

# The Playcentre

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	956896
<b>Inspection date</b>	02 October 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Liz Whitehead
<b>Setting Address</b>	Holme Christian Care Centre, Madison Avenue, Bradford, West Yorkshire, BD4 0JE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01274 689306
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Playcentre
<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?

The Playcentre is a voluntary organisation and registered charity. It is part of the Holme Christian Care Centre and is run by a management committee. It was registered in 1983. The centre is situated on the Holme Wood Estate, in Bradford, where it serves the local community.

The Playcentre provides sessional care and offers crèche facilities to enable parents to access training. The setting is open Monday to Friday 09.30 until 12.00 and 13.00 until 15.30 term time only. The setting may care for a maximum of 44 children at any one time and there are currently 74 children on roll, 10 of whom receive funding for nursery education. The centre supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

The playcentre employs 10 staff, eight of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification. One member of staff is working towards a relevant qualification. The setting has completed the Effective Early Learning Quality Standard and has achieved the gold level of the Inclusion Quality Standard and are working towards Investors in People.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn about the importance of good personal hygiene. They consistently wash their hands prior to having a snack and after handling worms and snails outdoors. Staff actively reduce the risk of cross-infection through providing a variety of ways for children to wash and dry their hands. Younger children use wet wipes before having a snack. Additionally, liquid soap and hand cleansing gel are readily available and children have the choice of using hand dryers or disposable towels to dry their hands. Staff instinctively explain to children that they must cover their mouth and nose when coughing and sneezing to prevent the spread of germs. Tissues are readily available, used once and then discarded. To further reduce the spread of infection, all parents are made aware that the setting does not care for children who are ill. Children with an infectious illness are expected to stay at home.

Staff work closely with parents and ensure that all special dietary requirements are fully adhered to. Snack time is a very relaxed and social time with children sitting with their friends and staff, and chatting about their day. Snack times are used effectively to promote children's independence as they serve themselves and older children choose when to access their snack. Children are encouraged to eat healthily and enjoy snacks, such as toast, apple, banana, melon and yogurts. They are learning about keeping themselves healthy and know that fruit is good for them and that milk 'gets their bones and teeth stronger and stronger'. Staff actively follow children's interests to teach them about foods which are healthy. For example, they try all the fruits from the story 'The very hungry caterpillar'.

Older children are able to recognise the needs of their body and freely access bottles of water, which are available for them to use independently. These contain the children's name and photograph to enable them to easily identify which is theirs. Drinks for younger children are available with snacks and on request, although they are unable to access these themselves. Children sleep according to their own routines and their parents' wishes. They sleep on floor mats, bean bags or in their own pushchair, to make rest time a relaxing and pleasant experience for children of all ages.

Children have daily opportunities for fresh air and older children move independently between the indoors and the outdoors. They learn about the effect that exercise has on their body. Older children recognise when they are tired and rest sitting on a football. They talk about their legs pumping when they are peddling a tricycle. Children enjoy playing in the large hall, where they are able to run, climb and slide. Young children experiment moving in a range of ways, for example, crawling, walking, rolling and standing with adult support, which develops their coordination. Children are as active as they choose to be and are able to join in with activities, such as ring games, or to play with the resources available.

Children are aware of their personal space and carefully manoeuvre around fixed objects and people when walking, running and pushing prams. Older children judge their own body size well and are really proud when they climb into a plastic box, stating that they are 'in the bath'. Children confidently use one-handed tools and equipment with ease, such as spades, rakes, paint brushes and pencils. Older children independently manage the scissors effectively to cut paper and younger children do this with adult support. Staff provide a range of scissors to suit all the children's needs and abilities.

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

The provision is good.

Staff are fully aware of the signs, symptoms and procedure to follow if they have concerns regarding a child in their care. All the staff have recently attended child protection training to update and increase their knowledge, awareness and confidence in dealing with any issues. Staff are fully aware of the importance of recording existing injuries to children. They ensure that these are countersigned by the parents, who also sign to acknowledge that they are aware of the centres' duty to report any concerns to the appropriate agencies.

Children are further protected as the staff clearly record details of persons authorised to collect children. They rigorously implement this and do not allow children to leave the setting with anyone other than those named. The staff contact the parents and also complete an emergency collection form if a parent has failed to notify them that someone other than themselves will be collecting their child.

Staff are able to treat minor accidents effectively as a first aid kit is readily available and is always taken on outings. Effective systems are in place to prevent children from leaving unaccompanied and from unwanted persons entering the premises. These include a buzzer entry system where parents and visitors must be admitted by a member of staff, and a record of visitors is consistently maintained. A number of indoor and outdoor areas are covered by close circuit television cameras to further enhance children's safety.

Children understand about evacuating the building in an emergency. Regular practises take place to ensure that all children and staff are familiar with the procedure for leaving the building quickly, calmly and safely. Written information is clearly displayed to ensure that all parents and visitors are fully aware of the procedure. Staff have a sound understanding of how to keep children safe and take appropriate steps to minimise hazards and risks to children. For example, safety gates and plug covers are consistently used and large viewing panels in the doors enable persons entering the rooms to see if there are children behind the door.

Children learn about keeping themselves safe through activities and discussions. For example, safety hats and goggles are readily available in the building area and staff talk about not throwing the sand as it will hurt their eyes. Staff also discuss with children about looking behind them when reversing on the bikes so that they do not bump into anyone. Children really enjoy learning about road safety. They dress up as a road crossing officer and stop the children riding tricycles at the zebra crossing. The staff support this play and fully explain to children about crossing the road safely. Staff caring for younger children instinctively place their hand over the table edge to prevent the children from banging their head. Staff encourage children to take risks in a controlled environment and they thoroughly enjoy climbing trees in the outdoor area.

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

The provision is good.

Activities are planned in advance but remain fully flexible to allow for spontaneity and for children to initiate activities. A wide range of resources are available for children to freely access. These include books, train tracks, dressing up and construction toys. Children state that they like to play at the centre and particularly enjoy making things, playing outside and with their friends. The staff balance their time carefully to allow children to play and learn independently as well as giving time to support and encourage them.

Staff appropriately nurture children's creativity and provide a mixture of pre-cut shapes and various sizes of paper for their activities. Children are encouraged to express themselves through a variety of resources, such as pencils, chalk, paint and glue. They use a range of items to paint with, including everyday objects, for example, bricks, knives and brushes. Young children particularly enjoy exploring the texture of the paint using their hands and fingers. They spontaneously move and sway to the music playing, which encourages them to experiment with how their body moves. They confidently sing at snack time and sing louder with encouragement from the staff.

Children are very confident communicators and happily talk with their peers and staff. They are interested in books and enjoy looking at these independently with staff and in group situations. Children of all ages develop their language and number skills through lots of singing, stories and conversation. Young children particularly like to self-select books and actively join in making animal noises as they look at the pictures. They become very animated and excited as they enthusiastically sing 'head, shoulders, knees and toes'. Staff encourage the children to alter the volume and tone of their voice as they sing. Staff regularly increase children's language and vocabulary through introducing new words, such as telling them which is their left hand and their right hand.

Children develop an active imagination and thoroughly enjoy dressing up in a wide range of outfits. Role play situations are significantly enhanced through the provision of beads, bangles, headbands, gloves and make-up brushes. The children show a range of emotions, for example, pride and humour when they look at themselves in the full length mirror. They enjoy involving adults in this game and place jewellery on them and also pretend to put make-up on for them. Young children concentrate well and spend a long time exploring and investigating the natural and synthetic resources. They count the shells in the sand and also really enjoy putting toys into containers and really laugh when they empty the balls out of the bowl. The children use the resources available and improvise when playing in the home corner. They place the cutlery and the plates and cups into the washing machine to clean them.

Staff actively encourage children to become confident decision makers and they are continually given opportunities to make selections, such as whom and what they wish to play with. Some children opt to play in the home corner or build whilst others wish to paint. The staff are caring and kind, attentive and are interested in the children and value what they say and do. All children greatly benefit from high quality interaction from the staff. Those working with the younger children have attended 'Birth to three matters' training. They implement the framework well and planning and assessment systems are effective for this age group. Staff skilfully follow children's interests when they want to build sand castles. The staff explain why the castles will not hold together using dry sand and encourage the children to add water, discussing that if they add too much it will then be too wet. With staff support the children add sufficient water and eagerly make their sand castles.

#### Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have attended training regarding the Foundation Stage and enthusiastically put this into practice. Therefore, children are highly motivated, keen to learn and enjoy trying new experiences. The staff demonstrate a sound knowledge of how children learn through play and hands-on opportunities and provide a wide range of activities and experiences to cover all areas of children's learning. The planning closely follows children's interests, is flexible, understood by all staff and ensures that clear learning intentions are identified.

Children have a real sense of belonging and older children separate from their main carer with confidence. Younger children manage this with support from the staff. They eagerly seek out adults to share their experiences. Older children are fully confident and openly approach both familiar and unfamiliar adults to initiate activities and conversations. They move freely between the activities, confidently selecting what they wish to play with and are very familiar with the routine. Staff are sensitive to the children's need to have time to finish activities and inform them that the routine will soon be changing. Children are very confident at making their needs known and tell staff when the paint drying rack is preventing them from using the hand dryer.

Children listen carefully and join in enthusiastically playing the listening game. They eagerly shout out the name of the sound on the tape. When playing outside the children recall the story of Goldilocks and the three bears and they talk about Goldilocks running away. Older children are able to follow simple directions and find the animals in the red drawer listening carefully to the instructions from the staff. Some children can recognise their own name and occasionally that of their peers and are keen to practise writing these. Most children know the letter that their name begins with and more able children proudly spell out their name. They have many opportunities to see words and numbers as labels around the room. Some children talk freely about their home and community. For example, when pretending to be in the bath they talk about the toys that they play with and if they like to have bubbles or not.

Staff actively encourage children to be fully involved in the setting and to communicate and share their ideas. A group of children talk about a crocodile. A four-year-old excitedly states that 'there is a big crocodile in Peter Pan'. Staff skilfully follow this interest and they recall that Tinker Bell has wings. The staff allow this to develop and they talk about making a story of Peter Pan. Another child says 'to make a play'. One child then announces that he is Peter Pan and names children to be the other characters. Staff ask the children what they need to make. This ensures that they provide the appropriate resources for the creative table and also for the play to take place. The children then go outdoors and act out Peter Pan and the four-year-old uses a play telephone to book seats at the theatre. This is then fully incorporated into the weeks planning.

Children are developing good counting skills and enjoy participating in counting songs and rhymes. They use these in daily play and a three-year-old spontaneously counts to six as a member of staff points to the letter in their name. Some children are also able to count backwards, for example a four-year-old confidently says 'three, two, one, blast off' when talking about rockets. The children understand and use positional language, such as in and out and the staff provide opportunities for them to describe size and shape through daily activities. Children are learning about volume, capacity and the related language through filling buckets and containers in the sand and water. When they find a worm they spontaneously describe it as long.

Staff actively develop children's understanding of mathematical concepts and regularly introduce new ideas to them. At the creative table the staff ask how they have made a square from a rectangle. The children reply that they have cut it and the staff informs them that they have cut it in half. At the snack table one child states that their friends' cup is bigger. The staff suggest putting them together to compare them. The child says that the cups are the same but it is bigger inside. The staff introduce the terms fuller and emptier. The children then experiment and enjoy using these new words.

Children are very interested in information and communication technology and follow simple computer programmes and operate the mouse with confidence. Other equipment, such as the

compact disc player and tape recorder are readily available and are used independently by children. They show a keen interest in how things work and watch with fascination as water makes the wheel go round as it is poured into the water wheel. Staff actively develop children's sense of time and provide a two minute timer to encourage them to have equal time when using the equipment. They are beginning to know about their own traditions and beliefs, although opportunities to learn about those of other people are limited.

Children show curiosity and observe and manipulate objects. They realise that tools can be used for a purpose and enjoy finding out how the play dough changes as they squeeze and roll it. They talk about it becoming thin. Children respond in a variety of ways to a range of experiences and have a wonderful time developing an awareness and respect for the natural world and living things. They know about the life cycle of frogs and talk about 'Gary' the giant African land snail. They learn about how things grow and about caring for plants. They regularly plant seeds and watch with awe and wonder as the sunflowers, peas, cress and bulbs grow. They eagerly hunt for bugs, hide in the bushes, go on nature walks and balance carefully on the stepping stones made from circles of logs. Overall, children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

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

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents and carers for funded nursery education is good. They receive a wide range of information about the educational provision through displayed information and leaflets. Assessment records for each child clearly show their achievements, progress and details the planning for their next steps in learning. There are good opportunities for parents to become involved in their children's learning. These include home visits where parents and staff complete baseline assessments to record children's starting points. Topics are always displayed detailing how parents can become involved at home and staff regularly send 'at home' sheets. Additionally, parents and children are encouraged to bring items in for the colour table and to be as involved as they choose to be. For example, sharing their talents with the children, such as playing the guitar.

Children's individual needs are very effectively met as the staff work closely with the parents and record all relevant information. They know the children, their routines and likes and dislikes well and they regularly offer comfort and cuddles to the children. Young children are always cuddled when being bottle fed to provide a pleasant experience for them. Staff encourage children to become progressively independent and provide appropriate equipment to enable them to use the bathroom with the minimum of support. For example, child sized toilet seats and steps so that they can reach the sink and taps. Children know that their personal belongings are always on their pegs which are clearly depicted with their names and photographs.

The children behave really well and learn right from wrong through the positive example of the staff. They consistently offer children meaningful praise and reward positive behaviour and achievements with smiley faces. Any inappropriate behaviour is suitably managed through distraction and explanation. The children get on well together and happily help to tidy the toys away. The staff skilfully make this into a fun activity for the younger children. The staff are polite and courteous to the children and encourage them to say 'please' and 'thank you'. The children are really proud of their achievements and point to their art work on the walls and say 'I did that'.

Children develop a positive attitude to others and enjoy joining in singing songs and using basic sign language. They learn about those who are less fortunate than themselves through regularly participating in fundraising activities. Staff know children's individual abilities and offer additional support, as required. For example, sitting close by at snack time. All the toys and resources are readily available to all the children. Boys enjoy playing with the dolls and dressing up in bangles and girls enjoy building and playing with the cars. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Very effective systems are in place to keep parents fully informed of their children's care and well-being. These include, all parents receiving a handbook and completing an 'all about me' booklet for all new children. The nursery encourages and welcomes parental views and feedback and parents confidently approach staff to share relevant information. Daily discussion keeps parents fully informed regarding their children's activities. This is supplemented with written information for younger children. Parents are very happy with the setting as 'the staff are very flexible and supportive'. They highly recommend the provision.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Very effective systems are in place to regularly review the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. This includes an annual survey of the people using the setting and a comments and suggestions box available at all times. The staff are continually developing their good practice through regular self-evaluation and taking positive steps to address any areas highlighted. There is a clear management structure in place. The manager and staff work well together as a team, each aware of their individual roles and responsibilities. They regularly seek advice and support from the local authority. The staff complete detailed planning and children's developmental profiles are based upon the Foundation Stage.

All the staff have a good working knowledge of the National Standards and the supporting criteria. They have a sound understanding of how children learn and develop and provide a wide range of age appropriate activities, including a good selection of natural resources. For example, shells, pebbles and logs.

Staff caring for children are suitable to do so. The recruitment and selection of staff is rigorous and the management ensures that relevant checks are completed prior to staff beginning work with the children. Checks are consistently renewed every three years to ensure that they are accurate and current at all times. In order to protect the children, persons who have not been vetted are not left unsupervised with them. All new staff receive a full induction, from both the organisation and the nursery, in order to familiarise them with the settings' routines and policies and procedures.

The majority of staff hold a suitable qualification and a current first aid certificate. This enables them to care for the children effectively and to deal with any accidents appropriately. They are all very committed and enthusiastic about their role and regularly access relevant training. For example, management, child protection, sign language and the early years degree. Adult to child ratios are consistently very good and staff are deployed exceptionally well to enable them to best meet all the children's needs.

The setting is very warm and welcoming to children and their families, with pictures, posters and children's artwork thoughtfully displayed at all heights on the walls. This creates a



stimulating and appealing environment. Children feel settled, secure and fully confident in the setting due to the effective settling in procedure. Space within the playrooms is used effectively to divide the areas of play, which provides the children with a familiar and secure environment. The setting operates a well established key worker system which all parents and staff are familiar with.

The setting is very organised and all the required documentation is in place. All sensitive records and information are appropriately stored to ensure that confidentiality is fully maintained at all times. The settings' unique policies and procedures are readily available for parents to view and all staff sign to acknowledge that they have read and understood them. All parents receive a copy of the detailed handbook and are required to sign the nurseries terms and conditions. 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 it was recommended that the setting develop the key worker system and improve children's access to the coat pegs. All parents are fully aware of their children's key worker which remains consistent and the coat pegs have been lowered to enable children to access them independently. These improvements enhance children's well-being.

Additionally, the setting were asked to improve children's access to creative materials. The children are now able to freely select from a wide range of collage and craft resources which develops their creativity.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

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. 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 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):

- implement systems to enable younger children to individually access drinks.

#### **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 children's awareness and interest regarding cultural and religious differences.

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)