

Heytesbury Hedgehogs Pre School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	145876
Inspection date	16 January 2008
Inspector	Susan Mann
Setting Address	Heytesbury C of E Primary School, Heytesbury, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 0EA
Telephone number	07870 472091
E-mail	
Registered person	Heytesbury Hedgehogs Pre school
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Heytesbury Hedgehogs is a well established group in Heytesbury about five miles from Warminster. It is managed by a committee of parents. The pre-school leader is responsible for the overall organisation and daily management of the group, which serves the surrounding community. It is located in a purpose built classroom in the grounds of Heytesbury Primary School in Wiltshire.

Heytesbury Hedgehogs operates on Monday, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays in term time only. It is registered to provide full daycare for 16 children per session, aged between two and five years, of whom no more than four may be under three years. There are currently 11 children on role, of whom seven are funded. Sessions are 9.00 to 12.00 and 12.00 to 15.00.

There are three members of staff working directly with the children and all hold an appropriate early years qualification and a current first aid certificate.

The group has strong links with the local school and receives support from the Early Years partnership. They are also members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive at the pre-school. Their health is promoted extremely well by a range of exceptional routines and procedures. They learn how to keep themselves healthy through interesting activities and well-designed systems that develop their understanding. For example, children enjoy tasting lychees as part of their snack. They examine the texture of the skin and the flesh of the fruit before tasting it. They enjoy stories that promote healthy eating and know to wash their hands after using the toilet following the pictorial routine that is displayed for their information.

Children enjoy extremely healthy snacks and drinks each day. They sit together with the staff whilst they eat and drink, laughing and talking as they take pleasure in each other's company. Children who stay for lunch may bring a packed lunch or have a meal that is cooked in the adjacent school. The pre-school has an excellent system of storing perishable items properly to ensure they stay fresh. Children place items in individual lunch bags which are then stored in the refrigerator. Children who purchase school meals enjoy nutritious lunches that are prepared and cooked on the premises.

Children benefit significantly from daily opportunities to enjoy fresh air and exercise. They can extend their play to the adjacent outdoor area, where they can play with a wide range of toys and resources. They also have multiple opportunities to develop their physical skills and general level of fitness. Excellent use is made of the school premises. Children enjoy a vast range of games and activities on the playground. For example, they run around with hoops, rolling and spinning them as they chase each other around. They also enjoy indoor activities in the school hall, and regular gym and ball skill sessions enhance their development further.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe in the welcoming environment. The classroom is organised well to provide children with plenty of space to play, eat and rest. Daily checks and formal risk assessments ensure that the premises and equipment are in a good state of repair and that hazards are minimised. Children work together to create colourful wall displays which create a bright and inviting room. They choose from a wide range of toys and resources that are suited to their stage of development. These are stored at child height so children can easily select items themselves if they wish. This helps to foster children's independence.

Children are secure at the pre-school. Staff are vigilant and work well together to provide a high level of supervision. The premises and outdoor areas are properly secured so children are safe. Children have regular opportunities to practise the emergency evacuation procedure so they are familiar with it. This means that they would be able to exit the building quickly in the event of a real emergency.

Children are safe from harm and neglect because staff are knowledgeable about how to safeguard their welfare. The child protection co-ordinator ensures that proper recording and reporting procedures are in place. This element of the provision is underpinned by a robust child protection policy that is mostly in line with current guidelines. However, the policy needs to be amended to make reference to Local Safeguarding Children's Boards.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. They enjoy playing with a wide variety of activities. They benefit from the support of enthusiastic and cheerful staff. Younger children enjoy play that is carefully tailored to their developmental stage. The Birth-to three co-ordinator ensures that activities are suitably differentiated so younger children access an appropriate curriculum. For example, at story time a younger child chooses her own story to read with a member of staff. It is suited to her interests and level of understanding. She contentedly snuggles into the member of staff as they look at the book together.

Children benefit greatly from the mixed age range at the pre-school. Older children show great care and consideration to their younger counterparts, whilst younger children benefit from having the older more confident children as their role models. They are learning to become independent through parts of the routine, such as self registering when they arrive in the morning.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are progressing well towards the early learning goals. Children are actively involved in planning their own learning. They play a pivotal role in the mid term planning. They do this through group discussion to create a spider gram of ideas that arise from the proposed topic. For example, children sit together at group time saying things and ideas that they associate with the topic of 'Space'. The staff then plan activities and learning opportunities which stem from the children's ideas. This means that children have already considered the topic, and listened to thoughts and suggestions about it. It also means that they will be exploring elements of the topic that they have expressed an interest or knowledge about, thus building on their own experiences which makes it relevant to them.

Children enjoy a curriculum that is varied and interesting. Staff ensure it is planned to cover all aspects and stepping stones throughout the year. Short term planning and activity plans make sure that children have a variety of activities that enable each child to make good progress. These are thoroughly evaluated so that the curriculum continues to be relevant and effective. Children's learning is monitored through careful observation and assessment. This enables staff to have a clear picture of the next steps of learning for each child so they can make good progress at their own pace. This knowledge of children's progress is then used when planning, so that each child's needs are incorporated.

Children and staff demonstrate a friendly rapport. They all talk and laugh with one another as they go about the day, which makes the pre-school a very relaxed and happy place. All are enthusiastic and busy. Staff are skilled at supporting the children's learning. They are knowledgeable and confident in their role. They show great respect to the children, and give clear explanations which enable children to understand activities and routines.

Children develop good listening skills at the pre-school. They enjoy stories that are suitable for their stage of understanding, and listen intently as the member of staff reads the story with great expression. Children have daily opportunities to draw and make marks. They enjoy free drawing. For example, a child comes to the setting having seen a rainbow on his way. He describes it to the other children, and soon most children are drawing pictures of colourful rainbows. The majority of children are able to form recognisable letters when writing their name. Children develop their mathematical understanding in a number of ways. For example,

they count and add numbers as they play, and routinely recognise shape and measure as they use equipment and resources.

Children benefit from multiple opportunities to express themselves and develop their creativity. They enjoy role play and dancing, as well as many art and craft activities. They can use play dough each day, and have frequent opportunities to use paint, glue and sand in both planned and free play. For example, children work together as a group using newspaper, paper bowls and glue to create a wall display of the surface of the moon. They look at pictures of the moon before they begin, and discuss what it might be like. When they have finished, the piece is displayed on the wall, which shows children that their efforts are valued. On another day, children may explore the texture of shaving foam or gloop. Although children have these opportunities during the day, there is no painting or similar expressive art available to them at the start of the day. This means that some children who may wish to paint as soon as they arrive at pre-school are not able to do so unless they specifically ask.

Children develop their small muscle movements through a variety of activities. For example, children skilfully manipulate the small pegs with their fingers to push them into the boards to make patterns. They learn about living things because the pre-school has two pet Giant African Land Snails, Sandy and Patrick. Children take it in turns to feed them and demonstrate good knowledge of what they need to live and be comfortable.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children demonstrate an exceptional sense of belonging to the pre-school. They have a very strong sense of community that is significantly enhanced by the extremely dedicated staff team. The setting participates in regular events that are part of the life of their village. For example, children from the pre-school participate in the celebrations on Bonfire Night. They also make excellent use of their local resources. At Easter, children have great fun finding Easter Eggs on a treasure hunt that is set up around the village. They maintain superb links with the adjacent school, sharing resources and enjoying friendly relationships with the staff. Most children who attend the pre-school will go on to attend this school and they benefit significantly from these close links.

Children and their families are greatly valued in this inclusive environment. This element of the provision is underpinned by a robust policy on equal opportunities that is consistently implemented by all staff. Children learn about cultures and beliefs in a wide variety of ways that are wholly relevant to their understanding. For example, children celebrate the Chinese New Year, using knowledge and resources from a parent who regularly works in China. Children learned about the American celebration of Thanksgiving with a family who are from the United States. They followed the background of the story as a topic and had a celebratory lunch. This was a successful way for children to learn because they could relate it to the experiences of one of their peers who attended the setting with them. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children manage their behaviour exceptionally well. Staff are extremely clear in their guidance and explanation so children know what is expected of them. Any disputes, such as over the sharing of a toy, are handled skilfully by staff who work with the children to help them understand each other's point of view. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive a very high level of support to enable them to make excellent progress. The setting liaises extremely closely with parents to ensure that children benefit from a coherent approach,

and that families are fully involved from the outset. The special educational needs coordinator is experienced and highly knowledgeable to identify concerns and seek support from the appropriate outside agency. All staff work together closely to provide children with a consistent programme of support.

Children benefit significantly from the excellent relationships that exist between the pre-school and their parents. Children enjoy an excellent settling in process that gives them a good start at the pre-school. This is tailored to the needs of each child and family so that it is wholly effective. Parents express extreme satisfaction with the provision. When children arrive in the morning, staff give children and their parents an enthusiastic welcome that is genuine and warm.

The pre-school is managed very well by a committee of parents who are highly effective in their role. All parents are invited to participate, and committee members are known to everyone who uses the setting. This means that the pre-school management can accurately reflect the needs of the families that use it. Exemplary systems are in place for handover of committee roles. Detailed information is available to prospective members so they are fully aware of the roles and responsibilities of committee members and officers. This ensures that the pre-school is managed consistently and effectively when a new committee is formed.

Partnership with parents with regard to the provision of nursery education is good. Parents are well informed about what their child is learning and how they are progressing. Parents are given information about the curriculum in the prospectus and planning is displayed on the walls for them to see and discuss with staff if they wish. Parents are involved in the assessment process. When a child starts at the group, they are asked to provide basic information about their child to enable them to settle successfully. This also includes some information on a child's starting point, such as words they might use and social development. Parents are invited to Feedback Meetings twice a year, where they can meet with staff to view children's records and discuss their progress. They also benefit from informal chats throughout the year when they can see children's folders and discuss them with the staff whenever they wish. This ensures that parents are knowledgeable about their child's progress and general well-being at the pre-school.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the efficient organisation of the pre-school. Staff are all well trained to provide a good level of care and education. Recruitment and induction procedures are robust to ensure that staff working with the children are properly checked and trained. Strong systems are in place to support staff so they can perform their roles well, such as annual appraisal and half yearly supervision meetings.

The management committee is clear in its role and it ensures the pre-school runs efficiently. Members of the committee work well with the staff team, supporting one another to help the pre-school progress and develop. The provision is underpinned by a range of written policies and procedures that provide an effective framework.

Leadership and management are good. The pre-school leader monitors the provision of nursery education well to ensure that children continue to make good progress towards the early learning goals. She is a good role model to the children and staff. She provides strong leadership because she is enthusiastic and professional in her approach. She leads a strong team who work

very well together. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection, the setting was asked to consider several recommendations with regard to the provision of care and education. All have been suitably addressed. In the provision of care, risk assessments are now done on a regular basis so that necessary action can be taken to minimise identified risks. In addition, the pre-school has moved from a temporary building to an independent classroom within the main school and there are no hazards to the children in the outdoor area. All members of staff have been trained in first aid, and so can provide necessary treatment during sessions or when on outings. In addition, all staff now hold a relevant childcare qualification, and two are trained to level three which meets staffing qualification requirements.

In the provision of education, staff have reviewed the curriculum provision to address all recommendations from the previous inspection. Children now enjoy daily frequent opportunities to explore pattern and solve mathematical problems. They count and calculate throughout the day, and have many opportunities to learn about shape and measure. Children may access free art each day. There is a free drawing table, with a well resourced art trolley where children can choose glue sticks, paper and drawing materials. Activities are planned to ensure children can complete them successfully, and so they do not require adults to draw shapes for them. Finally, the curriculum informs parents of the six Areas of Learning of the curriculum, and this is supplemented by an information sheet which is given to each family. This sheet explains how children might learn through play doing appropriate activities.

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 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 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 existing policy statement on child protection to refer to Local Safeguarding Children's Boards

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):

- enhance children's creative development further by providing opportunities to enjoy expressive arts such as free painting at the start of each day.

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