

# Holloway Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	206793
<b>Inspection date</b>	30 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Joanne Baranek
<b>Setting Address</b>	Village Hall, Yew Tree Hill, Holloway, Matlock, Derbyshire, DE4 5AR
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<b>Registered person</b>	Holloway 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 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 satisfactory.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Holloway Playgroup opened in 1970. It operates from the Village Hall in Holloway, Derbyshire.

The playgroup serves the local rural area.

There are currently 43 children from two years two months to four years six months on roll. This includes 20 funded three year olds and four year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting could support children with special needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

The playgroup opens five days a week during school term time only. Sessions are from 9.15 until 12.15 Monday to Friday and on Thursday they run a Rising 5s group from 13.15 until 15.15.

Four part time staff work with the children. Three of staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3. The setting receives support from Derbyshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The playgroup are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA) and is managed by a parental committee, who delegate day to day responsibility to the staff.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children are kept healthy within a setting that uses consistent hygiene routines for both the staff and children. They are reminded to wash their hands after using the toilet and before snack to ensure germs are not spread. Appropriate methods are used when the staff change nappies to ensure there is no cross-contamination such as gloves and changing mat sanitation for each child. Accidents are recorded in good detail and the entry is signed by parents or carers at the end of a session to make sure they are aware of any injury received whilst at playgroup.

Staff provide healthy food for the children at snack time and the rolling system enables the children to choose when they want to have snack and take ownership of their routine. The children are able to drink milk or water and eat at their own rate ensuring they all have time to finish before returning to their activities. Staff have discussions with the children to enable them to begin to choose healthy options and embark upon a balanced lifestyle. Dietary requirements are taken into account to make sure all children are able to enjoy their food.

Children are able to choose a variety of activities to promote their physical skills because the setting uses a free-flow system between the indoor area and outside on a daily basis. They provide a good variety of activities to develop both their large muscles and small muscles through bicycles, parachute games, construction toys, and threading beads. The children are able to receive fresh air because the setting takes all areas of learning outside and they are able to choose activities either inside or out in the garden such as music, books, creative play and dressing up.

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

The provision is good.

Children are safe and secure in a setting that checks the premises and equipment they use regularly, for example, the staff ensure the children are safe on their bicycles by checking the stabilisers are securely fastened. They remain safe within the setting as the staff check the door is locked after children arrive and that visitors cannot access the building without being checked and signed in. The staff make certain the gate is closed while the children are playing outside to guard them from the dangers of the road.

The setting supplies age-appropriate resources for the children to access, for example, children's tables and chairs, and they provide space for relaxation and quiet activities as well as an outdoor play area and space within the hall for the children to play actively. The staff use the space available effectively to supply areas for the children to enjoy their play, snack and group time. The large outdoor area enables the setting to extend their learning into the fresh air whilst remaining safe, as it is enclosed and private.

Staff continue the safety of the children through vigorous risk assessments, that are updated when a change occurs, and fire safety with regular fire drills practised and appropriate equipment available. Increased supervision of children on outings away from the setting and risk assessed visits from the library van ensure children are kept safe when out and about.

Children are safeguarded through the playgroup's child protection policy and the staff's understanding of their role within this procedure. Staff are adept at identifying the signs of

abuse and following the procedure to ensure the safety of the children as they have attended training to support them.

Staff are helping children to learn about safety through visitors to the setting such as the fire brigade and the police, and they remind the children about staying safe through conversation. For example, a child brought in a reflective wrist strap for show and tell and the staff asked the children why they need to wear this when they are walking in the dark. This helps the children to keep themselves safe within the setting and when they are at home.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff have a sound understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this is used for the two year old children, however, the planning does not show how this will be implemented, impacting on the support the children will receive in the planned activities.

Children are becoming confident in their play and the setting provides a good selection of activities for the children to role play such as a vets surgery, a home environment and dressing up clothes. They are able to act out situations they have experienced and staff are available to support their play. They are experiencing things first hand through planned activities for example tasting noodles for Chinese New Year and the children are able to relate these experiences to the knowledge they obtain from the topics.

The children are learning to manage their own behaviour because the staff use a consistent approach and they are aware of and understand the rules in place, for example the playgroup uses "Golden Rules" to encourage the children to sit and listen to each other during circle time. The children know, understand and abide by these rules.

### **Nursery Education**

Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals with staff offering a range of activities and play experiences which are generally balanced, however children are not challenged sufficiently, limiting the progress they are able to make.

Children are engaged in their activities and have good levels self-esteem because of the methods the staff use in the setting, for example, the children receive constructive praise for their achievements. They are developing caring relationships with each other and becoming independent in their manner. The children are able to wash their hands, and dress themselves without support and are able to choose activities for themselves. However, the setting does not have a strategy in place to ensure that all children access the areas of learning equally resulting in some children missing out on mathematical development and literacy. The playgroup plays a big part in the community, for example, becoming involved in the local carnival, and they have developed a relationship with the local school to ensure continuity of education.

Staff encourage the children to talk throughout the activities during the session and they have opportunities to bring in personal items and talk about them to the group, and also have conversations with their peers and adults about their play. Staff encourage children to use the initial sounds of their names and objects such as milk. They then use this approach to help them to start writing their names. The children are able to practise their writing on a designated mark making table with an abundance of resources such as pens, pencils, scissors, hole punches

and sticky tape, however, not all children access this area impacting on their ability to start to write.

Children have access to a range of mathematical activities such as games, helping to foster an understanding of numbers and the number system, but they do not attempt to access this area unsupported and are rarely encouraged to use maths in context at the setting. Children are not challenged sufficiently within this area as the more able children are not given the opportunity to extend their learning through, for example, simple addition problems. This is impacting on the overall progress they are able to make within this area of learning.

Staff encourage children to learn about the natural world and teach them about where animals live and why, how the compost is made and the different sounds musical instruments make. Staff allow the children to dig for worms and talk to them about their dog's puppies showing them the scan and letting them name the unborn puppy. They are able to use a computer and other programmable toys with skill with the staff being available to support if required. Their understanding of the world around them is a strong area and they become engaged in activities and conversations where they are gaining further knowledge.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory.

The staff have recently changed their planning to incorporate the children's next steps into their daily activities, however, currently this does not show how all areas of the curriculum will be covered equally, resulting in unbalanced learning. Support is provided during activities such as asking open ended questions although this could be developed further to provide more challenge for children. For example, one child is creating a model and the staff cut the card for him where he is capable of attempting this himself.

The assessment process the staff use is systematic and evaluative showing the level the children are at and where they will take them next to extend their learning, and this is individual to each child. The staff involved in the playgroup are experienced early years practitioners who are developing a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum.

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

The provision is good.

Children and families are all included within a setting that actively promotes different religions, cultures and beliefs. Staff have received training in equal opportunities and encourage the children to broaden their understanding of a diverse community, through activities incorporating differing festivals and celebrations. They are able to dress in multicultural costumes and taste foods from around the world during topical sessions enabling the children to understand and respect individual beliefs.

Children with learning difficulties and / or disabilities are supported by all staff and helped by the settings special needs co-ordinator. She works closely with outside support agencies to ensure children receive the appropriate help from trained workers, and has received training herself in Makaton and working with children who have communication difficulties. All activities are adapted to ensure inclusion and support.

The setting manages behaviour using consistent procedures that are set out in their policy. The approaches are age and / or level defined and the children are learning to understand

about right and wrong because the staff explain the consequences of their actions. The children are helping each other to share and take turns by reminding each other of these reasons.

The parents are invited to support the setting through the joining the committee and helping with the sessions on a rota basis. The setting helps them understand the Foundation Stage and the "Birth to three matters" framework through information sheets provided and they are able to access their children's files on request. Information is shared verbally with parents and they are encouraged to share information about their children when they first start at playgroup ensuring continuity of care for the children within the setting.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory.

The playgroup supplies the parents with information about the Foundation Stage discussing the areas of learning they will cover and how the curriculum works to help children to progress. The parents are encouraged to talk to the staff before and after the sessions, however, some parents feel they do not offer enough time to be able to talk through their child's progress sufficiently with the staff. The setting does not currently offer the parents support to continue the children's learning at home, impacting on the overall progress the children are able to make towards their early learning goals.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children show wonder and investigation through conversations and exploration, for example, the children find some compost in the garden and ask the staff what it is and why it looks different to mud. The staff explain about the compost heap and talk about how the plants and worms love it. The children are learning to manage their own behaviour, develop caring attitudes, and take care of each other when they are hurt or upset. They relate to adults and their friends and are able to talk openly in groups and broaden their experiences through topics about religions, festivals and celebrations.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is inadequate.

Children's welfare is compromised as the setting has failed to notify Ofsted of changes to the committee, therefore they and the manager have not been deemed suitable by Ofsted. This is a breach of regulation.

However, the playgroup ensures staffing is correct to safeguard children effectively and the use of parent helpers offers further support for the staff and children. There is a contingency plan in place to ensure staff sickness does not impact on the care of the children and a consistent induction process ensures all staff understand their duties within the setting.

Policies are clear, concise and ensure children are safeguarded. They are shared with parents so all parties involved with the children's care and education are kept informed of the procedures the playgroup follows in all situations. Staff are committed to the care of the children and work well as a team, and the committee supports the running of the playgroup by arranging events and fundraising.

The leadership and management is satisfactory.

The setting has high expectations of the staff and challenges them to improve by training in different areas, recently encouraging a new staff member to train in child protection and take

on further responsibility by having a keyworker group. However the setting does not assess and evaluate their practice effectively in order to improve the education and care they provide, impacting on the ability to ensure all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum are covered with equal concern.

Overall, the children's needs are not met as the setting has compromised their welfare through the breach of regulation.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider agreed to develop the past system of planning to ensure that all the stepping stones to the early learning goals are taught through a balance of directed and non-directed activities, differentiated according to the individual needs of the children. They were also asked to develop a regular, systematic assessment of the children's attainment and progress towards all the early learning goals, which is used to inform the planning for the next steps of their learning. The setting has improved both areas by developing their planning to coincide with the children's next steps and using the stepping stones to assess the children against. The children are able to access a balance of directed and non-directed activities in a playgroup that offers the children a variety of activities to choose from.

The setting was asked to provide more planned opportunities for children to develop an understanding of calculation, involving addition and subtraction in practical situations such as snack and group times. This has not been fully achieved as the children are not consistently challenged to calculate during activities, although counting is used during snack and group time more readily for the younger children.

The induction process for staff, volunteers and the committee was recommended to be more effective. All staff understand their roles fully as do the committee, however, the committee are not fully aware of the National Standards and this has flagged up the breach in standard 14.3 with regards to the change on committee.

It was recommended that the operational plan should be updated to contain reference to current legislation and registration requirements. The policies and procedures are up to date with all current details and changes including an alteration in child protection policy with regards to the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

### **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 to 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 satisfactory.

## 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 requirements set out in regulations and set in place a procedure to notify Ofsted of relevant matters with regards any changes in the registered person or person in charge.

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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- develop the planning to ensure all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum are covered equally
- continue to develop the accessibility of mathematical development and writing within activities and challenge children consistently within these areas
- improve the partnership with parents with particular reference to information provided about progress and support to continue learning at home (also applies to care)
- develop and implement a system to assess the strengths and weaknesses in the education provision to ensure gaps are highlighted and actioned

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