

Walkington Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	503384
Inspection date	05 July 2007
Inspector	Rosemary Beyer
Setting Address	The Pavilion, The Playing Fields, Walkington, East Riding of Yorkshire, HU17 8SP
Telephone number	07722 561116
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Registered person	Walkington Pre-School
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?

Walkington Preschool was originally registered over 25 years ago as a sessional group but changed to full day care in 2001. The group is committee run and meets in the sports centre in Walkington village just outside Beverley. Sessions are available Monday to Friday, 08.50 until 11.45 and 13.00 until 15.30, during term time only, but children can bring a packed lunch and stay all day. The group has the use of one room only, which is arranged to meet the needs of the children with different areas designated for different activities. There is a secure outside area available, adjacent to the building, and they can also use the sports field and the village play area.

The group serves the local community but also has children from further afield. Currently 45 children are on the register, of these, 35 are funded for nursery education.

There are eight staff working in the group. Four of these have appropriate childcare qualifications and experience. There are usually three staff present for each session depending on numbers of children present. One member of staff is working towards a Level 3 qualification. The staff receive support from the local early years teacher mentor.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for on premises that are clean and where good hygiene practice is effectively implemented to prevent the spread of infection. Children know that they must wash their hands before food and after personal care to protect themselves from germs. Staff are vigilant to ensure children remember. Good practice is also employed in the kitchen, in line with environmental health guidance.

The group has a sick child policy, which is made available to parents. If children are taken ill during the sessions, parents are contacted to fetch them and children are comforted in the quiet corner until parents arrive. Appropriate systems are consistently used to administer any required medication, including for allergic reactions. Parents give written permission for staff to seek medical help or advice in an emergency and they include any special medical concerns on the information forms.

Staff have current first aid certificates and there is a rolling programme of training in place. Well stocked first aid boxes are available and staff complete the accident book as required.

The children are developing a good awareness of healthy eating, with fruit or toast for snacks, and a well balanced range of foods in their lunch boxes. They know they need lots of fruit and vegetables to stay fit and well. The group provides water or milk for snack time, and the children can help themselves to water at any time they get thirsty or hot after playing.

Children know they need to have fresh air to stay healthy, and they enjoy outside play and walks in the countryside or in to the village to feed the ducks. Before they play outside in the sun the children put on their hats, and if necessary ask for sunscreen. They move around very confidently both inside and out, with good control. During music or exercise games they successfully obey instructions for actions or to stop and start. They climb and balance very confidently, using the climbing frame to create the ladders for a pirate ship, and also when using outside equipment. Their fine motor skills are developing well and they use a wide range of tools and resources successfully, for example when making clay boats, spreading bread for sandwiches or when cutting and sticking.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Safety is a very high priority, and parents and visitors are admitted by staff. Children do not leave the premises unsupervised and the premises are secure. A register of children, visitors and staff is maintained and used for fire drills. Exit doors are kept clear and evacuation notices displayed. Fire equipment is in place and serviced annually.

The premises and equipment are checked regularly for safety and cleanliness. Children have access to a wide range of resources and equipment that are suitable for their needs. They do not have unsupervised access to items stored in an outside container and in the large internal cupboard but can ask for different things to play with, in addition to the planned activities. During sessions they help themselves from shelves and trolleys. Children access the computer independently and staff ensure they do not spend excessive time at the screen.

Children learn to keep themselves safe by the correct and careful use of toys and equipment. They use small tables and chairs with care, ensuring chair legs are down to prevent accidents. If staff are clearing the room, the children hold hands and stand to the side of the room while the tables are moved. They share and take turns, for example when climbing the ladder on to the pirate ship. When clearing away they co-operate well and help each other.

Staff have a good knowledge of child protection, although they have not updated their training recently due to lack of courses. The policies and procedures have been adapted to take account of the recent changes and the Local Safeguarding Children Board contact details are available. New information has been shared by all the staff so they are all generally aware of the changes.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff have a very good understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and adapt activities to meet the needs of the different stages of development that children are at. Staff monitor and record children's progress and include photographs in the group album, complete with description and the relevant aspect of the framework. No more than three children attend who are under three years of age, but their development is still monitored separately.

The younger children enjoy a wide range of resources and learning opportunities, mostly the same as the older children although staff have different expectations of the younger ones. All children participate in creative activities, outside play, stories, songs, and role play. Sand and water are freely available, all the time.

Nursery Education.

All the children are supported so that they can enjoy the same activities. They enter the group very enthusiastically, curious to see what is on offer and keen to learn. They concentrate well to complete tasks and move around from one activity to another when they are ready. All the children sit quietly at group time, listen carefully and participate in the activity when asked to do so. They take it in turns to count, complete the weather and date chart, and point to the colours on the board. Articles are displayed on the table matching the chosen colour and discussed by the children.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a very good understanding of the Foundation Stage. They plan activities carefully to provide sufficient challenge to support children's development in all areas of learning. Teaching methods are adapted to suit the children's needs with staff input dependent on the child's confidence, independence and ability. Staff use open-ended questions to develop vocabulary and conversation, and allow children choice to select resources for themselves and develop their play. Children use construction toys to create figures for an imaginative play that other children then watch. The play includes an entrance fee, introductory music and sweets to eat during the performance. Later on the paper boats became hats for the pirates and paper tubes telescopes for watching whales and sharks.

The children have a very good understanding of number and most count very well. They can add or take away simple numbers, recognising and using them in their play. Their problem solving skills are also developing well. Children are able to build with construction toys and discuss how to balance the pieces to create imaginative structures that do not fall over. The children concentrate very well on matching and number games, playing together until they

have finished. They recognise simple shapes, and know the days of the week and months of the year.

Children's imagination is developing very well. For example in a role play involving a pirate ship they watch whales and sharks, and travel the world looking for treasure. An imaginary visit to New Zealand promotes interest as a family has relatives from there. They also made imaginary sand castles and watched the sea come in and wash them away.

The children enjoy music, singing and dancing. They move around to quiet music, pretending to be water and keeping in time. They also sing simple songs in tune and are developing a good understanding of rhyming words through poetry. The staff have attended courses to give ideas on the effective introduction of music into the setting, and the children are developing a very good appreciation of different kinds of music. They have also used musical instruments in the past, however they have not since had regular use of the group's musical instruments.

Children produce very imaginative art work, some of which is displayed on the walls. Currently a very colourful octopus collage made with hand prints has pride of place. They use a good range of materials for craft work and a variety of fixing methods, including the use of clay and junk for models. A fleet of clay sailing boats is on display for parents to see. The children have confidence to experiment. For example they use cardboard tubes, paint and paper in different ways to see what will happen. They become engrossed in activities, comparing what they have done and discussing how the patterns are made.

Books and stories are very popular. Children listen quietly, but also participate in anticipating what will happen in the tales. They use books correctly, turning the pages carefully. They know print carries meaning, both for stories and also for information. All the children recognise their own names, and those of their friends. Most of them are able to write their names recognisably and if they have difficulty, they help themselves to their name labels to copy. Staff have successfully introduced phonics to support the children's knowledge of letters and simple words.

The children are developing their knowledge and understanding of the world through growing plants such as cress, sunflowers and bulbs which they take home. They enjoy going into the village to learn about the community such as during the Victorian week when they dressed up and discussed how people used to live. They can also use programmable toys and the computer very capably, with older children supporting the younger ones if they have problems.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The group is managed by a committee of parents and local people. Parents are asked, as part of the registration procedure, whether they can provide support for fund raising, help with the rota duties or join the committee, or if they have any special skills which could be shared. They are also asked if they wished to have parents' evenings, but decided these were not necessary.

The parents' brochure is currently being updated, and contains information about the setting, the staff, the daily routine and ideas for activities at home to support the children's development. It also includes 'Birth to three matters' framework information and an explanation of the Foundation Stage, and what it entails. A large photograph album is compiled of the children's activities throughout the year, complete with descriptions of the areas of learning involved for

children over three years of age and how the activities depicted support the younger children. It shows a group where children enjoy a very wide range of fun learning opportunities.

The parents spoken to during the inspection are very happy with the care their children receive and feel welcome when they enter the setting. They like the range of activities provided, the information staff provide about development in the group and also for ideas for things to do at home. They say staff are very approachable so they can confidently raise concerns with them. Parents can ask to see their children's records at any time, and staff willingly discuss what they are recording, whether they have any concerns about the children and how the information is passed on to school when the children leave the group.

Children spoken to like the preschool. They say the staff look after them very well and they are happy to be with them and their friends. They also like the toys and activities they can use, especially the computer and paint.

Children behave very well in the positive encouraging environment. They are considerate of each other, they share and take turns. Older children are very supportive of new or younger children, for example older children help new children to find a mat at circle time, show them where things are kept and how to use the computer.

Children have regular input into the group's house rules and discussion of behaviour is part of the general routine, through which they are developing a good sense of right and wrong. All the children are very sociable, mix well and do not exclude each other. They are also developing very good manners with good staff role models to guide them. The children treat each other and the staff as individuals and with respect. Children's social, moral spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children help to clear away resources and for tidy-up time they are able to bring in a CD to play while they are clearing up. They select the track to be played and have developed a wide range of musical tastes. A procedure for the management of unacceptable behaviour or bullying is in place, with parental involvement a high priority. A record of any incidents is recorded and stored confidentially.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are welcome in the group. The staff and children help everyone to settle. Through extra staff support and additional resources they are able to develop their potential. Care is provided in line with the Code of Practice, and staff obtain advice from outside agencies and parents where necessary. They also devise individual learning plans to help the children's development.

The group has a written equal opportunities policy which is inclusive of all children and parents. Resources are available to widen the children's knowledge of other cultures and customs through food, music, craft activities and costume. The children know they are all different, but whatever their background they treat each other with equal concern. They like to learn about other countries, and enjoy celebrating different festivals and finding out about the backgrounds of other children. Staff are aware of the need to provide positive images of those often discriminated against and to challenge unacceptable language or comment.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The playgroup is effectively managed by the committee, which provides good support throughout the year. Regular committee and staff meetings are held and minuted to keep a record of the group's development. Self evaluation is completed each year, in line with the Ofsted forms, to judge their progress in each of the outcomes, and any suggested improvements recorded, such as the need for staff to update their knowledge of child protection in light of the recent changes. Staff are constantly looking to improve their practice.

Robust systems are in place for the employment of new staff. A comprehensive induction is completed and then appraisals annually. The group has an expectation that staff undertake training to support their own personal development and further improve their practice.

The registration certificate is on display, and the conditions respected. Good staffing levels ensure the children are well supervised and have support when they need it during the sessions. A register of staff, children and visitors is maintained, with times of attendance noted. Children do not leave the building with unauthorised persons, and parents are expected to notify staff of any changes to their collection.

Leadership and management of the setting is good. The group has clear aims and objectives supported by the implementation of comprehensive policies and procedures which effectively meet the needs of all the children. By thorough planning and recording the staff ensure the children are making very good progress through the stepping stones in all the areas of learning. They adapt the planned activities if necessary to suit the children present, and evaluate them to ensure the learning objectives have been met. Staff work well as a team, keeping each other informed and ensuring messages are shared, also that development information is exchanged. 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 staff agreed to pursue the provision of a secure outside area for children to have free access. The children are now able to move freely from the premises into the enclosed area to use the outside equipment or, in fine weather, activities brought from inside.

A further recommendation was made to develop the use of natural resources in design and construction activities. Children now have use of a work bench with wood to create models, use clay on a regular basis and investigate the properties of other materials such as compost during their activities. These improvements contribute to extended learning opportunities and contribute to the positive outcomes for 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 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

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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):

- ensure children are protected by updating staff knowledge of child protection to take account of the recent changes.

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 children's use and understanding of different musical instruments.

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