

Horsley Playgroup - (School site)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	101770
Inspection date	09 October 2007
Inspector	Linda Janet Witts

Setting Address	Horsley Cofe School, The Street, Horsley, Stroud, GL6 0PU
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Telephone number	01453 833625
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Registered person	Horsley Playgroup - (School site)
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Type of inspection	Childcare
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Type of care	Sessional care
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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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Horsley Playgroup has been registered since 1998. This setting is one of two sites run by the same voluntary management committee, in the village of Horsley near Nailsworth, Gloucestershire. This setting operates from Horsley Primary School. The group is registered for 15 children aged between three and five years old. There are currently eight children on roll. The group welcomes children with learning difficulties or disabilities and those for whom English is an additional language. The group serves the town of Nailsworth and several local villages in the area.

The playgroup is based in the reception classroom. They have the use of the school's outdoor play facilities and other areas of the school are used at the leader's discretion. It operates on Tuesday afternoons in term time, between 12.30 and 15.00. The session is specifically for children who are in their pre-school year and are likely to be attending the school.

A team of four staff are employed. The leader has Early Years Professional Status and the deputy is qualified to level two in childcare and is nearing completion of level three. Staff are trained in first aid and child protection.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is actively promoted. They thrive because there are effective procedures and practices in place for meeting children's individual physical and nutritional needs. Children are well nourished, enjoying nutritious snacks, milk or water. Children can help themselves to drinks, as they wish, throughout the session.

Children learn about good health and hygiene procedures. They see adults taking care of the environment, for example, wiping tables before snacks are served. They follow well established routines for hand washing and are supported in their quest for independent personal care. Tissues are readily available and paper towels are accessible at child level. Staff talk with children about germs and the importance of good hygiene practice. Sometimes children share water for hand-washing and this does not constitute best practice for minimising the risk of cross-infection.

Children's health is well promoted through clear routines for administration of medication and first aid. Risk of injury to children is effectively minimised and any minor accidents dealt with sensitively by the staff who are trained in first aid.

Children develop their physical skills through planned daily activities. The children are able to use the school playground, climbing structure and other outdoor facilities. Here, children can enjoy a full range of physical play. They pedal tricycles with control and propel sit-in vehicles at speed. They run and chase each other across the grassy slope and in and out of the willow arches. The high climbing structure with fireman's pole presents a physical challenge for the children. They are permitted to use it, under close adult supervision, in the final term before they transfer to school. This helps them to become confident in their physical ability and to take risks safely.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are helped to learn to keep themselves safe. The reception classroom in which children play is secure and identified risks are minimised, to keep children safe. It offers a child-friendly play environment, one that enables children to develop good independence as they move between activities and utilise available resources.

The children use resources that are of good quality and well-maintained. The resources are appropriate to the children's ages and differing stages of development. Children play an active role in tidying up, helping to maintain a safe play environment. They learn how to carry and use resources safely, to protect themselves and others.

Outdoors, children are able to take risks, whilst being appropriately supervised. Staff are vigilant in their approach to safety and supervision. In the event that safety risks arise children's attention is drawn to the problem and a plan to keep everyone safe is discussed. For example, the risk of moving wheeled toys between the two levels of the school playground is highlighted and children dismount from their vehicles and lift them down onto the lower level. Regular fire drills help to familiarise children with emergency evacuation procedures. Children respond quickly as a member of staff calls out "fire". They line up and leave the building calmly following

the leader's instructions and answer to their names during roll call. Children's safety is promoted as all staff are clear about their roles in emergency evacuation procedures.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted through staff knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and procedures. Staff are trained in child protection. A clear policy, reflective of Gloucestershire Safeguarding Children Board procedures is readily available for reference, as is a flow chart of action to take in the event of any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All children who attend the pre-school session, held once a week, at this registered setting, are aged three or four. This session familiarises the children with the environment that they will move into when they transfer to school. Children enjoy their time at the playgroup and are supported well by the staff as they play and learn. They engage in a well-planned range of activities that promotes their all-round development.

Children arrive enthusiastically and join in group circle-time. They sing the welcome song, answer to the register and join in the counting of children present. They play number games and talk about the activities that they can choose from. The activities include, use of the school computers, drawing and crafts, construction and role play. Children can use any of the reception class resources, helping themselves to the resources stored in labelled, easy to access boxes. Children explore the natural resources on the heuristic table and enjoy threading some of these to create necklace gifts for their mums. Children use their imagination as they create at the play dough table, draw, play with small world toys and have fun in the home corner. The home corner often takes on different themes, such as, a castle for knights and princesses.

The children are very 'chatty' and use language confidently. They ask questions, talk about what they are doing, recall past experiences and make their needs known. The staff listen intently to what children have to say and encourage children's further language and thinking through skilled questioning. The staff give children time to explore and investigate and respond to the children's interests. They know instinctively when to play an active role in children's play and when to stand back and let children play freely.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children are warmly welcomed as they arrive, as are their parents. They are confident and self-assured. They are keen to try new things and persevere at chosen activities for extended periods of time. All of the children are relaxed in the company of the staff and their peers. They play happily alongside one another and link up with others, as they wish. Children's independence is actively promoted. They move freely between activities and select resources from low level storage units. They collect and put on aprons before undertaking activities, such as water play. They put on their coats, mostly unaided. They also play an active role in tidying activities away.

Children are well-behaved, take turns and share with one another. They are aware of the behavioural expectations within the setting and know that they need to be quieter as they move through other areas of the school. Staff are positive role models for the children with their calm and gentle manner. Children receive praise for effort as well as achievement. This helps to foster their self-esteem.

There are currently no children attending who have learning difficulties or disabilities. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of how they can successfully meet the needs of all children. The leader is familiar with the use of individual education plans and regularly attends training workshops to develop her skills in this field of work.

Children's parents speak highly of the staff and playgroup provision. A good partnership is established with parents. Parents are encouraged to visit the setting and share information about their children. The information gathered is then used to aid children's introduction to the group and to inform activity planning, so that children are offered activities that will be of interest to them. Friendly relationships between parents and staff are built up and parents are encouraged to be involved with the group. This can be through regular playgroup duties at the other playgroup venue, fundraising events or social occasions. Group policies, including the group's complaints procedure are shared with parents. Parents receive regular newsletters about what is happening in the group and about any policy changes. Staff make themselves available to talk to parents and feedback from parents is routinely sought and used by staff to evaluate their practice.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The playgroup leader has many years of experience, in this role. She is committed to providing very good quality child care and enthuses the staff who work with her. The team of staff work very well together and are each clear about their roles and responsibilities. The leader utilises the individual team members' strengths to enhance the provision. Together they plan a broad range of interesting activities and experiences for children. Good use is made of the school facilities and local environment. Visits and visitors also extend children's learning experiences.

Each session is structured to make use of available time and to provide a balance of activities for children. High adult to child ratios are maintained and staff effectively support the children in their play and learning. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of the children and help children to learn to keep themselves safe. Children are actively supported to help them to become healthy, happy individuals. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leader is extremely well organised and ensures that documentation is well maintained. All legally required records are clear, up-to-date and securely stored. Policies and procedures are comprehensively written and are reflected in practice. When policies are updated parents receive copies of the new policies to ensure that they are well informed. Effective procedures are in place for recruitment and vetting and to ensure the ongoing suitability of staff.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group was asked to develop and implement an action plan detailing how at least half of all childcare staff will hold a level two qualification in childcare. Also, to look at ways to improve hand washing procedures before eating.

The group has taken action in response to the recommendations made. Since the last inspection the leader has achieved a level three qualification in childcare and has also recently achieved Early Years Professional Status. The deputy now holds a level two qualification in childcare and is nearing completion of level three. This ensures that at least 50 percent of staff are appropriately qualified.

In respect of hand washing arrangements, the leader sought advice from the local environmental health department and looked at written information on the subject. Children routinely wash their hands with antibacterial soap and are shown how to ensure they cleanse all areas of their hands. Individual paper towels are used for hand drying. These measures are good practice. However, children sometimes use a communal bowl of water. They do not routinely rinse their hands under running water; a method deemed to be a more effective way of minimising the risk of cross-infection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take action 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

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.

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):

- give further consideration to the arrangements for hand washing, so as to effectively minimise the risk of cross-infection

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