

Hyde Heath Community Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY254245
Inspection date	01 November 2007
Inspector	Sonjia Nicholson
Setting Address	Hyde Heath Infant School, Weedon hill, Hyde Heath, Amersham, Buckinghamshire, HP6 5RW
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Registered person	The trustees of Hyde Heath Community Pre-School Group
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 satisfactory. 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?

Hyde Heath Pre-school has been open for over 20 years. The pre-school is managed by a committee and operates from the Infant School in the village of Hyde Heath, near Amersham in Buckinghamshire. The premises comprise of a single classroom and adjacent toilet block. There is an enclosed outside area for use by the group and they also have access to the school playground and hall.

The pre-school is registered to provide full day care to 22 children from two years to under five years at any one time. There are currently 25 children on roll which includes 18 children in receipt of nursery education funding. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term time from 09:00 until 11.45. Children can stay at the lunch club from 11.45 onwards and then at the Daisy Chain Club which offers care until 15.00. The children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting does not currently support any children who speak English as an additional language or who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

There are six staff who work with the children. The supervisor has a level three qualification and the majority of staff hold early years qualifications to level two or three. One member of

staff is working towards gaining a level two qualification. The pre-school is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance and receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Service.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment where they are beginning to follow and understand simple hygiene practices, for example, they wash their hands before snack and lunch times and know it is 'because you might have germs'. Staff follow good nappy changing procedures which protect children from cross-infection and implement the settings sickness policy to keep children healthy. The majority of staff are able to deal with minor injuries to children using knowledge gained through relevant first aid courses and items from the basic first aid box available. In the event of a more serious accident, staff have parents' written consent to seek emergency treatment on file to ensure children receive prompt and appropriate care. There are procedures in place regarding the administration of medication, whereby staff gain parents' verbal consent to administer prescribed medication. However, staff do not record when they have administered medication, which places children at risk and is a breach of regulations.

Children are developing an understanding of healthy eating through planned cooking activities where they make a variety of nutritious foods, such as vegetable stew, cheese and ham pastries and salad. Food tasting activities, group discussions and a display about healthy foods further helps children learn about which foods are good for them and to experience new flavours and textures. Details of children with allergies and food intolerances are known to staff who organise cookery sessions so that everyone can take part. The setting is registered as a low risk food business with the local environmental health department and staff prepare healthy snacks that provide nourishment for children, including, fresh and dried fruit, breadsticks and savoury biscuits. Children have water or milk to drink with meals and snacks and can ask for a drink at anytime to ensure they do not become thirsty.

Children have many opportunities to be physical. They thoroughly enjoy their weekly Physical Education (PE) session led by a fitness instructor which is a fun time where they develop basic skills, such as balance, agility and spatial awareness. They play a variety of games that increase their skills, confidence and physical abilities. Staff plan a weekly music and movement session which provides further opportunities for children to jump, run, crawl and move to music. They have daily use of an enclosed outdoor area and the school playground where they climb on the climbing frames, manoeuvre ride on toys and enjoy making lots of noise using musical instruments.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a bright, stimulating environment where good use is made of the space available for them to play and move freely. There are many displays of children's artwork and posters around the room which adds to the welcoming environment. Children have easy access to a good range of toys and resources that are stored around the room on open shelves in labelled boxes. Staff actively encourage children to make independent choices about what they want to do, particularly in the Daisy Chain Club where activities are child-led. There are procedures

in place to check and clean toys on a regular basis so they remain in good condition and safe for children to play with.

Children play safely as the premises both inside and outside are secure and free from hazards due to weekly risk assessments undertaken by the staff. Staff provide good supervision to children at all times and help them learn how to keep themselves safe and avoid accidental injury with reminders, such as 'don't rock on your chair because you might fall off' and 'we don't play with scissors because they are sharp'. At collection time there is an established routine in place, designed to keep children safe; staff are particularly vigilant at this time. There are policies in place relating to a child becoming lost or a parent failing to collect their child but some minor details are lacking. Staff describe how they organise safe outings for children, both locally within the village or on a coach further afield but this information is not currently available in writing. Children are very clear about the evacuation procedure which takes place on a regular basis; this means they know how to leave the building safely and quickly. Staff record details of fire drills for future reference.

Staff have a good understanding of their role in safeguarding children through knowledge gained predominantly during their professional childcare courses. They are aware of the signs of possible abuse and know who to report their concerns to. Staff notice when children arrive at the setting with existing injuries but do not record this information. The setting has its own Child Protection policy which needs updating so it refers to the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures. All staff are vetted before they work with the children and students and volunteers are fully supervised at all times to keep children safe. Staff are aware of visitors within the setting as they sign the visitors book and are accompanied at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children have fun as they take part in an interesting range of activities, for example, a group of children make a 'show' for everyone where they dress up and use music from the music box to sing and dance to. This creates lots of laughter and is great fun for all involved. Children make independent choices about what they want to do and appear very happy and settled. There is lots of freedom for them to move and play freely both inside and outside. Children have lots of interaction from the interested staff who chat freely to them, for example, a member of staff asks a child about what happens when she goes to church. This attention helps children develop their confidence and self-esteem. Children receive frequent praise from staff for their efforts, such as 'you're doing a great job' and 'you're doing really well'. Staff provide good care to younger children, for example, noticing when a child needs to go to the toilet and offering cuddles and reassurance to a child who is upset when their parent leaves.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and are clear about the learning objectives of their planned activities, for example, developing scissor skills as they make witches broomsticks. During whole group times staff ensure they gain children's attention so they can listen and learn effectively. Staff manage children's behaviour appropriately and the sessions run smoothly with little or no incident. Staff gather information on entry regarding children's abilities and have a good system in place to make daily observations which they use to plan the next steps in children's learning, consequently, children are making good progress towards the Early Learning Goals. All staff are involved in planning activities which are linked to themes, such as, 'Festivals and

Celebrations'. They spend time each week working with their key worker group to focus on specific areas, for example, pencil control.

Children have a positive approach to learning and new experiences and are highly involved in their activities; they eagerly rush to make a witches broomstick and enjoy the structure of the PE session. They develop good relationships with staff, approaching them freely to initiate conversations and ask questions. Children are very familiar with the daily routine and know what staff expect of them; they walk quietly down to the hall for their PE session, follow instructions from the instructor and respond well to the signal used at tidy-up time. Children are becoming independent as they learn to undress and dress for PE, find their coats on their peg and put the cups on the table for snacktime.

Children speak confidently to adults within the group and their peers, for example, a group of children at snacktime discuss what goes on in their house in the morning. Children have access to the comfortable book corner where they can read a selection of fiction and non-fiction books. They enjoy daily story times as a whole group, followed by familiar songs and rhymes. Children listen attentively as some children confidently sing solo to them. The environment is rich in print with an alphabet frieze, posters of nursery rhymes, name cards and labels. Staff encourage children to recognise their name as they arrive in the morning and by finding their coat on their named peg; there are also picture clues for younger children. Staff encourage those children who can to write their name on their work and there are several activities set out each day where children can make marks freely, including chalks at the easel and a whiteboard and pens. Children are beginning to learn initial sounds as they complete a phonics computer program. Staff introduce new words to extend children's vocabulary, such as 'handle' when talking about the witches broomsticks.

Children use and understand mathematical language, for example, they stretch out to make a big circle then make it small during PE. They are beginning to develop spatial awareness as they find a spot on their own and a child putting his coat on feels squashed and says to a member of staff 'I need more space!'; she encourages him to move away from the other children so he has more room. Children also understand positional language, for example, they make towers with the cones by putting them 'on top' and stand 'opposite' their partner before they roll the ball to one another. Children count by rote to 10 and beyond as staff complete the register, however staff do not seize opportunities throughout the day to encourage children to count and make simple calculations, for example, counting how many children are present as they line up and how many cups are needed at snacktime. Displays of numbers are evident around the room which help children recognise numbers to 10 and there are plenty of resources available to help children develop their mathematical skills, such as a large dice, computer programs, pegs and pegboards, plastic 2D shapes, matching games, sorting equipment and weighing scales. Children measure and weigh their Halloween pumpkin then weigh each other to find someone of a similar weight as a comparison.

Children explore different textures as they play with sand, make frightening Halloween models from clay and manipulate playdough with a range of tools. They investigate change as they take part in weekly cooking sessions where they follow interesting recipes. Children construct witches broomsticks using paper, sellotape and long tubes; they practise their scissors skills and use pens and pencils to decorate the handle. Most children confidently use the computer to develop their hand/eye co-ordination and complete simple programs to aid their matching, sorting, counting and colour recognition skills. Staff ably support those children less able to manipulate and move the mouse. Staff set up a sinking and floating activity using bowls of water on the table and a range of objects which children enjoy experimenting with.

There are daily opportunities for children to express themselves freely as they paint, draw, chalk and make sticky pictures. Children act out scenarios, such as listening to a heartbeat using a stethoscope during role play in the hospital using appropriate props, such as first aid boxes, a telephone, small bed and doctors and nurses uniforms. Two children have great fun pretending to be witches using their broomsticks to go around the room cackling loudly! Children enthusiastically join in with the words of favourite songs at whole group time and enjoy exploring music during outdoor play where they use a variety of different instruments to make noises.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are becoming aware of the wider world through themes and planned activities, particularly as this term's theme is 'Celebrations and Festivals' which incorporates Halloween, Bonfire Night, Diwali and Christmas. There are a number of resources that help children recognise diversity, such as small world play figures in a wheelchair and a grandparent with walking sticks, dolls with differing skin tones, books, and a 'pick and mix people game'. Children feel a sense of belonging as they take part in village and school events, for example, the annual Family Fun Day held on a Saturday so all members of the family can attend. Staff organise a Teddy Bears Picnic with the help of parents and go for walks on the adjacent common. Children participate in an outing away from the setting each year which aims to be fun but also give them new experiences, such as going to a Zoological Museum or play park with paddling pools and a narrow gauge railway. Staff welcome visitors into the group, such as a parent who plays the mandolin, another who organises music sessions and a police officer.

There are currently no children attending with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, however the settings Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator has completed training provided by the Early Years Service, attends regular meetings to keep up to date with issues and receives regular support from the Area Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator who visits each term. Children behave well. They respond well to the bell used to signal registration time which shows they are familiar with the daily routine and listen when staff apply the simple rules in place, for example, reminding a child not to run around because he might fall over. Staff give high priority to developing children's manners, particularly at snack and meal times where they regularly remind them to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Children receive lots of praise from staff which adds to their feelings of security and happiness, especially when they get a sticker for their efforts. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered

New parents receive a prospectus detailing the service provided and on entry parents complete a form containing personal details for their child which includes emergency contacts, dietary needs, likes and dislikes and favourite things; this ensures children receive consistent and individual care. Parents have the opportunity to stay and settle their child at the beginning of each session; it is also a good chance to develop relationships with the staff. Staff provide parents with daily feedback if asked and maintain a parents' notice board where they can access the settings policies, staff photographs, list of keyworker groups and the weekly planning sheet. The committee produce regular newsletters in conjunction with the staff to keep parents informed about what is going on within the setting; they are particularly keen to hear parents' views and have created a questionnaire for them to complete. Parents are very happy with the care provided. They are impressed with the structure of the group, like the fact that staff are thoughtful and constructive about the activities going on, staff provide feedback about good and bad behaviour, children are happy and want to come and the staff are very caring and have the children's interests at heart. Staff keep a complaints log but the complaints policy needs updating to reflect changes to regulations.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory.

Parents complete an Initial Meeting Form which forms the beginning of their child's progress record and provides staff with information about their starting points for learning. Staff make regular observations and keep a Foundation Stage Record for each child which they update each half term. Parents can access these records at anytime but most view them at the annual parents' evening. There is some information evident within the setting about the educational programme, for example, a book containing the Early Learning Goals, Foundation Stage information on the parents' board and references to the six areas of learning in the prospectus but most parents are not familiar with this and therefore have little knowledge of what is expected of their child. Staff give parents information at the beginning of the term regarding the planned themes but there are few opportunities for them to become involved in their child's learning at home, for example, ideas for activities to extend what they have learnt within the group.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Most aspects of the setting are well organised. The committee follow a recruitment procedure to appoint suitable new staff, this includes placing adverts in a variety of places, holding interviews, completing a Criminal Record Bureau check and taking up references. They do not currently seek information from applicants about their health which means the procedure is not fully robust. New members of staff follow an induction programme to ensure they familiarise themselves with all areas of their work, including health and safety issues and policies and procedures. The staff team work very well together and their friendly banter adds to the welcoming atmosphere. They communicate effectively with one another, support new staff and supervise students which means everyone knows what they are doing and consequently the sessions run smoothly.

The committee place a high emphasis on staff training. There is an expectation that all staff will undertake professional childcare training and attend short courses to add to their existing skills and knowledge, most recently, 'Getting Started with Planning' and 'Promoting Positive Behaviour'. Staff meet weekly to discuss the interesting range of activities for children and discuss any pertinent issues. Staff maintain most records to a good standard. The exception to this is the documentation relating to the administration of medication; this is not organised effectively to fully support the children's welfare and safety. Some policies need slight amendments to fully update them and the policy relating to outings needs to be available in writing. The Chairperson is very aware of when Ofsted need to be informed. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are good.

The Chairperson has a clear vision of how she wants to take the setting forward and is aware of the strengths within the group, particularly the fact that everyone has developed good relationships and works well together for the benefit of the children. The committee are keen to seek parents' views on how they can make improvements and involve them more within the group. Staff appraisals take place each year to assess staff development and establish their training needs. The committee hold regular meetings, send e-mails and make telephone calls to ensure clear communication between all members. The Chairperson meets regularly with the Supervisor to discuss and evaluate the nursery education provision and ensure children are in receipt of a broad and balanced curriculum.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection an action was raised to develop procedures to be followed for lost and uncollected children. This action has been met as the previous committee developed and adopted these policies; some minor amendments are required to ensure they remain up to date and this has been raised during this inspection. Four recommendations were also raised; make sure that Ofsted is notified of changes to the premises, ensure that hot drinks do not pose a danger to children, develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues and make sure that all records relating to day care activities are kept and contain sufficient detail and all revised policies and procedures are known to all staff.

Since the last inspection there is a new committee in place along with many new members of staff. During this inspection the new Manager and Chairperson demonstrated a good awareness of the changes and significant events that Ofsted need to be informed of. Staff make hot drinks in the kitchen area which is out of bounds to children and keep them out of reach on a high shelf so there is no danger of spillage. The current staff team are secure in their knowledge of child protection issues and have a good understanding of their role in safeguarding children. Many of the settings policies have been updated, however some minor details are lacking, such as references to changes of regulations since the last inspection; these have been raised during this inspection. Staff have developed a good knowledge of the setting's policies and procedures through their induction programme, regular meetings and team discussions.

The last Nursery Education report was undertaken in 1999 and several key issues were raised relating to the planning of story time, imaginative role play and children's physical development. Staff were asked to encourage children's independence throughout the daily routine and include all six areas of learning in the planning process to ensure a full and balanced programme.

The current staff team plan a broad and balanced curriculum that takes account of all six areas of learning and includes a daily story time, imaginative role play, particularly in the home corner which they change regularly to link into themes and physical development where children take part in a Music and Movement and Physical Education session each week; this is a particular strength of the setting. Children gain independence throughout the day as they put on their coats, select their own snacks and use tissues without adult help.

Until recently the Daisy Chain Club was registered separately. It was last inspected in 2004 when three recommendations were raised; to keep a record of visitors, record accurate times of arrival and departure for children and review the procedure for self-held medication. All visitors to the setting now sign the school's visitors book and the setting's own visitors book so staff are aware of who is on the premises. The register is completed as children arrive to ensure it contains accurate information and there are currently no children who self-medicate attending. Any medication required would be kept out of children's reach in a high cupboard and clearly labelled.

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 satisfactory. 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):

- obtain parents written consent prior to administering medication and ensure a written record is maintained when medication has been administered
- devise a written outings policy and update policies relating to child protection, complaints and if a parent fails to collect their child.

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):

- give parents more information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and provide further opportunities for them to become involved in their child's learning
- provide further opportunities for children to count and make simple calculations during everyday activities.

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