readily available.

A recommendation was also made to further develop the wooded area. This was already in the groups own development plan. The work has been carried out and an excellent outdoor area has been created with lots of outdoor equipment including slides, swings, wooden log train and play house. This enhances the outdoor play experiences available to the children.

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 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):

- review the arrangements for children's hand washing to minimise the spread of infection
- extend the medication recording system to include the parent's signature to acknowledge the entry
- ensure that fresh drinking water is available to children at all times
- ensure the privacy and dignity of children is respected when using all of the toilets.
- further develop the vetting and induction procedure to ensure a robust system is in place.

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):

- extend the range of opportunities and play experiences to begin to develop children's understanding of calculation, shape and measure

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