

Heanor Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	206789
Inspection date	01 October 2007
Inspector	Justine Ellaway
Setting Address	Heanor Baptist Church, Derby Road, Heanor, Derbyshire, DE75 7QL
Telephone number	07944143158
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Registered person	Heanor Pre-school Plagroup
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?

Heanor Pre-School Playgroup opened in 1982. It operates from the main hall within Heanor Baptist Church, Heanor, Derbyshire. A maximum of 24 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.00 and from 12.30 to 15.00 on Mondays and Wednesdays during term time. The playgroup also runs a lunch club between 12.00 and 12.30 every day during term time, for children aged three years or above. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 36 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local community. The playgroup currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The playgroup employs seven members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a higher level qualification.

The setting receives support from Derbyshire County Council and are members of the Pre School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is well promoted in the setting as there are effective hygiene procedures. The environment is clean and tidy. Tables are cleaned before and after snack with anti-bacterial spray. Three members of staff have a food hygiene certificate.

Children learn about good hygiene. Children are asked to wash their hands before snack and after toileting. They are given clear reminders about the reasons for hand washing by staff. A child looks at her hands and says they are clean, so a staff member explains that as she has been playing with the toys she needs to wash her hands before eating.

The risk of infection is minimised and the good health of children maintained. There is a suitable sick child policy in place to protect children from the risk of spread of infection, which is shared with parents. Children use liquid soap and paper towels for hand washing after toileting.

Children receive appropriate care when they have an accident or become ill, to maintain their good health. Accident records contain appropriate details and are signed by parents. The setting has a detailed managing medicines folder and a member of staff takes the lead on this. The procedures are very clear and she has devised a checklist at the front of the folder for all staff to refer to. Appropriate forms are in place to record a parent's request and any medication administered.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to be active and enjoy physical exercise both indoors and outdoors, which effectively promotes development of their physical skills. Children engage in a daily physical session and play outdoors when the weather is dry. They run around, balance on different equipment and play with balls and hoops. There is ample space indoors for floor play and moving around freely. Children do this frequently during the session and play on floor mats with different toys. Children enjoy the outdoor area. Older children are developing good control of their small and large muscle skills. They work out the best way of getting across balance beams by turning their feet in a different direction. They show a good awareness of space as they move around the main room and when joining in activities such as sitting on the carpet at register time.

They are developing good control when using small equipment such as scissors and spoons to eat their cereal at snack.

Children learn about a healthy lifestyle through activities such as taking care of yourself during the topic 'myself'. They also talk about the effects of exercise on the body.

Children are well nourished and their health and dietary needs are met because practitioners work well with parents. Drinking water available at all times, a sign is displayed on the wall and the jug and beakers are set out on a table underneath. Children enjoy a healthy snack such as fruit.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment which helps them to feel secure and comfortable. The main hall is a bright and attractive room. It is set out with a range of different

activities before children arrive, so as they enter they can immediately begin playing. Children's work is attractively displayed which promotes a sense of belonging. Staff greet children and parents as they arrive, which helps children to feel comfortable and separate easily from their parent or carer.

Children use a good range of toys and equipment which is safe and suitable. A varied range of toys are put out each session to provide variety and stimulation. Children also enjoy playing with a good range of outdoor toys. They access the toys and resources independently and move about freely during the session. As a result their decision making and independence is well promoted. There is appropriate child sized furniture and sufficient tables and chairs for activities and meals. A quiet corner with cushions and mats is available for children who want to read or look at books.

Children are cared for in a secure and safe indoor environment. There is a detailed risk assessment in place, which is updated regularly. Staff undertake a daily safety check before children arrive. A staff member has undertaken training in health and safety awareness for child carers. Access to the premises is restricted at all times and staff monitor the door at arrival and collection times. Children's safety is promoted when they go on outings as low ratios are maintained.

Children learn to keep themselves safe. They are given clear instructions from staff so that they know what they should do. There is a steep slope to the outdoor play area and all children are aware of the rules to ensure their safety. A child proudly calls out to a member of staff as she goes down the slope 'Look at me I'm being careful'.

Children are safeguarded because staff clearly understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. The designated member of staff has attended relevant training as have other staff members. There is a clear written child protection statement which contains relevant information including the procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

There are good settling-in procedures to ensure children feel comfortable and secure. These are flexible to each child and a written policy supports the good practice. As a result children separate very well from carers and join in with activities. Even young children who have only just started at the group settle within minutes of their parent leaving.

Children are becoming confident as they move around independently and join an activity that interests them. They relate well to staff and other children and play in large groups, engaging in play for long periods of time.

Children are involved in a broad range of planned activities and spontaneous events which support their development and learning. There is a good range of planned activities and this is flexible to respond to the needs and interests of the children. For example, if a child joins an activity and begins to play a different game or talk about something different the staff member supports. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used effectively within the setting to provide appropriate activities for younger children. Staff make effective use of observation and assessment to plan for children's next steps.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage is good and the setting has developed a system of planning, recording and observing that all staff understand and can explain clearly. The effectiveness of planning for all children is good. Staff plan as a team so that they feel ownership of the activities. There is a good link of activities to themes and topics. For example, recognising groups in maths is linked to the theme of autumn by using autumn items such as conkers and leaves. However, on occasion the planning does not identify sufficient challenge for more able children.

Effective systems are in place to monitor and record children's progress. Organised files are in place for each child, with dated and clear notes. Not all of these are fully up to date to accurately reflect where children are at. Good methods are used to help children progress. Staff are very effective at asking questions and joining in with play. Management of children's behaviour is good, and enables them to play and learn in a positive environment.

Children demonstrate high levels of independence, confidence and self-care skills. They sit well at register time and find their own space on the carpet. They sit and listen well whilst all the names are read out. Children are aware of their own needs such as putting an apron on for messy play and asking to go to the toilet. They manage to do lots of things independently such as pouring their own drinks at snack times. Children have good relationships with staff and others and are comfortable talking to staff and asking them for things. Children engage in a range of activities looking at other cultures and beliefs, for instance, around the festival of Diwali.

Children are becoming confident at communicating with others. They respond clearly to their name at register time and more confident children also use the staff member's name. Children sit and chat at snack time which is supported by staff. Children use imaginative language in the role play area. They use language to clarify their thinking, which is well prompted by staff who ask appropriate questions. Children's recognition of letters and reading is well supported. They are encouraged to bring in things from home that link to the letter of the week. They enjoy talking about them at circle time and a child clearly informs the staff member that it is a 'big C' for the name of a toy. Children find their name card at snack time. They enjoy looking at books, they do this regularly and understand the order of a book. Children listen well to stories that are read to them. Children write for different purposes as there paper and pencils are always in the role play area. This is well presented to encourage children to use it and a child writes a list of food available in the café on a clipboard. Children make good attempts to write their own name and have lots of opportunities to develop pencil control through activities.

Children are progressing well in their mathematical development and staff use everyday routines to develop children's learning. They count how many children are present at register time and a child cleverly recognises the number of children when a staff member tells him one more has arrived. Numbers are displayed around the setting for children to develop recognition. Staff regularly use mathematical language during play and as a result so do the children. A child playing on the seesaw, says at the appropriate time, 'I'm higher, you're lower' then 'I'm lower you're higher'. Children regularly use resources to look at measuring and weighing as well as sorting and matching.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to explore and investigate. They use descriptive language when playing with the different materials in the trays, such as shaving foam, pasta and water. A child comes to wash her hands after playing in the shaving foam and says 'My hands are all gooey'.

Children participate in interesting activities that develop a sense of the natural world, such as looking at the lifecycle of a frog. They looked at real frogspawn and watched it every day to see what happened. This was further expanded as they used reference books to see how tadpoles grow. A staff member brought in the baby frogs for the children to see. Children are curious about why things happen. During a circle time discussion about conkers, a child correctly states that they grow on trees. Another child starts a discussion querying why you also find them on the ground. Construction blocks or materials are available every day and children use this imaginatively to enhance their play. For example, a child makes a digger from the construction blocks and uses this in the play farm to dig up the hay for the animals to eat. There are a good range of information communication technology resources including two computers, telephones and a till which children play with regularly. They show good control operating the mouse and understand how to select items on the screen. Planned activities help children to develop a sense of time, such as talking about significant events and what they can remember doing previously at playgroup. Children develop a sense of place as they talk about going on holidays, look at maps and globes and what route they took to come to playgroup.

Children recognise several colours. They have regular opportunities to participate in playing with musical instruments. Children show control as they make different noises and try to play the instrument loudly or quietly. They ably sing a song where they clap out a rhythm. Children have regular opportunities to engage in music and movement. They use their imagination well in the role play. A child pretends she is running a café offering breakfast and asks those present what they want to eat. She then informs everyone of what food she has available and writes down the orders.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued and included within the setting. Information about children's needs and stage of development is gathered at the time of placement. Staff use this information to help children to settle. For example, parents record the child's favourite toys and if a child is upset, staff get out things they like to play with to comfort the child. Children's work is displayed which promotes a sense of belonging. A child completes a model during the session and a staff member puts it on a table to display. When the child's parent comes to collect her the staff member encourages the child to show the parent the model. Regular visits to the local school during the last term of a child's attendance successfully aid the transition between pre-school and school.

Children play with a varied range of toys and resources and participate in activities that help them to develop an understanding of the wider world. Activities are effectively extended to capture children's interest and secure their understanding. When looking at Chinese New Year, staff did a chart of which animals the children's birthdays represented, children made good fortune envelopes, did some Chinese writing, made lanterns and masks and did a dragon or lion dance as well as playing with oriental style food and utensils in the role play area. Children also enjoy visits from members of the community such as a person with a guide dog and a visit from someone who cares for hedgehogs and other animals.

Children have their individual needs met and are given good levels of support whilst at the setting. The designated Special Needs Co-ordinator is very clear on her role and responsibilities and organises her records well. Regular communication takes place between parents and other relevant professionals to support children in their development. Staff are proactive in raising

any issues and these are then discussed with parents to ensure early intervention is provided if needed.

Children are developing a good understanding of responsible behaviour. There is a clear written behaviour management policy with reference to bullying. Children are very clear of the rules and follow instructions carefully such as lining up to go outside or listening when a staff member shakes a tambourine to signify it is time to tidy away. Children play well together and share and take turns. They can play quite happily in large groups without upset or argument. The children are able to explain the rules of the group and confirm that they are to share and play. Children receive lots of praise and encouragement and lots of positive interaction from staff. Staff are friendly and engage the children in conversation during play. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children have their individual needs met by adults who work in close partnership with parents and carers. As a result children receive consistent and appropriate care. Lots of details are gathered at the time of placement about the children so that staff can provide appropriate support. Parents receive a useful information booklet at the time of placement and regular newsletters informing them what is happening at the group. Parents can talk to staff whenever they want to and staff give verbal feedback on children's achievements and progress. A notice board of useful information is displayed within the setting.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is good. Parents are provided with information about the Foundation Stage. They are suitably informed about their child's achievements and progress because they receive a written settling-in report, a yearly progress report and a final report when they move up to school. Parents can talk to staff at any time and staff give verbal feedback at the end of each session. Appropriate arrangements are in place to encourage parents to share what they know about their child, through informal discussion and asking for feedback on the written reports. Each child has a book where they can write in any comments that staff then transfer to children's development records. Effective systems have been adopted to encourage parents to be involved with their child's learning. The letter of the week is displayed on the board and children are encouraged to bring in things from home which they do regularly. The setting has recently implemented a library borrowing system to encourage parents to look at books with their child.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children receive good support and care from staff who are qualified and experienced in childcare. Six of the seven staff members have a relevant childcare qualification that is equivalent to level three and two members of staff are working towards a higher level qualification. Effective deployment of staff throughout the session supports children's care, learning and play. Good use is made of the space, time and resources to provide a positive environment for children to play and learn. Appropriate consideration is given to the range of resources within an activity to provide a varied and stimulating learning opportunity for children. The outdoor play area has been recently refurbished to make this an appealing and attractive place for children to play.

Children are cared for by adults who are vetted, promoting their safety. There are suitable recruitment and vetting procedures which are undertaken at the time of appointment on all staff. However, systems to check the ongoing suitability of staff have not been fully developed. Additionally, the regulator has not been notified of all changes to the committee to ensure

that suitable checks have been undertaken. Satisfactory induction arrangements are carried out by the person in charge and a checklist is used to ensure consistency of information given.

Staff have regular opportunities to share information through formal meetings and daily discussions both before and after the session. They demonstrate a high commitment to improvement to positively impact on the care provided for children. A written action plan identifies the main areas for improvement and any issues discussed with the staff team are taken on board straight away and appropriate action taken. There are good links between the management committee and staff team which strengthens the management of the setting.

Policies and procedures work in practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. A detailed operational plan is in place which includes relevant information such as the daily routines. This is well organised and clearly labelled and indexed. Appropriate documentation is held on file for each child. Regular reviews of the policies and procedures ensure they are up to date and contain relevant information.

The leadership and management of funded nursery education is good. There is clear leadership of the setting with a clear mission statement focusing on the quality of care provided. The person in charge gives clear instructions to staff during the session and is proactive in leading. The friendly interaction from the management team both motivates and supports staff. The professional development of all staff is well promoted, as a detailed training log is kept of both the needs of the setting and of individuals. All staff undergo relevant and regular training. The staff team are effective in regularly assessing strengths and weaknesses.

Appropriate use of monitoring and evaluation ensures that the nursery education is effectively delivered.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to ensure that fresh drinking water is available to the children at all times and to ensure that the complaints procedure names the regulatory body and provides their contact details.

Drinking water is now available for children to access independently to ensure they do not become thirsty. The complaints procedure has been updated and includes relevant details including the regulatory body details.

As a result parents are fully informed of the factors that potentially impact upon children's well-being.

At the last inspection of the nursery education the setting was asked to improve planning so it is reflective of activities provided, consistent and covers all aspects of learning; to develop opportunities for children to select their own creative resources and experiment with design; to provide opportunities for parents to share and contribute to children's assessment records and to revise staff deployment during large group activities so that children are well supported, enabling them to gain confidence with new skills.

Planning has been developed so that it clearly reflects the activities provided, is consistent and covers all aspects of learning. Children have good opportunities to select their own creative resources through a well stocked trolley available each session. Parents are invited to contribute

to children's assessment records. Staff deployment effectively supports children during large group activities. As a result children make good progress towards the early learning goals.

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

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 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):

- develop systems to check the ongoing suitability of staff and volunteers
- ensure that the regulator is notified of any changes, including changes to the committee.

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):

- ensure that children's assessment records are up to date and used to fully challenge and extend more able children.

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