

Hellesdon Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254106
Inspection date	06 December 2007
Inspector	Anne Walker
Setting Address	Kinsale Avenue, Hellesdon, Norwich, Norfolk, NR6 5SG
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Registered person	The Trustees of Hellesdon 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?

Hellesdon Community Pre-school is a committee run group. It opened in 1962 and operates from a self-contained unit, to the rear of Kinsale First School in Hellesdon, on the outskirts of Norwich. A maximum of 40 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting opens each weekday from 09:00 to 11:30 and 12:30 to 15:00, during term times. The children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 62 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 48 receive funding for early education. Children attending the pre-school come from Hellesdon and the surrounding areas. The setting currently supports children with disabilities.

The pre-school employs five full-time staff and two part-time staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications, and the remaining member of staff is shortly to complete a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn how to care for themselves through daily routines and expectations. They are able to make good links about the purpose of washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet because they regularly sing a song about 'using soap to wash the germs away'. Some of the older children in pre-school are very independent in this routine but younger children are always well supported and provided with gentle reminders. Tissues are readily available for children to wipe their nose when needed. A clear policy regarding the care of children who are ill, is shared with parents enabling them to work cooperatively with the pre-school to minimise the spread of infections. Most of the workforce hold a current first aid certificate so that there are always staff at each session with the necessary skills to deal with any accidents. Suitable records are kept of any accidents, and medication administered to children, so that children's health and welfare is promoted. Parental consent to seek emergency medical treatment is not part of the records gathered before children start at the setting. This could comprise the care of children in an emergency.

Each day the children enjoy a snack which always includes fruit and a carbohydrate to maintain their energy levels. Healthy options of milk or water are provided for them to drink and they have independent access to drinking water at all times, so that they learn the value of drinking sufficient water to ensure their health. Food is safely prepared and presented for children as all the adults caring for them hold food hygiene certificates. Any specific dietary requirements are known and effectively acted upon to ensure children do not eat any foods that may cause them harm.

The pre-school has good outdoor facilities that are used effectively in all weathers. A covered area enables children to play outdoors during heavy rain so that they experience the seasons in all their variety. They eagerly choose to put on warm coats and get outdoors in the fresh air. They enjoy experimenting with different ways to come down the slide and have space to build with large blocks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are looked after in a bright, well-maintained setting. Good risk assessment procedures ensure that hazards to children indoors and out are minimised in order that they play safely and use their surroundings independently. For most of the session children choose to play indoors or out. Adults ensure that all areas are secure so that they cannot leave unsupervised and they deploy themselves effectively to watch over children. Good staffing levels provide children with purposeful interaction with adults who are skilled at engaging them in activities. Fire drills are carried out at regular intervals and children learn to cooperate with the adults to evacuate the building quickly in an emergency. There are effective procedures at the beginning and end of each session so that they are kept safe at these busy times.

The pre-school has a broad range of well-maintained furniture that provide a comfortable and attractive environment. The play materials are of good quality and age-appropriate so that children do not have access to things that will cause them harm. Activities with increased risks, such as woodwork, are well managed with good levels of adult supervision. They are introduced gradually so that children learn to respect the use of tools and materials.

Children's welfare is promoted as the adults caring for them have a suitable knowledge of their child protection responsibilities. Most staff have attended training to ensure their skills are current. There is a policy that acts as a useful guide for staff and parents enabling them to work cooperatively in children's best interests. Explanations for existing injuries are sought but not routinely recorded. This could compromise the welfare and safety of children if information is needed to be shared with external agencies.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The pre-school is organised and ready to receive children. They arrive to a welcoming environment that enables them to separate from their parent or carer and settle to an interesting range of activities. The environment is organised so that their independence is fostered. There is a broad window of time for having their snack so that their play is not unduly interrupted. Additional play materials are stored at child height so that they make choices, such as if they wish to change the construction materials on the carpet. Routines are consistent so that young children quickly get to know how the morning or afternoon is structured. This helps them relax and enjoy what is on offer whilst knowing when mum or dad will return to collect them.

Regard is given to providing children under three with activities and care that meet their developmental needs. Adults looking after them use guidance such as 'Birth to three matters', to assist their planning and assessment in order to support their next developmental steps.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from the qualified workforce who have a secure knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. They work well as a team to plan and deliver a broad range of interesting activities across the six areas of learning. Their practice demonstrates a good awareness of the importance for children to feel secure and valued in order to learn. Effective strategies ensure this is given high regard from the outset. Adults develop good relationships with children showing sensitivity where it is needed and an enthusiasm for what they are doing. This combination of factors mean that the children are interested in engaging with adults, motivated to learn and open to new challenges.

Good staffing levels ensure that children have sufficient adult support which on occasions helps them extend their use of play materials or questions are posed which encourage them to think more about what they are doing. There is also time for the children to explore activities independently and with their friends. Stories are read together in large groups and the children listen with interest and show awareness of the story by responding to questions asked by the adult. They use these experiences to share stories with friends, discussing between themselves what they think will happen. 'What is the cat going to do?' 'Oh no, he'll be squashed!' There are daily, varied opportunities for them to mark-make and older children are beginning to form letters of the alphabet, recording their names on their work. Number skills are developed so that some children count to 10 or beyond. They recognise numbers which they see across the nursery, including an advent calendar which they open each day prior to Christmas. Number rhymes are used to introduce mathematical concepts and children confidently give their answer to questions about 'how many are left'. Adults are becoming increasingly confident to incorporate child initiated interests into their planning a recent example being recycling. This is a powerful tool in developing children's confidence as independent learners.

The indoor and outdoor environments are used effectively. Many children express their preference to be outside, drawing chalk pictures or taking part in role play 'at the hairdressers', as well as using large physical equipment, experimenting with different ways to use their bodies to get down the slide. Indoors they sing enthusiastically in preparation for their Christmas concert, whilst outside they dance and sing using simple musical instruments.

Staff meet regularly to plan future activities and use their observations of children to inform this process. Development records for children are updated frequently so that they have current information readily to hand to do this. The process to translate the observations into the planning is not fully refined. This means that they do not always effectively use what they know to set the best challenges for individual children's next steps in learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's individual needs are known and acted upon. The staff show commitment in doing their best for children and their families, valuing children as individuals and ensuring that their experiences of pre-school are positive and their self-esteem and sense of themselves as part of the pre-school community are high. They establish excellent communication channels with parents and carers so that they feel welcome and are able to share regular information. Staff use this process to ensure children's happiness and ability to learn remain constant. Children's art work is attractively displayed across the setting. Their efforts to communicate their thoughts and interests are listened to respectfully so that they develop a sense of ownership and empowerment and are able to influence what occurs.

There are excellent strategies to help children with disabilities and additional learning needs join in all activities alongside their peers. The setting is pro-active in ensuring that strategies are in place to meet their needs from the outset. Members of staff with responsibility in this area show genuine commitment to working in partnership with parents and other professionals to review what they provide, ensuring that progress is achieved and acknowledged and next steps are put in place. Review decisions are shared at team meetings enabling consistent implementation across all the adults working in the pre-school. This means that children have care which is seamless and their opportunities are equal to all others attending.

Adults have warm and trusting relationships with children and are good role models so that children are encouraged to cooperate and behave well. Positive strategies, implemented by staff who work as a team, mean that children quickly learn what is expected of them and the benefits of managing their own behaviour in order to enjoy themselves and take part in what is offered. Good staffing levels, and adults that are confident practitioners in this area, ensure that someone is always on hand with the knowledge of how to deal with everyday situations that arise when children are learning to share and take turns with their peers. Adults show children ways of dealing with situations themselves, for example, using egg timers to share time at popular equipment such as bikes or the computer. This helps children to begin to find ways of resolving potential conflicts for themselves. A range of activities, play materials and posters in the pre-school foster children's awareness of the lives of others and their respect for people's similarities and differences. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. They receive initial information about the Foundation Stage in the prospectus and how the six areas of learning are taught through play. There is a white board at the entrance, outlining what the children have been doing, enabling

parents to talk with the children about their morning or afternoon. Parents can help at sessions, giving them a valuable insight into how the children spend their time. The development records are 'parent friendly' as they use photographs and examples of children's work, as well as written observations, to illustrate the progress children make towards the early learning goals. The documents are readily accessible and parents know they can look at them when they wish. Children and their parents have the option of taking a book home from the pre-school on a regular basis. This provides a good link between home and pre-school and further fosters children's interest in books and reading.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are looked after by a consistent staff team who hold relevant early years qualifications and are enthusiastic and interested in doing the best for the children in their care. They have attended a broad range of short courses that are pertinent to the children they look after and keep them aware of the current trends in early years care and education. There are good induction processes so that new staff and students learn quickly how the setting operates, and become effective team members. High adult to child ratios provide children with good levels of support helping them remain confident and happy in the pre-school environment.

Appropriate strategies are in place that ensure those working with children are suitable to do so, with relevant checks carried out and records kept. The system for checking staffs mental and physical suitability for their post is slightly less robust so that there is potential for it to impact on the quality of care children receive. Records are organised and sufficiently available to demonstrate that conditions of registration and requirements are maintained. They are used effectively to manage the day-to-day running of the setting. Overall children's needs are met.

The leadership and management is good. The committee meet regularly and the pre-school manager and her deputy provide them with a report on the running of the setting. Some members of the committee visit the setting weekly and are able to view how it is operating and see first hand if there are any concerns. Overall, appropriate channels of communication are established and maintained so that they monitor the quality of the nursery education on an ongoing basis. Rotas are organised so that staff have time to carry out their planning and assessments for children. Training is encouraged so that staff retain the necessary skills. The manager works directly in the setting. She and her deputy provide good role models for less experienced staff and ensure that they are deployed effectively during the session.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to improve the storage for buggies and ensure that the temporary fencing in the outdoor area is secure so that children cannot leave unsupervised. Both matters have been dealt with effectively to ensure children's welfare and safety. There is an area designated for parents to leave buggies if they wish but parents are made aware of their responsibilities should they choose to do so. An area of temporary fencing has been replaced with more solid and permanent structures that prevent children accessing other areas of the school playgrounds.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting agreed to continue to evaluate the new assessment system that they were establishing so that it remained relevant. The current assessment system is appropriate as it reflects children's progress across the six areas of learning towards the early learning goals and shows clearly what children know and can do. As

practitioners they are currently considering ways to better use this information, across the staff team, to set realistic challenges for individual children across the curriculum.

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):

- request parental consent to seek emergency medical treatment
- improve procedures for recording existing injuries
- further develop procedures to check that staff are mentally and physically suitable for their post

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):

- continue to refine the planning and assessment systems to support staff in adapting activities to meet individual children's next steps in learning.

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