

Humpty Dumpty Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	251528
Inspection date	10 July 2007
Inspector	Deirdra Keating
Setting Address	Community Centre, Twelve Acre Approach, Bell Lane, Kesgrave, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP5 1JF
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Registered person	Sally Evelyn Cutts
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?

Humpty Dumpty Playgroup is managed by a management committee made up of staff at the playgroup. It opened in 1987 and operates from the community centre in Kesgrave.

The Playgroup is open from 09:30 to 12:00 and 12:30 to 15:00 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Fridays during term time. The children have access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 50 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 32 receive funding for early education. The setting supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The Playgroup currently employs seven members of staff. They all hold early years qualifications. The setting receives support from a teacher from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is well promoted because staff follow sound and consistent procedures that are documented and shared with parents. An accessible and child-friendly bathroom enables children to wash their hands and use the toilet independently. Adults are on hand to support children and praise is given as children consistently follow good hygiene practices. Children are protected well from accidents as a fully stocked first aid box is available and a current first aid certificate is held by all members of staff. All accidents are correctly recorded and signed off by parents. Children receive good care if they become ill because the playgroup has the correct procedures in place including written consents for emergency and medical treatment.

Children benefit from a healthy diet. They enjoy varied, well presented food and snacks, which comply with all special dietary requirements. This ensures children remain healthy. Daily risk assessments ensure the kitchen is clean and very high standards are maintained by staff who have food hygiene training. Children enjoy a 'family snack' where they sit in small groups with a member of staff at each table. Staff provide very good role models as they encourage conversation and good table manners. Children become increasingly independent as they pass food around and pour drinks out. Snacks feature a range of well presented savoury foods and freshly chopped vegetables. Milk and water are available for children to drink. Fresh drinking water is available throughout the session in an appealing water dispenser, drinks are encouraged on hot days and after exercise. This ensures children remain well-hydrated throughout the session.

Children have daily access to a secure outdoor area where staff are careful to ensure they are protected from the sun. They learn about exercise and their bodies as they do a warm up routine where staff explain about the effects of exercise. Children have access to a good range of equipment. In the outdoor area they use trikes, ride-on cars and push-along toys. An extremely large well maintained field provides a good space for children to take nature walks and enjoy parachute games out in the fresh air.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment that is well maintained and suitable for purpose. The premises are clean, cosy and naturally well lit, giving an inviting and child-friendly atmosphere. Consequently children feel relaxed and at home. Space has been well-organised to give defined areas that are comfortable and contained. Children have access to a secure and well maintained outside area. A good range of equipment is available in order to provide children with a balance of varied activities. Children access toys and resources that are clean and in a good state of repair. Regular risk assessments are conducted to identify any hazards and ensure children are safe. The premises are secure and arrival and departure times are carefully overseen by staff. Fire prevention equipment is all in place and regular drills are conducted to ensure children's safety. Children are taken on outings with written permission from parents. Good adult to child ratios and forward planning ensure that children remain safe on outings.

Children are well protected because staff are vigilant and have a good understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the protection of children. All staff have attended safeguarding training in order that they have good knowledge of the correct procedures to follow. A written

statement underpins their practice and is displayed for parents along with local contact numbers and procedures. This ensures that in the event of a concern the correct procedures can be followed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are interested to learn through a wide selection of stimulating resources that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. They have good relationships with staff who are genuinely pleased to see them. Children develop confidence and a strong sense of self through positive interaction with adults. They settle quickly and happily as parents leave confidently approaching staff with their news. Younger children form warm and secure relationships with staff who are intuitive of their needs and encourage children to feel settled and secure. Children enjoy quality one-to-one time as they choose activities that appeal to them. Staff are readily on hand to support children's language development and encourage them to link letters to sounds as they complete large floor puzzles together. The children all enjoy books which they look at in the comfortable book corner where staff are on hand to share stories with them. The session time table is relaxed which allows children to play for extended periods and become truly engrossed in activities of their choice.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Good use of time provides a balance of adult focused and child focused activities. Resources are laid out attractively and look appealing and inviting which encourages children to take part. The session is well-paced and provides a good learning environment where children have time to complete activities in their own time. Staff are directly involved with children working in small groups and with individuals. They make the most of opportunities to extend activities and challenge children during activities they have chosen. This ensures that children are motivated and interested and they respond well to open-ended questions asked by skilled staff. Children have a large group story at the end of the session. However, the group is too large and does not provide enough challenge and involvement for some children. Staff support children's creative play well providing sensitive intervention when requested and extending children's learning and play. Staff all contribute to the planning which is linked to the stepping stones and provides a balance of activities across all areas of learning. Focused activity sheets outline clear learning intentions and staff observe children carefully to inform records of children's achievements. Step by step profiles include regular assessment of children's learning and show that children are making good progress toward the early learning goals.

Children settle well and quickly find their friends who they are clearly pleased to see. They play harmoniously in small groups as they recreate roles and experiences in the home corner. Children know right from wrong and have a good understanding of the behavioural expectations of the playgroup. They are becoming increasingly independent and confident as they develop many self-care skills. Children have formed warm and secure relationships with staff. They share stories and one to one time as they enjoy looking at the good range books in the comfortable book corner. Children self-register as they arrive linking letters to sounds as they find their names. They have many opportunities to develop their early writing skills through a wide range of resources and are making good progress.

Children show awareness of number and more or less when taking part in sustained construction activities. For example, when playing with bricks a child makes a birthday cake and counts the candles. This is supported well by staff who quickly challenge children to count on. Children can confidently complete puzzles sorting pieces by shape. Number songs, rhymes and stories enable children to grow increasingly confident with their number skills. Children learn about capacity as they pour water into a variety of measuring jugs in the water tray. Children have opportunities to explore through messy play experiences where they can compare differences and observe growing things such as sunflowers that they planted from seed. They learn about lifecycles as they observe frog spawn and tadpoles over the weeks. Children are proactively supporting the environment as the playgroup carefully recycles and encourages children to understand about waste management. Children operate the computer with precision showing good mouse control.

Children roll and manipulate dough with care, making specific shapes using a good range of tools. They use scissors and glue and show good hand to eye coordination as they decorate purses with stickers and glue. However, children quickly lose interest as there is not enough for them to do and they have to wait for staff to add their names. Children negotiate space well as they run around outside and show respect for each others' space as they play together using ride-on toys. A slide and climbing frame gives children opportunities to develop their climbing skills well. There are many opportunities for children's creative play through planned resources that are appealing and tactile. Children assemble very individual animal collages with support and focus intently on their own style and method. Dressing up, role play and small worlds all give children opportunities to recreate roles and experiences. They readily engage in imaginary play where staff are on hand to support and enhance their play as required.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children in this setting are valued and have a good sense of belonging. Children settle well and play happily together. Parents are welcomed into the setting which enables staff to get to know families very well. Children are encouraged to discuss their home lives, this helps them feel accepted and part of the community. All children are included as staff offer the right amount of support and adapt activities well to promote full inclusion. Children are able to make choices about how to spend their time as the session is relaxed and allows time for completing chosen activities. Different sized groups encourage children to socialise and build relationships with each other. Staff ensure that the resources positively represent the children who attend as well as individuals from the wider community, this helps children develop a positive attitude to others. They celebrate a range of festivals and traditional days including Chinese New Year. The children are interested and motivated to find out about other cultures and beliefs. They learn through hands on experiences such as cooking, tasting and dance. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The setting has a very positive approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The designated member of staff has training and experience of supporting children with leaning difficulties and/or disabilities. This enables her to meet individual needs well, complying with the required code of practice. Staff have a good understanding of how to best support children working closely with parents and utilising support and additional resources in order to meet the needs of each child. Clear documentation underpins practice and outlines specific intentions for children. Staff visit other settings and work closely with other professionals to provide continuity of care and gain further insight into how to best support individual children.

Behaviour is of a consistently high standard. Children become engrossed in a good range of purposeful and developmentally-appropriate activities. Staff use strategies such as positive reinforcement and signs such as 'thumbs up' to give encouragement to children. Staff demonstrate clear and consistent boundaries and yet reasonably challenging expectations and children are generally well-behaved and polite. A written policy underpins practice and ensures that parents know the behavioural expectations of the playgroup. The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are warmly welcomed and receive good information about policies and procedures. An effective parent helper rota enables parents to be involved and take an active part in the playgroup. Parents speak highly of the setting and particularly on how well children settle. Informative written agreements provide details of children's needs in order that they can be looked after according to their parents' wishes. There is a notice board for parents detailing a complaints procedure and newsletters highlight curriculum themes. However, records and profiles are not readily available for parents to share and contribute to.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for well by suitable adults who are motivated and have had all necessary checks to ensure children's safety. Good and effective policies are in place to support staff and ensure their well-being. Children are very settled and secure as good ratios are consistently maintained and the environment is well-organised and welcoming. Children benefit from dedicated staff who are highly qualified. The operational plan is well-organised and implemented. The policies and procedures are clear and work well in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Arrival and collection times are managed well, however, the actual times are not recorded in the register which could compromise children's safety. All required documentation and consents are in place and stored securely to ensure children are cared for in line with their parents' wishes. The manager has a clear understanding of the National Standards and her responsibility to comply with the conditions of her registration.

The leadership and management is good. The group is managed by a committee made of staff at the playgroup. An overall manager leads a dedicated team who work well together. Regular planning meetings ensure that the curriculum plans are evaluated and children make good progress toward the early learning goals. All staff are extremely committed to their ongoing professional development and have undertaken many courses. This ensures that children are cared for by qualified and knowledgeable staff who have a good understanding of child development. Clear job descriptions outline roles and responsibilities and an effective appraisal process ensures that staff have development plans. Staff work closely with an early years advisory teacher to ensure that teaching methods are effective and inclusive. Links with the primary school nursery teacher enables children to have a smooth transition into school. Overall the children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to continue to develop the range of resources reflecting positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. This has been developed and resources now include posters, figures and books to help children understand their differences and similarities.

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.

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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 that registers show actual times of arrival and collection

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 a system for parents to share children's written records
- ensure that children are grouped appropriately in order to provide more opportunities to extend children's learning and also encourage them to be more independent during adult-led 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