

Orchard Park Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	321588
Inspection date	28 April 2008
Inspector	Linda Cook
Setting Address	Badger Paddock, Huntington, York, North Yorkshire, YO31 9EH
Telephone number	07930410216
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Registered person	Orchard Park 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 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?

Orchard Park Playgroup is a committee run provision that provides sessional care. It opened in 1967 and operates from one room in Huntington Community Centre, which is situated in York, in North Yorkshire. The children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor area.

A maximum of 24 children may attend the provision at any one time. The playgroup is open during term time only from 09.15 to 12.15 on a Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday. On Thursday it is open from 09.15 to 11.15 and from 12.00 to 15.00. There is also a lunch club that is open on a Monday, Tuesday, and Wednesday from 12.15 to 13.15.

There are currently 41 children aged from two to four years on roll. Of these, 28 children receive funding for nursery education. The setting welcomes children with additional educational needs and children who speak English as an additional language. The playgroup employs five staff; four of them have a level 3 childcare qualification and the fifth is working towards one. The playgroup receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and are members of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children begin to understand the benefits of a healthy diet, through the promotion of nutritious snacks including fresh fruit. Older children talk knowledgeably about which foods are good for them and that sweets are not good for you. Visitors to the setting talk to the children about the benefits of a healthy diet and the importance of good oral hygiene. Drinks are provided at snack time and the children have a choice of milk or water.

Children develop a positive attitude to being active. They have regular opportunities to enjoy physical activities both indoors and in the outdoor play area. Children move with increasing control as they manoeuvre wheeled toys and practise their climbing and balancing skills on the outdoor equipment. Indoors they enjoy taking part in an increasing range of children's action rhymes.

Children are cared for in a well maintained environment where they learn about good hygiene practices. They learn to wash their hands before eating and after taking part in messy activities. They know that this is important to ensure they do not get germs in their tummies which make you sick. The procedures minimise the risk of infection as the clear sick child policy and a list of incubation periods is shared with parents. Most staff have current first aid certificates and appropriate accident and medication records are maintained.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Space is used effectively allowing children to have free and safe access to all activities. Children and parents are warmly welcomed by staff as they arrive. Staff arrive early to set out a range of activities and resources for the children to choose from.

Children are able to play freely in an environment where risks are identified and minimised. Staff check the premises each morning before the children arrive using a check list. Children choose freely from good quality play equipment which meets safety standard and door security is very good as the children arrive and depart or access the outdoor area.

Children begin to learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe. The staff explain to them why they need to sit on their chairs properly and how to cross roads safely. Emergency evacuation procedures are displayed and children are provided with regular opportunities to practise these. Staff give children's safety high priority and are vigilant in their supervision of the children.

Children's welfare is appropriately safeguarded as staff have a satisfactory understanding of child protection procedures. Key staff and committee members have completed child protection training and there is a policy in place which follows local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the playgroup, they arrive happy and quickly settle to activities. They separate from their carers well. Those who are new to the setting or who are reluctant to

say goodbye to the parents and carers receive individual attention from sensitive staff. They gently support and reassure them with their close presence, gradually encouraging them to become involved. Children develop secure relationships with staff and are developing their relationships with each other. Communication skills with children are satisfactorily supported through appropriate adult-to-child interactions. Children receive praise and encouragement for their achievements; this develops their self-esteem.

Staff plan a satisfactory range of activities appropriate for the younger children. Activities are planned around a theme or topic and are set up for children's arrival. Younger children are making satisfactory progress. Staff have attended 'Birth to three matters' training and the framework is incorporated in the planning process.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make steady progress through the six areas of learning because staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. They consider children's interests and plan activities and experiences that children enjoy and generally sustain their interest, helping them learn to concentrate and persevere. They use a reasonable range of teaching methods, with good opportunities for child-initiated play, complimented by adult-led activities.

The staff are interested in the children and listen to what they say. The current detailed plans of activities show that the whole curriculum is covered over the children's time at the setting; they also show intended learning and how more able children are to be challenged and less able children supported in their learning. Regular observations and assessments are completed by the children's key-worker. They complete a file for each child containing samples of work, photographs and the recording of their observations.

The staff use the available premises well. They arrive early to transform the community centre as much as they can to accommodate early learning and self help skills. The daily routines are generally effective in developing the children's independence, although arrangements for group time and snack time do not meet the children's needs well and as a result children become restless and do not always listen.

Children speak confidently, ask questions and talk about what they are doing. They communicate well with staff and each other. Books are readily available; children handle them well, turning the pages correctly. They enjoy stories and the use of props encourages their involvement. Children hold pencils correctly and some form recognisable letters. Most children know what letter their name begins with and the corresponding sound. They begin to understand they print carries meaning as they self register and pretend to make list and tick registers in the mark making area.

Most children can count to five and beyond, but there are insufficient opportunities in the daily routines for them to do this and to complete simple problem solving exercises in fun and practical ways. They know and can name simple shapes and explore capacity as they play with sand, compost and water, filling and emptying containers. They demonstrate an understanding of mathematical concepts as they correctly identify things being bigger and smaller, longer and shorter.

The children have strong exploratory senses. They investigate all the activities and some show great curiosity as they ask questions, such as, why flowers need water to grow? They learn a great deal about their environment by growing seeds and monitoring their growth. They

complete topics on mini-beasts and visitors to the setting share their expertise and bring added interest as the children are able to see and handle a variety of creatures. Children have access to a computer and confidently use binoculars, mobile phones and tills in role play situations which increases their awareness of technology.

Children develop good manipulative skills, carefully using tools for the play dough and craft activities. They have fun increasing their gross motor skills balancing and climbing on the various outdoor play equipment. Children enjoy and participate in an increasing range of children's songs and action rhymes. They enjoy a range of craft activities and older children persisted for prolonged periods of times to create the effect they desire as they decorated biscuits to look like spiders and experimented mixing paints and using for hand painting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered. They develop respect for people's similarities and differences, through the planned themes and topics and learn about the wider world and their local community. They celebrate festivals from their own and other cultures, have visitors to the setting and can access a satisfactory range of books and resources that promote equality of opportunity. They are treated with equal concern and staff use the registration forms and talks with parents to gain all the information needed to meet each child's individual care needs. The setting welcomes children with additional educational needs and/or disabilities and systems are in place to ensure they receive appropriate care and their individual needs recognised and met.

There is a behaviour management policy in place which staff are aware of. Children are generally well behaved; they receive praise and encouragement and are supported in the use of please and thank you. However, they are not always given clear explanations from staff when their behaviour is not acceptable and they do not always listen and follow instructions as at times noise levels are high.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the positive relationships developed between parents and staff. They work effectively together, and as a result children's individual needs are appropriately met. Strategies for communicating with parents on various levels are working well. Parents are made aware of their child's key worker providing them with a point of contact. The pre-school/home link book is completed by staff and goes home with the children; parents are welcome and encouraged to make entries.

Parents complete pre-start information about their children, their likes and interests, which contribute to the children's initial assessment on entry. The detailed assessment folders which are completed by each child's key worker are available for parents to access at any time. These are user friendly and include comments and observations from staff, photographs and samples of the children's work. Information about the foundation stage of learning and the associated areas of learning is also included. Parents are invited to discuss their children's progress in detail with staff once a year at a review meeting.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Effective recruitment and selection procedures are in place; this ensures children are cared for by staff who undergo appropriate vetting procedures. All requirements of the National Standards

for documentation and record keeping are in place and stored appropriately to maintain confidentiality. These include attendance registers and appropriate accident and medication records. There are clear policies and procedures in place, which are available on the premises for parents to access at any time, and which safeguard children's health and welfare.

The available space is generally organised well to enable children to move freely and safely in the environment and initiate their own play and learning. Children are aware and confident in the regular routines; however, these do not always meet their needs and on occasions interrupt their learning and play. For example, at snack time all children are required to stop what they are doing, to gather as a group to wash their hands and to sit as a group. This process takes too long the children are not fully involved and as a result some children become bored and restless.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. Children benefit from the leadership of the playgroup where the manager and staff are working together, with the support of the local authority worker to ensure that children are provided with appropriate care and education. This approach helps the staff to plan for improvement, however; there is no formal and systematic self assessment system in place to successfully identify strengths and weaknesses in the provision.

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 quality of care and education was judge inadequate and the playgroup was required to take the following actions :- to develop staffs understanding and consistency in managing children's behaviour and dealing with child protection concerns, to ensure that records and policies meet the requirements of the National Standards. With regard to nursery education they were required to develop planning systems to ensure the activities cater for children of different ages and varying ability. To carry out regular assessments that identify children's achievements and enable their individual next steps in learning to be planned for effectively. To ensure teaching methods promote effective communication and learning particularly in group activities, and provide children with regular opportunities to see and handle numbers in the environment. Also to introduce a system of self assessment to evaluate the provision for nursery education.

Since the last inspection the staff have been working with the local authority development worker to improve the quality of the care and education provided. They have made continuing and steady progress over the last six months with some issues being fully resolved and others continue to be work in progress.

Systems of planning and assessment are now in place which ensures the children access all areas of the curriculum and take part in activities which are appropriate for their age and stage of development. Plans show how activities are to be adapted to challenge more able children and to support younger or less able children. Staff make regular observations of the children and these are included in individual assessment files which track children's progress. Links between planning and assessment show how individual children's next steps in learning are planned for.

A complaints procedure and log along with a revised Safeguarding Children procedure are in place and meet the requirements of the revised National Standards. Key staff and some committee members have accessed safeguarding children training on-line. Accident records

are now signed by parents and the attendance register includes children and staff. This ensures children's safety and welfare is suitably safeguarded.

Staff continue to develop strategies for managing children's behaviour and are aware while they have made some progress the issues are not yet fully resolved. They offer children praise and encouragement to promote good behaviour which works well with individual children and small groups, however, children are not fully aware of the boundaries to their behaviour and staff do not always make their expectations clear. As a result children do not always listen and this limits staffs opportunities to promote effective interactions, through discussions and questioning particularly in large group situation. Posters depicting numbers are displayed around the room and mathematical concepts incorporated into the planning of activities but, there are insufficient opportunities in the daily routines for children to count and complete simple problem solving exercises in fun and practical ways. The setting has started to look at their practice identifying strengths and weaknesses, for example, they now evaluate the planned activities and are planning to introduce a more formal system of self-evaluation to cover all aspects of the provision.

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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- continue to develop staff's understanding and consistency in implementing effective strategies, when supporting children in learning to show care and concern for others and their environment (also applies to nursery education)
- review the organisation of the daily routines to ensure they meet children's needs, promote self-help skills and do not unnecessarily interrupt their learning and play (also applies to nursery education)
- continue to develop an ongoing system of self evaluation to effectively identify strengths and weakness in the care and education provided (also applies to nursery education).

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):

- increase the opportunities for children to count and complete simple problem solving exercises in fun and practical ways.

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