

# HIGHVIEW PLAYGROUP

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135305
<b>Inspection date</b>	01 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Gulnaz Hassan
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<b>Registered person</b>	Indira Allen
<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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Highview Playgroup was registered in 1992. The registered person is a private individual. The setting operates from ground floor premises situated in a small housing estate in Arnos Grove in the London borough of Enfield. The premises consist of one large play area, an office, bathrooms and an enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup operates every day of the week from 09:15 until 12:00, term time only and is registered to care for 16 children from two years to under five years. There are currently 15 children on roll in the playgroup, three of whom receive funding for education. The playgroup supports a number of children with learning difficulties and children who speak English as a second language. There are three staff who work with the children. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children's health and safety is not promoted. For instance there is no trained first aider at the setting, this means that in the event of an accident or illness staff will not be able to administer first aid. There are no sickness or accident procedures in place to ensure that children will receive prompt and appropriate attention. Staff follow basic health and hygiene procedures, such as wearing disposable gloves when changing nappies. These measures effectively limit the risks of cross contamination. Children are learning about hygiene practices because the staff promote this positively, for instance they remind children to cover their mouths when coughing and children independently access the bathroom to wash their hands after messy play and before snack time.

Children have a mid morning snack of fresh fruit and a choice of milk or water. At other times children independently serve themselves with water from a water jug. Children are making connections and are beginning to understand the effects of food and water on their bodies, for instance after having a drink of water a child says that his tummy feels much better.

Children frequently play outside and staff provide some opportunities to play with balls, bikes and other outdoor equipment. However the range of apparatus, such as the slide is suitable for much younger children and as a result children's skills and development are not fully promoted. The physical activities on offer do not present a suitable degree of challenge for children who receive nursery education.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children's safety within the premises is at risk because the setting has not ensured that electrical and gas equipment, such as the wall mounted fan heaters and the gas boiler continue to be safe and fit for their purpose because certified assessments have not been carried out since 2001. Children and staff have not practised the evacuation procedure for several months and this potentially compromises their safety.

The premises are not adequately heated to ensure that the areas used by children are warm and suitable to meet their needs. For instance on the day of inspection the premises were very cold and the heating was not switched on to ensure a healthy and warm environment for children. Children generally have access to a satisfactory range of resources which promote their care, learning and play. However some areas of the provision are limited, for instance the books in the book area are limited in range and items to support information technology are not available.

Children's welfare and safety is not ensured, for instance the setting is not knowledgeable of the nature of incidents that must be recorded. Staff have not attended recent basic training in child protection and there are no systems in place to ensure that all staff have the requisite knowledge, understanding and confidence in this field. The policy does not meet required standards and does not include a procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation of abuse being made against a staff member. This is a breach of regulations.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well on arrival at the setting and they benefit from routines that are familiar and help them to feel secure. Children are confident in their relationships with practitioners, they instigate conversations and staff help to build on developing language skills. For instance, when a child says that the dolls 'have gone' the staff member introduces new vocabulary by saying that the dolls have 'disappeared' the child likes this word and continues to repeat the word in its correct context. On another occasion a child's interest in aeroplanes is extended by staff when she brings the child a book about the subject to look at. During sand play a member of staff supports a child's play and learning by using a range of positional words and language such as too much, before, after. Children enjoy activities such as sand play, mark making and forming the letters of their names. At registration children count the number of children present and this simple number work is reinforced by clapping out the number and by showing the amount with their fingers. Children play with construction kits such as Lego, paint at the easel and engage in imaginative play. For instance children pretend to be the teacher and hold a circle time session with singing. At times children become frustrated by aspects of the routine, for instance after circle time staff insist that all children have to go to the toilet, the children resist this, at the same time children can hear that the rubbish removal van is outside but the staff do not open the doors for children to watch the disposal of the rubbish because they have to go toilet first.

## **Nursery Education**

The teaching and learning is inadequate.

Planning for learning and play is very informal and the learning environment is primarily based on children playing with the range of activities and resources available at the setting. Children engage in creative activities such as sticking glitter and shapes, whilst children enjoy gluing the shapes they do not have the opportunity to develop skills such as cutting because children work with pre-cut materials. This is not planned with teaching and learning intentions and although staff sit with children during the activity they do not always or consistently promote children's learning or asking pertinent open ended questions. The lack of observations and assessments means that the individual needs of not all the children are met. The system in place to monitor children's progress is weak and inconsistently applied amongst staff. For instance one child in the foundation stage has not had any observations completed whilst another child has had just one observation. Some staff are beginning to use the stepping stones to identify children's point of development and are briefly indicating next steps in children's development although connections with learning are not being made. Staff are generally aware of the specific interests of individual children however the focus of staff is on the same individual children whilst other children consistently, do not receive the same attention from staff. For instance when some children try to catch staff's attention to show them something, such as their bicycle becoming stuck or that they have observed or discovered something interesting, such as transparent coloured shapes, staff do not respond appropriately. The provision is not monitored to ensure that all children are purposefully engaged and accessing all areas of learning and play, such as the book corner, puzzles, the graphics area and the home corner. For instance the same puzzles and activities were left out on the table over the two days and children were not seen to approach this area.

The curriculum does not differentiate between very able and articulate two year old children and those children in the Foundation Stage who require additional support in their language

and physical development or who require additional challenge. Staff do not adequately support the learning and development of children when the opportunities arise, for instance when a child identifies a red sticker as pink staff do not respond. Teaching fails to promote adequate progress for most of the children in the Foundation Stage. This is because staff lack an understanding of the Foundation Stage. For instance whilst staff can make connections of activities to aspects of children's development such as imagination and communication this understanding is not applied to the areas of learning. Staff do not demonstrate any understanding of Knowledge and understanding of the World and of its various aspects. Children do not have access to experiences and resources that promote an understanding and investigation of science, such as torches, magnets etc. There are no resources available to promote Information communication and technology and there are no other programmable toys available. Some aspects of personal social and emotional development are good for instance children behave generally well towards staff and to each other, Children have good consideration for each other and take turns to use the favourite bicycles in the garden.

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

The provision is inadequate.

Children have access to a satisfactory selection of materials and resources that reflect positive images of race and culture and the provision of small world play promotes an understanding of disability. The provision to meet the individual needs of children is not satisfactory, for instance information about their interests and other information relevant to children's learning and development is not gathered. This means that the setting do not have a clear knowledge and understanding of the children that they are looking after.

The setting does not take sufficient steps to promote the welfare and development of all children with learning difficulties as some children receive better support. Records and information about each child is brief and do not sufficiently support children's areas of needs, for instance records do not indicate how the setting will work with each child to meet actions set. In some cases communication with parents is not adequate to meet the needs of children and not all children consistently receive the required support and individual attention to reach targets in their development.

Children's behaviour is generally good and children show consideration and kindness towards each other, for instance when pouring out water for herself a child also pours out a drink for her waiting friend and then proceeds to fill all the cups with water for the other children to help themselves. Staff are generally good role models and at the start of the session children are reminded to be nice and kind to each other. Staff are mostly consistent in their practice although occasionally negative comments are made, for instance when children do not want to settle down or to visit the bathroom. Children are frequently praised for positive behaviour and for good manners and in response children praise and applaud each other, for instance during singing time. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is inadequate. There is no written information about the setting available to parents to which they can refer to, for instance the policies and procedures relevant to the setting are shown to parents once at the point when their children join the setting. The exchange of information is informal and consists of general verbal feedback about care issues. Newsletters are infrequent and there are no formal meetings to discuss children's progress. Parents do not receive adequate information about the Foundation Stage or about their children's learning and development at the provision. The provision does not work in partnership with parents to help improve outcomes for nursery education children by

obtaining information about children's starting points. The information available to parents about making a complaint is inconsistent in various literature such as on the display board and in the policies and procedures. The provision is unaware of the amendments issued in 2005 relating to the complaints procedure. This is a breach of regulation.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

The provider does not have a secure knowledge and understanding of the National Standards and of the associated regulations which underpin good quality childcare and education. Children are cared for by staff who are appropriately vetted and deemed suitable to work with children. The setting meets the appropriate qualification requirements for staff. However staff have not attended relevant training, such as first aid and the foundation stage, for some years and this has had a direct impact on children's care, welfare and learning.

Little progress has been made in rectifying weaknesses identified at previous inspections. The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

A number of policies and procedures required to ensure the efficient and safe management of the provision are inaccurate, such as the complaints procedure or are not available or inaccurate this potentially compromises the quality of children's care and welfare. For instance a lost children's policy is not available and registers of children's attendance do not record the times of arrival or departure. These are breaches of regulation.

The leadership and management is inadequate. The organisation of the provision is weak and there are no systems in place to evaluate and monitor the curriculum or staff practices that have a direct impact on the care and learning of children. The setting's understanding of the Foundation Stage and its implementation does not underpin children's progress towards the early learning goals. The activities available for children over three lack differentiation and therefore do not meet their individual needs and children in the Foundation Stage are at times given insufficient support. The lack of planning, observations and assessments contribute to the failings of the setting. Recording systems are not implemented so staff have very little information about children's progress and development. Children's learning is hindered because practitioners are unaware of how to promote positive outcomes for children and which areas require improvement. Little progress has been made in addressing the key areas for improvement identified at the previous Nursery Education inspection. The manager has correctly identified most of the weaknesses and demonstrates a commitment to improving outcomes for children.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection of day care, a number of recommendations were raised to improve the provision. These were to ensure that the contents of the first aid box were checked frequently and replaced as necessary, to devise and implement a behaviour management policy, a complaints procedure and to update the child protection procedure, to keep a written record, signed by parents, of medicines given to children and to maintain written documentation of the daily attendance register with all the required detail including the hours of attendance. The setting was also asked to ensure that children had access to drinking water during the session. The setting has made improvements to the provision of the first aid box, to the systems for administering medication and of children's access to water. The group have made little progress in addressing recommendations in respect to the attendance register, the child protection

procedure and the behaviour management policy, as a result these elements continue to remain as areas for improvement.

At the last inspection of nursery education, four key issues were raised to improve the educational programme. These were to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the stepping stones, to improve the observation and assessments and to ensure that information is used to inform curriculum planning for the next steps of children learning and to share assessments with parents and to include comments from parents about their child's progress and development outside the playgroup. The group was asked to improve planning by indicating what children were intended to learn, the role of the adult and how activities could be adapted and modified for children's learning needs. The group was asked to provide more opportunities for children to develop maths ideas in their self chosen activities, to solve practical maths problems and to begin to develop calculation skills. The group was asked to improve the opportunities for children to write for different purposes in their play and to begin to read their names, to provide more opportunities and support for children to develop their understanding of information communication technology and develop their own creative ideas and explore using their senses. The group have made very little progress in addressing these key areas for improvement.

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

Ofsted received a concern on 11 July 2006 regarding staff qualifications, alleged discriminatory behaviour by staff and unvetted persons with access to the children. These concerns related to National Standards 1 (Suitable Person), 2 (Organisation) and 9 (Equal Opportunities). Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit on 25 September 2006 to discuss these concerns. Investigation of the complaint identified that the provider was not meeting Standard 1 by not ensuring that all adults looking after children on the premises were suitable to do so, and Standard 2 by not having accessible records including the name and addresses of all staff, volunteers and other persons with regular access to the children. As a result the following two actions were set: 1. Ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that students and volunteers are suitable to work with children:2. Ensure that accessible individual records are kept on the premises containing the name and address of the staff members, volunteers or any other persons with regular access to the children. Ofsted was satisfied that the provider's response to these actions was appropriate and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

## WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

### **The quality and standards of the care**

To improve the quality and standards of care, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve knowledge and understanding of the National Standards and of requirements set out in regulations
- make sure enough staff are trained in first aid for children and infants and ensure that at least one member of staff with a current first aid certificate is on the premises or on outings at any one time
- reassess systems of communication with parents in order to obtain good quality information from parents about children's individual needs ensure that staff are aware of and have a good understanding of the information obtained from parents
- ensure that the arrival and departure times of children are accurately and consistently recorded
- take positive steps to promote safety within the setting (including the regular practice of emergency evacuations, the safety and maintenance of gas and electrical appliances and fixtures )
- develop knowledge and information of child protection procedures and ensure that the child protection procedure complies with those of the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB)
- ensure that the complaints procedure is up to date and contains relevant and consistent information about making a complaint
- promote the welfare and development of children with learning difficulties and disabilities within the setting in partnership with parents and other relevant parties and ensure that practice is consistent with the code of practice for Special Educational Needs
- ensure that all policies and procedures (including accident, sickness and lost children procedures) are in place and that they are updated and reviewed regularly.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

### **The quality and standards of the nursery education**

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop observations and assessments to track children's development and progress, to assess their starting points, individual learning and development needs and interests and to plan for the next steps in children's learning
- ensure staff have a secure knowledge and understanding of the curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage and introduce a rigorous system for the monitoring and evaluation of the quality of teaching and learning
- develop systems and planning to provide a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences that clearly define teaching and learning intentions and that help ensure that children make progress towards the early learning goals



- ensure that parents receive information about the Foundation Stage and about children's learning and achievements.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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)