

# Highview Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	135305
<b>Inspection date</b>	25 June 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Malini Parmar
<b>Setting Address</b>	Under 118a Palmers Road, London, N11 1SL
<b>Telephone number</b>	020 8361 0853
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Highview Community 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?

Highview Playgroup was registered in 1992. The registered person is a private individual. The setting operates from ground floor premises situated in a small housing estate in Arnos Grove in the London borough of Enfield. The premises consist of one large play area, an office, bathrooms and an enclosed outdoor play area. The playgroup operates every day of the week from 09.15 until 12.00, term time only and is registered to care for 16 children from two years to under five years. There are currently 17 children on roll in the playgroup, nine of whom receive funding for education. The playgroup supports a number of children with learning difficulties and children who speak English as a second language. There are three staff who work with the children. Of these two staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and one staff is currently working towards a recognised early years qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted by the sound steps taken to ensure they have regular exercise, eat healthy snacks and learn basic hygiene skills.

Younger children receive gentle reminders from staff to wash their hands at appropriate times, such as after using the toilet and before eating their snack. Some older children independently wash their hands with little prompting, for example, after using glue, to maintain their health. Older children ask for tissues when they recognise they have a 'runny nose', and receive sufficient support to learn to dispose of them hygienically to prevent the risk of cross-infection. Young children benefit from the warm support they receive during nappy changes to nurture their emotional well-being. During this time staff reassure children by engaging them in conversation. Children's welfare is promoted by the sound procedures in place to record minor accidents and they do not attend if they are ill as there is a sick children policy in place.

Children enjoy the nutritional snacks which comply with their dietary needs and parental preferences. They sit together in a large group and initially exchange conversation, whilst they enjoy toast, cheese and choice of freshly sliced apples, oranges and grapes. However, the gentle chatter quickly changes as children become impatient in waiting to be served by staff.

Children benefit from free flow access to the outdoor area. Younger children strengthen their coordination and control as staff help them to practise ball skills, such as kicking and rolling as they enjoy a game of skittles. However, the crowded layout of resources and lack of effective planning for outdoor play means that children sometimes collide. Older children enjoy pedalling their bikes but they do not experience sufficient challenges to fully promote their physical skills.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happily and they are warmly greeted by staff which means they settle quickly. They have access to a sound range of toys, child sized furniture and resources which they generally access freely. Although, staff change the environment to promote choices for children. The layout of toys and resources has not yet been fully considered to ensure areas do not become too crowded with toys.

Children's safety is mostly promoted through the satisfactory steps taken to support this. Access to the provision is securely monitored through the telephone entry system. Staff carefully monitor the arrival and departure of children and note the times in the register as this happens. Children are generally supervised by staff within the free flow arrangement occasionally however, children eagerly race into the garden and staff do not join them immediately. Children are beginning to develop some understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They are reminded by staff to not rock on their chairs, and when they sometimes forget, staff remind them that this could be dangerous and may result in an injury. At other times, however children do not benefit from such clear explanations and repeated instructions to, for example, not run indoors are not always followed by the children. General assessments of potential risks are made to the environment and resources daily. However, the system to assess risks to activities such as sand play are not yet fully in place. Children practise emergency evacuations regularly and staff have

a clear understanding of their individual roles during an evacuation to support a swift emergency exit.

Children's welfare is promoted by the steps taken to safeguard them from harm. The manager has recently attended training and has a sound knowledge of associated signs. There is a clear policy in place and the safeguarding children procedures include steps to follow in the event an allegation of abuse is made against a member of staff.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are familiar with the routine and benefit from the positive interaction they receive from staff to build secure relationships. They enjoy a range of play which includes using malleable resources such as, sand and play dough to promote their senses. Young children particularly enjoy looking through books and staff help them to repeat words to increase their communication and vocabulary. Children delight as they successfully call out the animals staff describe behind the flap. Young children visit the book area often and enjoy mimicking staff, as they play together to look through the books. They enjoy cutting and sticking and making patches for their Elmer display. Children are learning to gain important skills such as sharing as staff guide them to recognise turn taking.

### **Nursery Education**

The overall quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are generally well occupied in a range of activities that promote their interests and development. Systems for planning and assessment are developing to ensure observations are consistently used to identify children's individual learning priorities, and these inform future plans. Children develop positive friendships with one another as they keenly participate in activities with their friends and invite one another to play with, for example, dolls. Children engage in imaginary play as they make their favourite pizza and cups of tea for staff. They are able to concentrate and persevere in their chosen activity by completing puzzles or threading a long chain of beads to make their necklace. They have some chances to develop their independence as they pour their own drinks when they wish and use the toilet when they need. However, some children sometimes become restless as they impatiently wait for staff to serve them their snack and drinks. They do not always select activities from the shelves and instead rely on the activities set out by staff which are on the table. This means that more able children sometimes wonder as they are not always prompted by staff to select things from the shelf. Children engage in some conversation with staff, they clearly enjoy listening to stories and visit the book area frequently. They enjoy recalling their favourite books to younger children whom when prompted, accurately call which animal they can see the older child pointing to. Older children are supported well by staff to label their own work, as they write their name on stickers and use these to mark their 'tall towers'. Children repeat much mathematical language they hear staff using, they know, for example, that their 'little square' will fit the 'big Elmer'. More able children enjoy jumping on the chalk numbers staff shout out. Some children ably match cones and cotton reels to the corresponding number and successfully count them as they place them from one through to 10. Some children competently manipulate tools and small objects to, for example, cut out squares and small pieces of different textured cloths. Although, group activities are organised to enable children to learn to express themselves freely and strengthen their small motor movements by learning to cut and stick. The organisation of the pace and routine means that not all children benefit from the activity. As these are not always carefully planned. Older children clearly enjoy looking through magnifying glasses to closely examine stones and shells.

Staff support some children in their discovery of big and small as they move the glasses closer and further away. Children spend time at the easel painting freely and happily paint with their friends to express their thoughts and ideas.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from the sound knowledge staff have of their needs and individual circumstances. They are encouraged to develop a positive view of the wider world and the needs of others through the use of resources, such as books and imaginary play items, as well as some activities. The nursery also helps children celebrate a variety of festivities, such as Father's Day and Divali, to help them understand about how different people celebrate and what is important to others. All children have equal access to all resources in a gender neutral environment. Systems to support children with English as an additional language are growing. Staff ensure all children are included. They value their contributions by actively listening and responding to what children say to increase children's confidence in speaking. Resources such as the use of dual language books and displays of words in different languages are not yet fully in place to enhance the existing systems for children.

Children with learning difficulties/and or disabilities are fully included within the programme. Staff work with outside agencies, the area special educational needs coordinator (SENCO), and parents to ensure children are set achievable goals, and that these are reviewed regularly to measure progress. The manager sets aside time with parents to give them feedback from visits made to the setting by outside agencies, who in turn help and support the nursery in promoting the needs of individual children. The nursery works with all agencies to seek help and obtain extra resources for children should the need arise. Staff organise activities to ensure all children are able to participate to promote inclusion. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children generally behave well, they receive lots of praise and encouragement from the staff to boost their confidence. They are encouraged to notice the needs of others, and as a result they are considerate towards one another and show kindness. For example, whilst pouring their own drink, children ask staff and other children if they would also like one. Staff reinforce the use of manners. They make a point of thanking the child when they receive their drink, and then encourage the child to repeat 'you're welcome' in return. However, children do not always benefit from supporting explanations from staff to help them understand why their behaviour is regarded as unacceptable. At these time, staff instructions for children to change their behaviour are sometimes ignored. This means children have fewer opportunities to learn to manage their own behaviour effectively.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Systems to ensure a secure two way sharing of information are developing. The manager has recently introduced comprehensive initial profiles which new parents complete when their children join the nursery. In addition, the manager conducts home visits to support the parents in completing these detailed forms. The use of these forms enables the nursery to help children progress by building on what they know. A gradual period for settling children into the nursery is encouraged to support the individual needs of each child. The parents information board is used to display pertinent information and the manager is currently rearranging it to ensure parents can easily access the information. Parents receive daily verbal feedback from staff and report they are very happy with the setting. They have access to a set of policies and procedures, some of these are displayed in the entrance hallway. To enable the nursery to work together more effectively and

give parents the opportunity to reinforce learning at home, the manager has recently organised programmed times for parents to discuss their child's development and progress with the nursery. The manager has a sound knowledge of her duty in regulation should the nursery receive a complaint from a parent. The regulator's details are shared with parents should they wish to raise a concern.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children benefit from a sound organisation to support their needs and progress. There is a set of policies and procedures including all the required detail and information to support the safe and efficient management of the setting. At least half of the staff team have suitable qualifications and the manager ensures they are also suitably vetted to work with children. Staff are, in the main, suitably deployed to work alongside the children, sometimes however, children are not always directly supervised in the outdoor area because staff are engaged in organisational tasks.

Leadership and management of the setting is satisfactory. Children benefit from a staff team that work closely together. They meet informally at the end of each session and more formally on a regular basis to ensure the ideas of all staff are valued to meet the needs of the children. Children's experiences are promoted because there is a strong commitment to improvement within the staff team which is instigated by the manager. Staff attend regular training and two staff are currently working towards childcare qualifications. The manager is aware of the setting's weaknesses and strengths. She has identified an action plan to support continuous improvement. At the moment the manager gains her awareness from working alongside the staff and children, as there is not yet a fully rigorous systems to monitor and evaluate the programme available for children.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider was set nine actions to improve the quality of care for children and four actions to improve the quality of education for the children attending.

The provider agreed: to improve knowledge and understanding of the National Standards for sessional day care; to ensure sufficient staff are suitably qualified in first aid at all times; to improve the safety of the premises, the regularity of fire drills and to better safeguard children by updating knowledge and procedures of it. She agreed to improve the quality of partnerships with parents and carers and ensure all the necessary documentation is in place including the complaints procedure. She also agreed to ensure children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities have improved experiences to promote their welfare.

The provider has made sound progress in addressing the issues and has secured a better understanding of her duty under the National Standards for sessional care. Children are now assured of receiving appropriate and swift support in the event of a minor accident as two staff who work every day have gained current first aid certificates. Overall, the children's safety has improved, they now practise regular emergency evacuations to promote their understanding of prompt evacuation. The provider has arranged for all the gas and electrical appliances to be checked to ensure they remain safe. An accurate record of attendance is now kept. In addition, the provider has attended safeguarding children training and has updated her policy and procedure for staff to consult should they need. The quality of working in partnership with parents and carers has improved. There are now sound systems for ensuring that sufficient

information regarding children's needs is obtained and these are shared with all staff at team meetings. Documentation has improved as all the necessary policies and procedure to support the safe and efficient management of the setting are now in place and contain the required detail. These are available for parents and staff and some including the complaints procedure is displayed to ensure parents have access to the regulator's details. The welfare and development of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is now improved. The group work with outside agencies and closely with parents to support their needs.

## Nursery Education

At the last inspection the provider agreed: to develop observations and assessments to support children's development and progress and ensure children next steps in learning are planned; to ensure staff have a secure awareness of the Foundation Stage and monitor the quality of teaching and learning; to ensure children access a broad range of activities and provide parents with information about the Foundation Stage.

The provider has made sound progress in addressing these areas overall. The system for observation and assessment has improved to ensure that staff now make observation of children's interests and play and now use these to identify their future steps in learning. The system the group now use is new, and it continues to develop to ensure it is robust and therefore remains a continued area for improvement. Staff have received some training in the Foundation Stage and have a more secure knowledge of it. Teaching and learning are evaluated for enjoyment and effectiveness, at the end of each session all staff discuss the successfulness of the session and activities for children. This information is gathered by the provider to make further improvement. However, this system is in its infancy and it is still developing to ensure it is fully robust. Systems for planning have improved and now include a balanced range of activities for children to use. Planning is beginning to reflect learning intentions for children to make sure children progress. The updated polices and procedures now include information about the Foundation Stage and the six areas of learning to support parents' understanding of the Foundation Stage. This is displayed on the information board for parents.

## Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required to 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):

- improve the use of space and layout of toys and resources to ensure areas promote good choices for children and are not overcrowded
- make thorough risk assessments of all areas, resources and activities to ensure children's ongoing safety
- ensure the management of children's behaviour is consistent and meets their level of understanding and make sure children are offered clear explanations to help them learn to manage their own behaviour
- make sure staff are always deployed effectively to support and extend children's play and learning and ensure their safety at all times

### **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):

- ensure observations are effectively used to plan for children's next steps in learning and these are clearly linked to the planning of activities available for all children
- improve the pace and routine to ensure activities are well planned and group times retain children's interest and promote their learning and independence
- make sure the system to monitor and review the group's strengths and weaknesses and that of the educational programme is fully robust to ensure continued improvement.

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)