

# Humpty Dumpty Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	119484
<b>Inspection date</b>	15 May 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Lisa Paisley
<b>Setting Address</b>	1 Sutton Road, Southend-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 5PA
<b>Telephone number</b>	07984 879986
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Humpty Dumpty 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 satisfactory. 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?

Humpty Dumpty Playgroup is run by a management committee of volunteers. The playgroup opened in 2001 and operates from a church hall situated in central Southend-on-Sea, Essex. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school opens five days a week during school term-times. Session times are from 09:30 until 13:15 on Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, and from 12:00 until 16:00 on Tuesday. Children can attend for a shorter session of two and a half hours on each day.

There are currently 27 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 21 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The playgroup serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties and who have English as an additional language.

The playgroup employs four staff, all of whom hold early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning about the importance of personal hygiene through effective daily routines, such as, washing their hands after creative activities and before snack and mealtimes. Relevant pictures and signs placed at child-height in the bathroom area provide children with reminders. They have access to warm running water, liquid soap and paper hand towels minimising the potential risk of cross-infection. Documentation in relation to children's health, such as, accident forms are in place and signed by the parents. All of the staff are first aid trained, the first aid box is easily accessible for staff and all items are regularly checked and replaced when needed. This ensures suitable care and attention in the event of an accident or administering medication.

Children enjoy a suitable range of activities, which contribute to their health, well-being and physical development. They develop increasing control of their bodies when they competently use the trampoline, rockers, play ball games and follow tracks. They have on going opportunities to develop their manipulative hand skills, as they have access to a range of small, malleable toys, such as, pegs, threading, play dough utensils and scissors enabling them to practise their skills.

Children help themselves to easily accessible drinking water during the session and a variety of healthy and nutritious snacks are offered to the children. Snack times are healthy and well balanced, taking into account of the individual and cultural needs of all children. They have choices from a range of different fruits available including bananas, oranges and apples. Children who stay for lunch bring in their own pack lunches and staff encourage parents to provide healthy options. Children are beginning to learn about healthy eating as staff sit with them provide positive support and guidance. As a result, children are beginning to understand the importance of a healthy diet. Staff are suitably vigilant at snack time to ensure that the snacks comply with all special dietary requirements to ensure children remain healthy.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a safe and well-maintained environment where formal daily risk assessments are implemented to identify and reduce potential hazards. For example, all fire exits are clear and in working order, the main entrance is secure and low-level sockets are protected. Visitors are required to show their identification badge and they are recorded in the register confirming the visit. There are clear procedures for the arrival and departure of children, ensuring children arrive and leave the premises safely. Fire evacuation procedures are in place ensuring children and staff know how to evacuate the building quickly and safely. Children's awareness of safety is promoted through gentle reminders from staff, such as, walking inside, holding scissors safely and carrying chairs appropriately.

The main play area is warm and welcoming for children. The hall is brightly decorated with good quality displays of children's art work, posters, notices in English and other languages and information for parents. Staff have a secure awareness of how to organise space, furniture and equipment effectively, enabling children to move freely with independence around activities and different play areas. As a result, children feel confident within the playgroup and are safe and secure. Children benefit from using a good selection of toys and play equipment which are

maintained to a high standard. Children generally self-select their own play resources which are appropriate to their ages and stages of development, fostering choice and independence.

Children are effectively protected by staff who have a suitable understanding of child protection procedures and know how to put these into practice to safeguard children's welfare. A written policy is in place and staff are able to recognise signs of abuse and know whom to contact if they are concerned about a child in their care. The playgroup have obtained information regarding the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Parents are informed of the playgroup's responsibility regarding child protection reassuring parents of their child's welfare.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children generally enjoy their time at the playgroup and are happy and settled due to staff relating to them sensitively. They are provided with activities which are generally interesting and stimulating. For example, water play with boats, role play, books, physical and creative activities, however, the range of activities do not always capture children's interest and sustain their attention. Subsequently children occasionally play with no purpose. Staff developed warm and generally effective relationships with the children, enabling them to feel secure and develop a strong sense of their own self-worth. The playgroup have taken appropriate action in implementing the 'Birth to three matters' framework, ensuring younger children are suitably supported within the setting.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff use the Foundation Stage curriculum adequately and securely to plan a range of activities for children. However, teaching methods, activities and resources of the playgroup limit children's learning experiences as there is no registration time or small group activities. Planning sufficiently covers all the six areas of learning sufficiently. Focus activity planning is in place with clear learning intentions, evaluation and assessments of activities this informs future activity plans. Children's interests and comments are beginning to influence planning, for example, the current interest in pirates. A key person system is in place and staff use individual profiles to record children's developmental progress. Children enjoy their time at the playgroup.

Children are happy and confident within the playgroup. They are keen and enthusiastic to participate in the range of activities provided. Children are encouraged to independently self-select resources and initiate their own activities and games. They show a sense of belonging as they greet staff and each other upon arrival and they are learning to share, take turns and be co-operative. For example, making boats together. Children are developing secure communication skills, as they engage in conversation with their friends and staff, who actively listen. For example, talking about a new baby sibling. The book corner is inviting and comfortable for children where they enjoy books sitting in small groups with friends and staff to share stories, such as, 'Whose Stripes'. However, there is no organised story time with the children, as a result, children are not developing an early appreciation of stories. They confidently use tools and resources to make marks. Older and more able children are beginning to write their name. Meaningful mark making is linked in with role play, however, the use of name cards is limited, for example, there is no self-registration. They gain an understanding of early numeracy skills through singing number rhymes and daily routines, for example, counting boxed raisins before snack time. Older and more able children can count up to 10 and beyond. Sand and water activities help develop children's sense of size, weight and capacity.

Children learn about the local community through staff inviting people from the community into the playgroup to meet the children and talk about their roles, for example, the local football team. There are opportunities for children to take trips out into the community, such as, visits to the local library, shops, pet shop and Marsh Farm. They have opportunities to learn about the natural world through planned topics and activities, for example, growing seeds and learning about the life cycle of butterflies. Children are developing a secure awareness of the uses of information technology in everyday life and are able to operate equipment, for example, telephones, cooker, toaster and the computer. Children's imaginations and free expression are suitably promoted through a range of activities including playing musical instruments, singing, painting, and craft activities. They particularly enjoyed making their own three dimensional treasure island, linked in with their current interest in pirates. There are adequate opportunities for children to engage in role play, such as, the restaurant, veterinary surgery and home corner. Children move around the premises safely avoiding hazards, as they find a space on a mat at story time and line up when requested before lunch. Their physical skills are effectively promoted through a variety of mediums, such as, the trampoline, balls and rockers. Children use small scale equipment safely and with increasing control to help develop their finer manipulative skills.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are warmly greeted on arrival making them feel welcomed. They are treated with equal concern, helping them to settle and join in with the activities. Staff respect parents wishes with regards to any individual needs, helping to promote the children's self-esteem. Children who have learning difficulties and English as an additional language are respected and are fully integrated within the playgroup. Their needs are met through staff working in partnership with parents and other agencies. Diversity is securely promoted within the pre-school, for example, children participate in festivals, such as, Chinese New Year, Saint George's Day, Easter, Mother's Day and Christmas. Consequently, an inclusive environment is effectively promoted. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children are generally well behaved and staff do regularly praise and encourage them for their individual achievements, promoting their self-esteem and confidence. However, due to the lack of focus to the sessions and staff not always fully implementing effective strategies children's behaviour becomes more challenging and staff can become over directive. As a result, there are missed opportunities in children's play and learning experiences. Children are generally able to share play equipment, take turns, help one another and take responsibility for their own actions as staff adequately support children in managing their own behaviour. They respect their environment by helping to tidy away toys before snack time and at the end of the session.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from their parents being actively involved in their children's learning. For example, regular newsletters are sent out to parents informing them of future events this includes a trip to Marsh farm. Children are encouraged to bring in items from home linked to topic work. The notice board provides parents with all the required information about the playgroup, including the Early Years Foundation Stage. Formal meetings are not in place providing the opportunity for parents to discuss their child's individual progress with staff, ensuring parents are fully informed with regard to their child's welfare and development. Staff listen to parents' concerns and a written complaints procedure and log are in place.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's care is adequately supported by the secure organisation of the playgroup. All staff have been vetted by the Criminal Records Bureau, ensuring their suitability when looking after children. Staff make sufficient use of available play space, however, the lack of focus with regard to daily routines limits children's play and learning experiences. Documentation and records are in place and are suitably organised, this ensures that the playgroup meets the National Standards.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The manager and staff work closely together to ensure the day to day running of the playgroup runs smoothly. Staff have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities, however, their practical skills require further development to ensure consistent purposeful interactions with the children. They are suitably deployed within the playgroup and staffing ratios are maintained throughout the session ensuring children are well supervised and supported during activities. Staff have a suitable understanding of the policies and procedures which are in place and regular team meetings take place ensuring all concerns are effectively addressed. Staff have regular appraisals ensuring training needs are met. Consequently, children receive secure continuity of care, play and learning experiences.

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

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection, the quality of care was judged as inadequate. The setting was required to ensure; that the arrangements for nappy changing meet Environmental Health recommendations, assess the risks to children in relation to their access to batteries, the storage cupboard and cleaning products in the kitchen and take action to minimise these, review and update the action plan for staff training with timescales to show how the manager will achieve a Level 3 qualification, notify Ofsted of all changes to the committee and ensure that all members complete the appropriate vetting procedures (this refers to completing DC2 forms and CRB disclosures), ensure that the leadership and management promote high standards, set clear directions and manage the setting efficiently, ensure that sufficient staff are deployed within the premises to ensure the safety, welfare and development of the children, ensure that children are cared for less than a continuous period of four hours in any day and develop staff's knowledge and understanding of behaviour management, so that it is consistent and developmentally appropriate.

The nappy changing procedure has been reviewed ensuring that they meet Environmental Health recommendations, risks assessments have been reviewed and updated to ensure that there are no potential hazards to children, the manager has a level 3 qualification, Ofsted have been notified of changes with regards to committee members and the manager is currently being supported in her role to ensure that staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities and staff deployment within the setting has been improved. Some staff have attended behaviour management training, however, further development is still required to ensure secure improvements with regards to managing children's behaviour is effective. Overall, secure improvements have been made with regards to the quality of care.

At the last inspection, the quality of the education was judged as inadequate. The setting was required to ensure; review the organisation of the sessions and the way the activities are presented to ensure that children have more opportunities to investigate, initiate their own

learning and are inspired to achieve as much as they can (this also relates to care) and complete the planning cycle by ensuring that staff identify children's next steps in learning and use these observations to inform future planning so that activities build on what children know and can do.

The organisation of the setting and activities have been reviewed to ensure children have suitable opportunities to investigate, initiate their own learning and inspired to achieve and planning has been updated to ensure staff identify next steps in their learning and they use the observations to inform future activity plans, building what children know and understand. However, further development is required to the overall organisation of daily routines to provide children with purposeful learning activities. Overall, secure improvements have been made with regard to the nursery education.

### **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 satisfactory.

### **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 a range of activities for younger children that successfully capture their interest and attention
- develop further a range of positive and inclusive strategies to manage children's behaviour
- review the organisation of daily routines to provide children with purposeful play and learning opportunities.

#### **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 range of activities, resources and teaching methods used by staff
- develop children's appreciation of books and stories

- develop staff's practical skills with regard to their interactions with the children.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)