

Hemblington Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 254107 |
| Inspection date | 31 October 2007 |
| Inspector | Pauline Margaret Todd |
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| Registered person | The Trustees of Hemblington 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hemblington Pre-School opened in 1980. It operates from Heathlands Community Centre in Blofield Heath, Norfolk. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. It is open on Tuesday, Thursday and Friday 09.30 until 12.00 and on Wednesday from 12.30 until 15.00 during term times only. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 33 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these 21 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local area. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The pre-school employs four staff. Three of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well. The pre-school takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection. Staff have a clear understanding of cleaning and hygiene procedures. Children are learning how to meet their own personal care needs. They confidently use the toilet and thoroughly wash their hands afterwards and before eating snacks.

Children's health details and medical requirements are clearly recorded to maintain their good health. Staff follow effective systems which enable children who are unwell to be cared for appropriately. Staff have current first aid knowledge to ensure children's well-being in the event of an accident.

Children are appropriately nourished. They eat snacks of apples, carrots and breadsticks which help them to learn about healthy eating. Children with special dietary requirements have their needs met appropriately because parents provide the setting with detailed information. Children independently help themselves to water from jugs and place the mugs in the bowl for washing up afterwards. They have further drinks at snack time to make sure they have sufficient amounts to keep them healthy.

Children are encouraged to adopt a healthy lifestyle. They have a positive attitude to exercise and enjoy going outside to play. They practise running and riding bikes avoiding obstacles and controlling their speed. They safely use the trampoline, rockers and stompers and walk carefully in their dressing-up clothes and shoes. Children have some opportunities to use challenging equipment to practise climbing, scrambling, sliding and swinging. They use malleable materials, such as playdough, with and without tools and are developing competent manipulative skills by using scissors to cut paper. They engage in activities requiring hand-eye coordination, for example, marble painting. Children are able to fulfil their own needs with regard to rest and relaxation and use comfortable cushions by the book corner as they wish throughout the session.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in premises that are safe, secure and suitable to meet their needs. The staff prepare the village hall so it is ready when children arrive. Children are able to move about freely and have spontaneous access to the outdoor play area. Children use an adequate range of developmentally-appropriate resources. There is sometimes a lack of small-scale floor play, building blocks, dolls, home corner equipment, painting and natural play materials to encourage children to use their imagination and express their feelings. Children do not have sufficient choice at each session to allow them to develop their own ideas and maintain their interest. Children use suitably sized tables and chairs which enable them to sit comfortably to undertake activities and eat together. Steps are present in the toilet area to enable children to access the facilities independently.

Children are kept safe because staff use daily risk assessments to reduce potential hazards and minimise risks. The main entrance door into the hall is bolted and a chain fitted to the play room door to keep children secure. Procedures for fire safety are simple and clear and staff have a good understanding of their responsibilities and roles in the event of a fire. Fire drills are practised regularly to keep children safe.

Children are suitably safeguarded because the staff have a sound working knowledge of child protection issues. They would be able to put appropriate procedures into practice if they suspect that a child is being abused or neglected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children's welfare is promoted well. The setting provides them with activities and play opportunities that develop their emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities. Children enjoy using playdough, cutting and sticking, dressing up and making models from the Mobilo. They undertake planned activities with the staff, for example, marble painting and firework pictures. They are happy and settled. Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to promote effectively the development of younger children attending. They use it for reference when planning activities. Staff meet children's needs through sensitive and appropriate interactions that promote children's self-esteem. They are positive and give children reassurance, praise and encouragement. They maintain good eye contact and constantly talk and listen to the children. They position themselves at the child's level to support them with their activities. They read them stories, pretend to speak on the telephone, eat the food they have prepared from the playdough, dress up by wearing hair bands and hats. They act as good role models, are polite, kind and caring.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff help children to feel secure and encourage good relationships. They are all enthusiastic about learning and try to make the activities fun for the children. They generally use language to further children's thinking and ask open-ended questions, for example, 'how can we make it longer?' Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. They are familiar with the early learning goals and pick up on learning opportunities as they arise. However, they are not always extending the activities to provide children with challenge. They use planning to make sure that all areas of learning are covered. There are detailed plans for focussed activities and basic play provision available. However, they do not clearly show the purpose of activities and how they will be adapted to suit individual children. Regular observations are made of the children. Helpful information is gained from parents which staff use as a base line assessment. They record their observations and use photographs as evidence of children's achievements. However, these are not linked sufficiently to planning to make sure activities build on what children already know. The teaching helps children to focus and persist for some time, for example, drawing, cutting and sticking, and making firework pictures.

Children are developing a positive sense of themselves. They have regular opportunities to talk about their home and community. They are forming good relationships, for example, they share the playdough, hold each others' hands, pour each other a drink of water, cooperate well when using the rocker and take turns to paint with the water outside. They do not always initiate their own activities and play experiences as many are adult-led and organised for them. Children interact readily with others. They tell each other they are putting their shoes on and going outside. Others say, 'wait for me'. More able children recognise the initial sound of their names but they are not always becoming aware of sounds in words. They look at books independently, turn the pages and show interest in the illustrations. They mark-make well, for example, they use spatulas in coloured sand, use brushes and water to make marks on the slabs outside, and draw pictures using crayons and pencils.

Children take part in activities that help them to achieve in mathematics, for example, puzzles, matching objects to numbers. They sing number rhymes which involve counting up and back, for example, 'Five little men in a flying saucer'. Children count independently, for example, the number of jumps on the trampoline, the wheels on the vehicles. Staff use mathematical language well to discuss size, shape and position. Children have some opportunities to discover how things work. They look at themselves in mirrors, staff help them to take photographs with the camera, they use a dryer to dry their hands. However, there are limited opportunities for them to explore and investigate. For example, they are not able to use magnets, magnifying glasses, household implements, water wheels, construction materials, natural play materials and computers on a regular basis. They experience some cutting and joining using glue sticks and scissors. Children learn through using their senses. They are excited to add glitter to the playdough and say it is sparkly. They use fluorescent sand on glue to make firework pictures. They enjoy hearing the 'clip clop' of dressing-up shoes on the floor and the feel of feather boas on their faces. Music times are held regularly and children select instruments by themselves. They enjoy singing familiar songs and join in well with the actions.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children have high self-esteem and confidence because the staff give them lots of praise, for example, for sharing the equipment or for the work they have produced. The pre-school liaises well with parents to ensure that children's records contain sufficient information to enable appropriate care to be given, for example, their medical needs and food arrangements. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are warmly welcomed into the setting and given suitable support to promote their welfare and development. Children are helped to develop a positive attitude to others by using some play equipment which reflects positive images of race and culture, and celebrating festivals. The spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of children is fostered. They play together cooperatively and share the play equipment. They have many planned opportunities to learn about themselves and the local community, for example, they have visitors from the village talk to them about their work and have good links with the school.

Children's well-being is promoted because of the positive relationships which have developed between staff and their parents. Parents are very involved with the running of the group. They serve on a management committee, help with fund raising and assist at sessions on a rota basis. There is a useful exchange of information at the beginning and end of each session. Parents state they find the staff friendly and approachable. There is an informative notice board in the entrance lobby which keeps them informed of childcare practices. Parents receive a helpful information pack which includes details of policies and procedures. Parents have sufficient information about the procedures for making complaints and the process for resolving them. However, some of the information is now out-of-date. Parents receive regular newsletters informing them of activities.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Parents gain some knowledge of the Foundation Stage through displays and from reading the group's prospectus. Not all of them have received detailed information about the curriculum. Some state they are informed of their child's progress. They have seen their child's assessment record and have contributed by bringing in photographs. Others state they have not yet had the opportunity to discuss fully their child's achievements with staff. Parents receive details of things they can do at home, for example, collecting conkers and doing leaf printing for autumn, which makes them feel they are involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the setting ensures that children are well cared for by staff that are suitable to meet their needs. There are satisfactory arrangements to make sure staff and committee members are vetted. However, the written procedures are out of date and do not reflect the pre-school's current practices. The staff and volunteers are able to work together well to promote children's welfare and learning. However, there is some uncertainty regarding the organisation of the pre-school and the information shown on some documentation. If committee members have become trustees, they need to be aware of their roles and responsibilities. Appraisals are regularly undertaken for all staff to identify their training and development needs.

The pre-school's policies and procedures protect children and are implemented effectively to promote all outcomes. There is an effective key worker system in place to help children to settle in and ensure continuity of care. An accurate registration system is used to keep children safe.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The supervisor and committee chair are very committed to the improvement of care and education for all children. Staff are aware of children's starting points. They generally work with parents to support their child's progress and help children to achieve. The staff team and committee meet together regularly to discuss the provision. The setting has an effective system for monitoring and evaluating their provision. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the pre-school agreed to: obtain permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for the children; develop their child protection policy, and improve the range of resources reflecting diversity and disability. The setting has made steady progress since the last inspection. There are now appropriate consents and procedures in place to safeguard children's welfare. There are items of play equipment available which promote equality of opportunity.

There were no significant weaknesses to report at the last nursery education inspection but consideration was to be given to improving the use of observation and assessments. The setting are now using these successfully to identify the next steps for children's learning but they still need to use them to inform planning.

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

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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):

- develop the range of play equipment available at every session to provide stimulating activities and play opportunities for children and give them sufficient choice to develop their own ideas
- develop the complaints and recruitment policies and procedures to reflect current guidance and practices and make sure correct information regarding the organisation of the pre-school is shown on all documentation.

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 the information gained from assessments to guide planning and improve plans to give a clear understanding of the purpose of the activities and how they can be adapted to suit all children
- provide children with further opportunities for exploration and investigation, make sure they are challenged and supported individually and in small groups to achieve as much as they can.

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