

Old Hutton Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	501095
Inspection date	21 February 2008
Inspector	Diane Roberts

Setting Address	Old Hutton Village Hall, Old Hutton C of E School, Kendal, Cumbria, LA8 0NQ
Telephone number	01539720309
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Registered person	Old Hutton 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?

Old Hutton Pre-school is run by a committee. It opened in 2003 and operates from two rooms and reception area of the village hall in the grounds of Old Hutton Church of England School in the village of Old Hutton, Kendal, Cumbria. A maximum of 13 children may attend the setting at any one time. The setting is open each weekday from 09.00 to 11.30 and Monday, Tuesday and Thursday from 12.45 to 15.15 during term time. Children have access to an enclosed outdoor play area and share access to the school's outdoor facilities.

There are currently 15 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the village and the surrounding rural area. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. There are no children for whom English is an additional language.

The setting employs two staff both of whom hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean and well maintained environment. Staff make sure that children's individual needs are met ensuring their well-being. Procedures are in place to make sure any specific medical needs are responded to immediately. Good measures are taken when children are ill to make sure the health of others is maintained. For instance, children who are infectious do not attend thereby preventing the spread of contagious ailments. This acts in the best interest of children, thereby protecting them.

Children have a reasonable awareness of healthy practices such as hand washing. They know to wash their hands before eating, after handling visiting animals and after toileting. Soap in bottles and individual paper towels for drying hands help to avoid cross-contamination. However, when washing their hands before snack, children share a bowl of water. This practice could help to spread infection.

Children learn about the importance of healthy eating. They enjoy nourishing snacks appropriate to their individual needs, presented attractively to encourage them to eat. A selection of fresh fruit is provided by parents by rota. Children proudly talk about the fruit they have brought as they happily share a plate of apple, kiwi and orange with one of their friends. Children of all ages skilfully pour their own drinks. Good portion control is encouraged as the children clearly know how much drink to pour by using the line inside the cup as a guide.

Children's growth and development are promoted through regular chances to exercise. Daily opportunities to participate in vigorous play encourages a healthy attitude towards exercise. Children improve their physical skills such as balance and co-ordination by balancing on beams or running up and down the gently sloping playground chasing their friends. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they successfully complete a stimulating obstacle course. They develop a strong sense of purpose and self fulfilment as they throw balls in buckets, crawl through tunnels and jump from circle to circle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a stimulating safe environment with colourful displays and interesting activities. High priority is given to ensuring the safety of children and security of the premises. Clearly defined procedures are in place for the emergency evacuation of the building and fire drills are practised on a very regular basis. A high level of supervision and a keen awareness of safety issues allows children the freedom to choose activities that offer variety and challenge within safe limits.

Children have a good grasp of how to keep themselves safe by avoiding accidents as staff put a strong emphasis on raising their awareness. For instance, when playing in the water trough, children know to mop up any spills to prevent anyone slipping. When sitting around the table, children remind another child not to swing on two legs of the chair as the chair might fall over and they could be hurt.

Clear documentation is in place to protect children with regard to child abuse. Staff are fully aware of their responsibilities with regard to reporting of suspected abuse or neglect in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. A designated member of staff further

ensures children's safety because staff understand their role in child protection and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary. This means the setting can act quickly in the child's best interest and safeguard their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident demonstrating their enjoyment of the time spent in the vibrant surroundings. They have a very good attitude to learning and are motivated and interested in the many resources available to them. Children are encouraged to explore their surroundings and choose from the exciting range of activities. There is a strong emphasis on friendship within the setting and children happily play alongside one another, sharing and working cooperatively. Children learn what is expected of them by the consistent application of clear boundaries.

Staff create a very good learning environment. This enables children to choose their activity depending on their personal interest. For instance, children thoroughly enjoy playing with the small world resources, such as toy tractors and a miniature farm and animals. They have plenty of time to play and explore these familiar items that reflect their local rural community. Thereby, they can learn about their surroundings and resources independently and at their own pace. Staff plan interesting and stimulating activities that support and promote children's learning and development. The excellent range of activities and resources enable children to explore and create using all their senses.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making very good progress towards the early learning goals due to staff's keen knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. Taking inspiration from the internet and professional publications, staff plan the learning environment and activities to provide a wide range of activities across the six areas of learning. The very well planned learning environment and programme of activities is suited to the needs of the children and reflects the community and wider world. Good evidence of children's work is maintained which clearly shows how children are making progress in their learning and development.

Staff's style of teaching truly interests the children and helps them focus, persist and resist distraction. This means that children are supported to achieve as much as they can. For example, children thoroughly enjoy completing the obstacle course in the hall. Staff skilfully demonstrate the detailed course showing the children just what has to be done and where. The children closely watch and without exception, they competently finish the course. Staff are very attentive to the children, constantly interacting with them without stifling their independence. They are skilled in extending children's learning at every opportunity.

Careful assessments and observations are made and the information is used as a guide for planning and to help move children to the next stage in learning. Staff share information regarding each child's progress and make sure they fully benefit from all activities. Every term each child has clearly defined goals and staff plainly identify how they can help each child reach these goals.

Children are making considerable progress in their communication, language and literacy skills. They can readily access a wide range of mark-making materials such as, pencils, crayons and

markers. Children are developing early writing skills and some can write their names independently. Staff are very good at prompting language and conversation. For instance, during a memory game, children are encouraged to give clues about a missing item from a selection on a tray. Children wait patiently and respectfully as they each take a turn. Impressive clues such as 'it has an exhaust' or 'it has wheels' are given by children as young as three. Children glow with pride as they are thanked for their clues or their participation. They are beginning to understand the foundations of reading and writing as they learn that text runs from left to right on a page. A great selection of books, attractively displayed and easily accessible, invite children. They can often be seen sharing a book whilst sitting on the cushions in the book corner or snuggling up to one of the staff whilst they look at a book together. These experiences help to foster a love of books and an appreciation of the written word. The attractive displays and well labelled collages and paintings around the room further help towards making this a literacy-rich setting. However, numerical text is limited. This could restrict children's ability to recognise number form. Children have good knowledge of positional language such as 'between' when lining up between the lines of the zigzags outdoors. They spontaneously count and enjoy lots of action songs including numbers such as one about five little monkeys.

There are lots of opportunities for children to operate and explore information technology. They use the computer independently and with support from staff to enhance their learning. Visitors to the setting give children information and knowledge. For example, the veterinary surgeon talks to children about animals and brings a dog to visit. Children are thrilled to hear the dog's heart beat by listening through a stethoscope. Through different topics, themes and visitors to the setting children are learning about their community and the wider world.

Children develop their imagination and creativity through painting, collage, story times and a variety of role-play activities. Staff are fully committed to changing the role-play area each week to secure children's interest. Whether the area is a hairdresser's or a building site, children enjoy good levels of challenge making connections in their learning. The very wide range of attractive dressing up clothes made with bright, shiny material of a variety of textures are easily accessible to children. Exploring a range of creative materials and experimenting with colours and textures fuels children's imagination. Throughout the session, children play in the impressively created opticians in the role play area. Staff and parents act as patients as children 'test' their sight and sell them a pair of glasses from the wide range available. This very well resourced area has gift bags for the purchases and a credit card machine and a cash register for payments. Children are able to write appointments in the diary and use one of the many telephones to confirm arrangements.

Staff give high priority to nurturing children's personal, social and emotional development. Children are developing secure relationships and behaviour is of a high standard. A great range of worthwhile activities are rotated to stimulate children and maintain their interest. Children are independent and have many opportunities to self select from a good range of activities throughout the session. Parents are made to feel welcome, valued and necessary through a range of planned and spontaneous opportunities. Staff create a secure environment where children can develop good attitudes and dispositions to learning. They interact very well with each other and support children in a way that positively affects their attitudes to learning. Staff effectively help the children become more aware of their environment and the natural world with many first hand experiences such as walks in the community and visits to the school wildlife area. They invite speakers into the setting such as the vet and the dentist. A neighbour has donated some of their garden for children to grow vegetables. Staff establish good relationships with the children and respond readily with enthusiasm to their needs. They make very good

use of time and resources and use their monitoring procedures very well to evaluate the care and the quality of their teaching.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm caring environment. Staff put great emphasis on treating each child as an individual. They have many opportunities to engage in activities which enhance their learning and understanding of the wider community and the world around them. For example, the role play area is used to good effect. On the week of the inspection, the role play area was an opticians. On other occasions it becomes a veterinary surgery or a builders yard. Children enjoy learning about cultural celebrations such as Harvest Festival by visiting the church next door and talking with the vicar. This helps children to understand and value the similarities and differences between themselves and others.

Children are valued and made to feel an important part of their local community. For instance, a villager has offered the setting use of her garden so the children can grow vegetables. Another neighbour captures the children's interest by telling them stories of her homeland of Australia. At Christmas, children fill a box with gifts for children overseas who are less fortunate than themselves. Hence, children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development are fostered.

Children's sense of belonging is promoted through the staff knowing the children very well and striving to meet their individual interests. For example, children take pleasure in sitting around the table with their friends. They happily chat over their snack and are polite and respectful waiting for one another to finish what they are saying before talking. The staff work hard to create an inclusive environment. Children have the freedom to follow their own learning agendas with support readily at hand should it be needed. Photographs of the children are creatively included in the pleasing array of wall-collages thereby helping to develop children's sense of belonging.

Children are confident and show good self-esteem responding well to continual praise and encouragement. Staff have good expectations of children's behaviour and consistently promote the use of good manners by skilful modelling. Children respond well as staff give them time to do things for themselves. For instance, children are encouraged to put on their own coats before playing outdoors. Staff are rewarded by the look of pleasure on children's faces when they succeed in putting their coats on or pulling up a zip. Children laugh and joke together demonstrating mutual respect. For instance, two children laugh and giggle as they say they are the teachers sitting on the chairs at the front of the group. Staff join in with the joke making the others laugh. Children are learning to respect others and realise the consequences of their actions may effect others. For example, when children are splashing in the water trough they are advised to listen to their friends sharing their play, as they might not want to get wet.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the lovely family atmosphere in a happy secure environment. Strong relationships between staff and parents makes sure children's individual needs are very well met. Parents are given clear and meaningful information on the Foundation Stage and the programme of learning through the welcome pack on registration, the prospectus and by the comprehensive notice boards. They are kept well informed of their child's achievements through daily exchange of information and regular opportunities to meet with staff to discuss their child's written progress reports. Parents speak highly of the setting and the staff with remarks such as 'a warm happy atmosphere' and 'lovely staff'.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are very happy and self-motivated in a well-organised environment. They are well cared for by a team of truly dedicated staff who have great experience, knowledge, skills and a strong sense of purpose. Children benefit from the staff's commitment to attending regular training to improve and consolidate their practice. Space and resources are effectively used to meet the children's individual needs and ensure their safety, welfare and development. Group sizes and staff deployment contribute to children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and ability to take an active part in the setting.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The manager is conscientious in her approach and works alongside the other member of staff. Both are effectively deployed to ensure children are very well supported. They work cohesively as a highly committed team. The manager has a clear vision for the nursery education with a strong focus on personal development and achievement of all children. Comprehensive and flexible planning systems allow children to make extensive choices. Children benefit from staff who are well qualified and are knowledgeable of not only child development but of the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

The consistent implementation of the detailed policies and procedures results in the successful promotion of children's well-being. Policies and procedures are organised together to show how the setting promotes the outcomes for children. Children's welfare and individual needs are well met at this setting and appropriate records are in place to support their understanding of each child.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting agreed to revise policies to ensure they reflect current practice, specifically, health and hygiene, child protection and special educational needs. Since then they have revised all related policies thereby making sure children's welfare is promoted.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 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.

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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):

- review the arrangements for children's hand washing to minimise the spread of infection.

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):

- improve opportunities for children to see numbers to enable them to recognise their form and learn some number names.

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