

West Hoathly Community Pre - School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113823
Inspection date	04 February 2008
Inspector	Felicity Gaff
Setting Address	North Lane, West Hoathly, East Grinstead, West Sussex, RH19 4QG
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Registered person	The Committee of West Hoathly Community Pre - School
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?

West Hoathly Community Pre-school has been established for many years. It is managed by a voluntary management committee made up of parents of children at the pre-school. It operates from the parish hall in West Hoathly, West Sussex. All children have access to a secure outdoor play area. The pre-school is open Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays from 09.30 to 12.15 during school term times, with an additional session on Wednesdays when numbers allow. A maximum of 26 children aged from two to under five years may attend the setting at any one time and there are currently 13 children on roll. Of these, eight children receive funding for nursery education. There are four paid members of staff, of whom two hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is also a regular volunteer working towards a recognised qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn to follow a healthy lifestyle; they bring fruit to share at snack time, which encourages them to try a variety of different tastes and textures. Dietary requirements are met because staff have good systems for recording them and ensuring they are followed. Staff follow good hygiene practices when serving food and the provider is pro-active in seeking out food hygiene training to enhance their understanding. Children begin to learn how to care for themselves; for example, they discuss suitable clothing for different weather and follow good personal hygiene procedures. There are excellent systems for ensuring ongoing medication that is stored at the setting remains suitable to use, and the procedures for managing accidents and administering medication conform closely to the National Standards. However, recording systems do not protect children's confidentiality. They do not always ensure parental authorisations for medication are sufficiently detailed to ensure children only receive the correct treatment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are well protected at the setting because the committee takes its responsibilities seriously and works effectively with the staff to make children's safety and security a high priority. Regular comprehensive risk assessments are carried out of the premises, practices, activities and resources to identify and minimise any potential risks to children. The committee ensures that required health and safety procedures are clearly documented and that staff comply with them. The outdoor area has been improved to a high standard to create a safe and secure play area. Toys and play resources are well spaced to provide an uncluttered environment. Separate zones for different activities mean that floor play activities do not cause obstructions. Staff have an acceptable understanding of child protection issues and know how to report concerns within the group. The exceptionally detailed child protection procedures are closely linked to those of the local safeguarding children board. Both the manager and the chairperson understand how to use them swiftly and effectively to safeguard children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle confidently at the setting because staff create a lively, child-friendly environment. Staff are interested in what children do and say and provide very good support to help them gradually gain confidence at the setting. Children enjoy the attractive photographs of previous activities displayed at an accessible height, which show them that they are valued. They develop their independence as they select their own readily accessible activities. The well-arranged resources support imaginative role play well. Children are as happy to follow their own interests as they are to cooperate in order to solve problems. Older children are proud to assist younger ones at tricky tasks, such as managing their own coats and shoes. They understand how their own actions contribute to the well-being of others, explaining, for example, that putting things away helps to keep them safe.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff engage children in conversation about their chosen activities and use incidental opportunities to support children's learning well. Clear guidance notes in each learning zone identify ways staff can promote children's play and use it to enhance their understanding. As a result children make suitable progress in language and literacy and in mathematical development. For example, they recognise their own names as they self-register, and demonstrate their emergent writing skills during imaginative role play. Staff use everyday activities, such as snack time, well to count and compare the numbers, shapes and sizes of fruit and vegetables. Older children confidently carry out simple calculations and are interested in recognising numerals. However, staff do not always use mathematical language with sufficient care to ensure they do not cause confusion.

Children develop their knowledge and understanding of the world through a balanced programme of themes and topics. The strong links created with parents allow children's home learning experiences to be brought into the setting and celebrated. Children explore a variety of media in two and three dimensions. They experiment with a very attractive and varied range of instruments from different cultural traditions to produce a wide range of sounds. Although staff make observations of what children do, these are not systematically used to assess their achievements and plan for their future learning. For example, they rarely assess children's progress in physical and creative development, or plan how they will provide suitable challenges for children at different ages and stages of development. Short term plans do not clearly identify learning outcomes or how activities could be adapted. This limits how effectively staff provide for individual children's needs to ensure they make good progress.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The very thorough written policy for equal opportunities addresses all relevant areas to create a welcoming environment accessible to all members of the local community. Staff have increased the resources reflecting positive images of cultural and ethnic diversity and use them well to help children develop respect for difference. The accessible environment fosters children's independence and self-esteem. There are suitable arrangements to meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or for whom English is an additional language. Children are purposefully occupied with self-chosen activities for the great majority of their time at the setting and receive good adult attention. Staff help them understand the reasons for the simple positive rules and consequently, behaviour is excellent. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents receive clear written information about the setting when their children first attend as well as regular newsletters and notices to keep them well informed. Many play an active role as committee members and/or parent helpers and as a result feel a sense of ownership. Partnership with parents of funded children is good. Parents are delighted with the welcoming, community atmosphere and the ease with which their children settle. There are good arrangements to link the learning children experience at home with what they do at the setting. Children are proud to borrow books to share with their parents, and to take their turn of having Hoathly Bear to stay for a weekend. They bring items of interest from home to share with the group, such as pictures of plants they have grown or worms from the garden. There are regular open mornings when parents can exchange information about their children's progress with staff.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The committee has taken extremely effective action to ensure that the written policies and procedures provide clear, authoritative guidance to staff and incoming committee members on all aspects of their roles and responsibilities. There are exceptionally clear and thorough recruitment, vetting, induction and appraisal procedures to ensure staff have the knowledge and skills to do their jobs. Written policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated in line with current legislation. They conform closely to the National Standards but also include information on other regulations that affect children's health and safety. The strong systems support high safety standards in the setting. The organisation of time, space and resources, and the deployment of staff, supports children's care, learning and play very well. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management of the nursery education are good. Responsibility for the Foundation Stage is delegated to the manager, and there are effective systems to ensure all relevant communications are made known both to her and to the committee. Improvements to the organisation of the environment and the guidance given to staff have enhanced children's learning. However, staff do not yet use assessments of children's progress along the stepping stones to inform their short term plans. This limits their ability to plan a focused environment where all children make good progress.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider was required to ensure children attending the setting are within the permitted age range and are included on the register. The provider also agreed to inform Ofsted promptly of any relevant changes and improve the written procedures for lost and uncollected children and for child protection. The provider now ensures the setting operates in accordance with the conditions of registration and complies with regulations. Only children within the registered age range now attend, which enables staff to meet their needs. Exceptionally detailed written procedures are in place, which provide clear guidance for notifying significant changes, for dealing with lost or uncollected children and for child protection.

At the last inspection of nursery education the provider agreed to develop the provision for mathematical and creative development, and to develop planning, assessment and record systems. Staff now use planned and incidental learning opportunities well to develop children's mathematical understanding. Children experience a range of open-ended creative activities that allow them to learn through all their senses and to explore and investigate the world through practical, first-hand play experiences. However, assessment and planning systems are not sufficiently closely linked to help staff identify what children are to do and learn, what they achieve and what they need to do next.

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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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):

- update accident and medication recording systems to improve confidentiality and to show clearly the details of any medication authorised.

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):

- use assessments of children's achievements to inform short term plans in all areas of learning, which identify clear learning objectives including how activities can be adapted to meet the needs of all 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