

# Hempsted Playgroup & Toddlers

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	101762
<b>Inspection date</b>	17 September 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Angela Cole
<b>Setting Address</b>	c/o Hempsted C Of E Primary School, St Swithuns Road, Hempsted,, Gloucester, GL2 5LH
<b>Telephone number</b>	07761 784888
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Hempsted Playgroup
<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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hempsted Playgroup and Toddlers is a committee-run pre-school group. It operates from a purpose built unit in the grounds of Hempsted Primary School. The village of Hempsted is on the outskirts of Gloucester City. The building is owned by the group, which is a registered charity. They have sole use of the premises which include the play room, children and staff toilet facilities, kitchen and storage cupboards. They also have an enclosed outdoor area with grass and safety surfaces.

The playgroup is open every morning from 09.00 to 12.00, and Monday afternoon from 12.30 to 15.00 later in the year. It can accommodate a maximum of 24 children. Children are admitted to the group from the age of two years six months, and afternoon sessions are specifically organised for the younger age group. There are currently 17 children on roll, of whom 15 are in receipt of funded early education. The staff have experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

Three members of staff are employed and all have appropriate childcare qualifications. They are supported by parents and carers who help on a rota basis. The group receives teacher

support from an Early Years Development and Child Care Partnership, Foundation Stage consultant and from local teaching staff.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have daily access to the garden for exercise and fresh air and spend considerable time outside, weather permitting. They move with increasing freedom, occasionally initiating simple sequences of movement as they jump and spin round. They manoeuvre to avoid each other when riding wheeled vehicles in the designated area and are able to stop appropriately during ring songs. Staff periodically take children to the school's outside facilities and set out larger physical equipment indoors and outdoors, though children do not have daily opportunities to swing and climb. Children use a variety of small tools with increasing skill as, for example, they draw on large surfaces, use trowels to dig and gain scissor control through planned activities.

The children begin to show an understanding of good practice with regard to their health and respond to staff's reminders to take off clothing when they become hot. When drinks are provided outdoors, some help themselves after energetic play. They play in a regularly cleaned environment and follow suitable personal hygiene routines. Some ask staff why they wash their hands though do not discuss the reasons in relation to themselves. In the event of a child becoming unwell or injuring themselves, staff know how to offer appropriate care, though some accident records are not signed by parents to ensure continuity of the children's care.

Children do not always have free access to drinking water from individual cups, though staff have systems ready to use, for example, to name children's beakers. They carefully pour their own drinks of water or milk for their snack. Their individual dietary needs are appropriately met as, for example, staff check cooking ingredients. The children enjoy trying the balanced variety of nutritious foods offered, including different fruits such as kiwi and peach.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are safe at the playgroup. The garden is shaded and the newly weather-proofed premises are regularly cleaned and maintained for the children's safety and comfort, though no coverings insulate the windows. The children have suitable space to play indoors where the room is made child-friendly with different play zones, including a 'writing' table and a developing 'maths' area. Each day, staff take equipment outdoors so that children make satisfactory use of the shaded grass and safety surface. Children independently select activities from a suitable range of sorted, quality toys and equipment that meet safety standards and are appropriate to their age and stage of development.

The adults in the setting satisfactorily implement safety procedures to promote the children's safety. Staff carry out daily checks on the premises and clearly identified hazards which have, mostly, been addressed to reduce the danger to children. Staff supervise children closely as they move outdoors as the garden fence is not yet extended to include the front door. Children begin to learn to keep themselves safe. They are involved in regular fire drill practices, though these are only termly, and discuss the importance of wearing seat belts when travelling on the road.

The staff's sound understanding of child protection and of local procedures contribute to safeguarding the children's welfare. This is underpinned by comprehensive policies and procedures to support staff to take appropriate action in the event of any concern.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are happy in the playgroup. They enjoy warm interactions with the small number of staff and with the helping adults. They are assigned to a key worker so that systems for observing their needs are being developed. Staff have a general understanding of child development, though not of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, so that two-year-olds are suitably supported at the activities set out, including drawing and painting. Children get to know the routine so they feel secure. As a result, they welcome the times at which they are allowed outside, though their concentration is disturbed when they are required to leave their chosen activities to be organised for their snack. Children are involved in a range of activities, that include those laid out by staff and those they choose themselves from storage at their level. These satisfactorily support their language, mathematical thinking, imagination and creativity, though children do not have frequent access to a range of large, physical equipment to extend their large muscle skills to climb, scramble, slide and swing. They begin to gain a sense of the world around them as they move toy cars around town features on a mat and take part in an outing to the local church.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how young children learn. The range of activities and experiences they offer supports children to make satisfactory progress in all six areas of learning. As staff get to know most children well, they take regular account of their interests and needs in the planning. For example, they know some children respond positively to the outdoor play environment and so they have significantly increased the time spent outside. Children are not supported to develop maximum concentration or personal independence when their activities are interrupted and they wait to be directed during the routine group snack time. Activities are planned at the staff's weekly meetings to take account of individual children's responses to support their progress. These pre-planned activities have clear learning objectives in order to build upon what children already know and can do. The adults have realistic expectations of children's abilities so that all are sufficiently challenged. Staff regularly record children's play and their responses using several, overlapping systems, though not by parents' contributions about their children's learning at home. Staff regularly monitor the children's progress, though some summaries of stepping stones achieved are not supported by recorded evidence to inform future planning.

Children benefit from appropriate teaching methods that include an emphasis on play and first-hand experiences at activities of their choice. The staff are sufficiently attentive to support the children's through offering interesting comments and by giving children time to answer appropriate queries if they wish. All children are encouraged to communicate and to listen as they say their names when passing round the toy rabbit. They begin to enjoy stories through staff reinforcing words and pictures using a DVD and encouraging them to create their own 'Bear Hunt' display. They show some interest in appropriately printed labels and print as they recognise their named drawers and look at books with different levels of concentration at a planned time during the session. All children have suitable opportunities to draw and paint, while some older ones volunteer to name their own work.

The environment supports children's learning as the suitable equipment and resources are satisfactorily organised to support play in different areas, for example, to develop their creativity. Children enjoy using the floor and table surfaces for their chosen activities, such as jigsaws, though furniture limits the space available for imaginative play and for staff to support their imitating of adult roles. They explore the colours and textures of some different materials, such as sand and leaves they collect. They willingly join in actions and words of familiar songs, enjoy spontaneous movement to 'boogie' music and are keen to explore sounds of instruments when these are available.

Children count by rote for the register, see numbers around the room and enjoy number songs, including 'Five little ducks'. Some count objects during their play, for example, to find they have five toy cars in a line or have made ten playdough 'sausages'. Staff challenge able children to count to high numbers and to group objects differently. Children learn about mathematical ideas, such as size, as these occur in their play. For example, staff give them new words, such as 'tall', to describe the height of a tower and encourage them to investigate the effects of a magnifying glass. Children gain a satisfactory understanding of the world around them. They are actively introduced to different cultures and encouraged to talk about events in their own lives, or about their families and others they know. They explore some objects and living things, for example, through occasional cooking, gardening and handling of pets. They show an keen interest in technology to use the laptop and take turns to operate the group's digital camera. They begin to gain a sense of time as they recall memorable occasions, such as a hot-air balloon landing on the field.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle through support that is focused on their individual needs. They get to know the small group of staff so they gain confidence. They begin to learn to think of other's feelings and willingly support new ones when guided in what to do. After the initial circle time, they choose from the activities laid out and access other resources from storage. Once the outer door is opened, they choose whether to play indoor or outdoors, though later they do not decide when to join group activities to further foster their independence and self esteem.

Staff provide resources that positively represent the children who attend as well as giving them experience of needs that are different from their own. The children explore some celebrations, including Eid, through food and craft and these activities help children develop a positive attitude to others. Staff work actively with children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities so they are supported through liaison with their parents and appropriate external agencies. Children have clear guidance to help them to learn the behavioural expectations within the setting. Their behaviour is managed sensitively and consistently with regular praise so they begin to think of others by tidying away activities, sharing, taking turns and learning to be polite, for example, by thanking adult helpers. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents of funded children have suitable opportunities to become familiar with the Foundation Stage and how activities support children's learning, through written information, pictorial display, a formal meeting and informal explanations by staff. Parents are aware that they can look at their children's progress records at any time and staff suggest they do so when they help at the group. Families are satisfactorily supported to be involved in their children's learning. This is because they receive clear directions about rota

duty and parents who collect their children see a whiteboard with details about the children's general activities and how these can be continued at home.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The children are cared for by three newly-appointed managers who are all qualified. The children feel secure in a basic routine that takes into account the group's requirements for active periods, quiet times and food. Children have sufficient adult support to feel secure and confident as the required adult-child ratios are always met. They are assigned to a key worker so that parents have a particularly member of staff to whom they can relate if they wish. Staff are prepared to attend further training and to continue their involvement with a local support group to develop their provision for the children's welfare.

Systems are in place so most records and procedures that contribute to the children's care and well-being are maintained and implemented. These include registration documents that show the hours of attendance when a child arrives later or leaves earlier. Children's details are stored securely on the premises and staff are aware of how to maintain confidentiality so parents are confident to share any concern. Satisfactory systems are in place to appoint and vet new staff, though the system to support existing staff is not sufficient to check their on-going suitability to care for children.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Actions set at the previous inspection are satisfactorily implemented through the setting's positive response to local authority guidance. The management group meets regularly and offers practical support, for example, through revising risk assessment to reduce hazards affecting the children's safety. The chair has revised key policies and is aware that others require updating and regular review. The leaders are dedicated and foster team working through the sharing of responsibilities. They are thinking of development plans that include extending outdoor learning, and are committed to further improving the provision for children.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the previous two inspections, the quality of care and education was judged to be inadequate. A monitoring visit took place following the last inspection during which it was found that all of the given compliance notices were being met. No further action was taken and the provider continued to remain registered.

Satisfactory progress has been made on all actions set at the previous care inspection. These required the setting to improve procedures regarding the manager's qualification, the operational planning, the use of risk assessment for the children's safety and the management of children's behaviour. The group has implemented an action plan that sets out how the play leader will achieve a Level 3 qualification and has appointed qualified managers. The operational plan now promotes satisfactory use of space, staff, time and resources. As a result of these actions, the children receive satisfactory care from staff who are appropriately qualified. The setting now satisfactorily promotes children's safety through its action on most aspects of the comprehensive risk assessment on the premises and children's activities. Staff have noted that a fireguard requires fixing before heaters are used in the Autumn, and plans are set for fencing to be extended to allow children independent, safe access to outdoor play. Staff have satisfactorily developed their knowledge and understanding of effective ways to manage

children's behaviour. As a result, children receive consistent support through positive strategies and praise which raises their self-esteem.

Satisfactory progress has been made on all actions set at the previous nursery education inspection. These required the setting to improve staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage, the quality of their assessment and planning, the quality of teaching for older or more able children and the evaluation of the curriculum. Staff now have a suitable knowledge and understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, including the stepping stones. They satisfactorily observe and assess children's progress and use this to make sure that planning effectively takes account of their needs and interests. They offer a satisfactory range of stimulating and interesting activities that cover all areas of learning and suitably challenge older and more able children. Staff have introduced systems to monitor the effectiveness of the nursery education programme, including daily evaluation of the children's responses, and this suitably supports the children's 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 the 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 satisfactory.

### **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 the provision for children's health by ensuring that clean drinking water is available at all times and that parents sign the record of children's accidents
- extend the system to check the on-going suitability of staff to care for children
- ensure that all policies are regularly reviewed and updated as required.

#### **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 the routine to maximise children's concentration and progress towards being independent learners (also applies to care)

- ensure that assessment of children's progress is linked to learning achievements and includes parents' contributions about their children's progress at home to increase the effectiveness of its use to inform future planning.

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)