

# Hopscotch Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY263357
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 April 2008
<b>Inspector</b>	Patricia Bowler
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<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 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?

Hopscotch Pre School opened in 1999 and operates from the Moira Dale Village Hall in Castle Donnington, Derbyshire. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open on Monday from 09.00 to 12.00 and 12.15 to 15.15 and Tuesday to Friday from 09.30 to 13.00 during term time.

There are currently 56 children aged from two years to under five years on roll. Of these, 35 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local community and surrounding villages. The pre-school currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs nine members of staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and four are working towards a qualification.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children are mostly protected from infection through consistent daily routines implemented by staff who have an underpinning knowledge of health and hygiene issues and supported through clear policies to support children's health. All areas accessed by children are clean and well-maintained to prevent the risk of cross-infection using anti-bacterial products. Children become increasingly independent in their personal care as they use the toilet facilities and talk knowledgeably about hand washing to remove germs. However, they share a large towel for hand drying which potentially leaves them at the risk from cross-infection.

Parents are informed about health issues, sickness and accidents through good recording systems, and regularly updated information ensures they can be contacted in an emergency. Staff are trained in first aid and a fully stocked first aid kit ensures children receive appropriate care in the event of any accidents.

Positive attitudes to exercise are encouraged as children benefit from regular opportunities to take part in physical activities. They enjoy visits to a local recreational facility where they use park equipment developing skills in climbing and coordination. A good range of resources enable children to develop large motor skills indoors and they enjoy riding wheeled toys and using the parachute.

Children develop an awareness of different lifestyles. Planned activities, including celebrations for Chinese New Year provide opportunities to discuss and try different foods. They enjoy the restaurant role play area where they take on different roles and refer to colourful recipe cards for different meals.

Children enjoy various foods at snack time including fresh fruit, biscuits and sausages which link into learning opportunities for the 'letter of the week'. They have drinks in line with parental wishes and choose between milk and diluted juice. Clear documented information from parents ensures any specific dietary needs are met.

Drinking water is available to address children's thirst needs.

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

The provision is good.

Diligent routines, where most risks are minimised, provide children with a safe and secure environment in which to play. A comprehensive risk assessment is established and maintained but staff do not have access within the premises to adjust the heating system. This sometimes results in children being at risk of touch hazard when the temperature of the unprotected radiators rise.

Good systems for arrival and departure ensure the safe transfer of care as staff closely monitor the entrance area. A register is taken by staff as children arrive and again in a group situation to ensure accurate records of children's attendance are maintained. Parents are required to inform staff, and complete written consent if other persons are collecting children, to maintain their safety. Attention is given to the structure and presentation of activities to ensure children can move around freely and independently as they play.

Children use good quality equipment which is systematically checked to ensure it is safe for purpose and is developmentally-appropriate. Additional resources, stored in low-level units enable children to freely access these as they require to enhance creative activities. Children develop independence within safe limits. They are supported, in varying degrees, as they gain confidence in climbing skills when they visit the nearby park. Older children wait patiently as younger children use the steps at the climbing frame. They know to stand back as the child in front climbs so 'we don't get hurt by their feet'.

Children begin to understand how to keep themselves safe. They remind each other about taking care as they play with sand 'so it doesn't get in our eyes'. They take part in regular emergency evacuation practises and walk carefully to meet at the designated meeting point. Children talk about safety procedures as they engage with staff in a small group activity about 'rules'. They talk about crossing roads safely and sitting carefully in vehicles using safety belts, holding onto adults hands and walking within playgroup so they don't bump into each other or fall over.

Staff have sound understanding of child protection issues, including the referral process which is detailed in the written policy. Comprehensive and clear procedures are shared with parents to ensure they are fully informed about staff roles and responsibilities to protect children from harm.

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

The provision is good.

Children's progress is effectively planned, using the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. Clear plans are established to provide age-appropriate activities to enhance children's development. Close and caring relationships with staff increase children's sense of trust and self-worth. They benefit from the visually stimulating environment, with pictures, posters and displays to extend and support their development. Children develop positive interaction with peers as they are supported in acquiring skills to negotiate and take turns as they play.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Varied activities meet the needs of individual children well, in a stimulating and welcoming environment which reflects their backgrounds and the wider community. Children's behaviour is managed extremely well as staff skilfully implement a positive behaviour policy to create a harmonious environment. Good teaching methods provide sufficient challenge to provoke children's thoughts and enhance their learning opportunities. Good assessments support children's development and the information gained is used effectively to guide the planning and progression in their next steps in learning. Diligent monitoring procedures enable staff to evaluate and maintain good standards of teaching. Children talk very well as they develop listening and conversational skills with peers and staff.

Personal, social and emotional development is a strong element. Children develop age appropriate independence in their personal care as they attend to their own needs and persevere to put on aprons and their own clothing. However, there are missed opportunities to further develop children's self-help skills, for example, at snack time where they do not pour their own drinks. They are highly motivated and enthusiastic as they make active choices about their play. Children are sensitively supported in gaining high levels of self-control. They have an excellent awareness of right and wrong in line with their stage of development. Effective

intervention from staff enables them to negotiate and become sensitive and respectful in their interaction with others.

A wide range of varied and stimulating activities captivate children's imagination. These are attractively presented so children make active choices about their play. They self-register with parents as they seek their name cards to place on an attractive board in individual coloured squares. 'I'm going to have a blue square next to my friends red square' states one child. Photographs, included for younger children help them to identify their name cards.

Children engage enthusiastically in free play, only interrupted as they join for a short registration period. They respond to an individual greeting as the register is taken and greet each other and staff members as they bid 'good morning'. They develop an awareness of mathematical terms as they count the number of children present in comparison to the number of adults present. They talk about 'big' numbers for children and develop concepts of more or less when comparing numbers in relation to less adults than children. Terms such as, big, medium and small are incorporated into activities where children sort 'puppies' following simple card instructions to become aware of size and colour. They weigh the 'puppies' in scales to connect size to the heaviest weight. Positional language is developed as children raise and lower the parachute, run under and place resources on top.

A creative activity is available at all times. Children create their own 'robots' at the junk modelling table choosing from various sized boxes and containers. Paint is available to add to their creations and children use a range of tools including glue spreaders and paintbrushes to develop dexterity. Nearby drawer units allow children to access additional resources at the collage activity where they use feathers, tissue paper, straws and coloured sticks. 'You have to put lots of glue on the paper to stick the sticks (coloured lolly sticks) and then press down hard so they don't fall off' advises an older child to a younger child struggling to achieve this. Children use glue sticks at this activity and know how to 'screw it at the bottom to make the glue come up'.

Good progress is made in mark making skills because children are encouraged in emerging letter formation as they identify their own pictures. They use paper and pencils in the restaurant area to take food orders and begin to understand meaning in written text from colourful recipe cards. Children make and wear 'chefs' hats from paper and sticky tape and know this is the person who cooks the meals. Other roles are discussed as children act as waiters and customers.

Communication and conversational skills are actively encouraged within the group. Children enjoy describing items inside treasure sacks as they try to identify them before removing them. They giggle as they feel soft toys and examine small packets of different textures including sugar and flour. These are opened so children can feel the substances describing flour as 'soft' and sugar as 'hard'. Children discover a small container which is opened to reveal brown granules. They smell this as it is passed around the group to identify the contents with one child announcing 'it's coffee'. 'Can we drink it?' asks the staff member 'no, not like this' he replies 'you have to put water on it'. The activity progresses to include a discussion about senses and parts of the body used for them which children correctly name.

Children engage in a variety of large and small group activities. However, these often run consecutively resulting in children sitting for long periods of time, becoming restless during sessions such as stories and singing. They join eagerly in indoor physical activities developing good skills in pedalling and steering as they ride wheeled toys but the limited time and requests from staff to 'change' so all children have a turn, leaves insufficient time and opportunity to consolidate these skills. There are missed opportunities to incorporate some activities, for

example, 'beat baby sessions' where children practice rhythms through songs and general singing into activities, such as the parachute to increase physical opportunities and extend children's obvious enjoyment with these resources. Children attending the extended lunch time period enjoy a visit to the nearby play area where they climb on large equipment and develop coordination on the swings and roundabout but there is limited time to enhance children's physical opportunities.

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

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a clear equal opportunities policy which works well in practice. Individual needs are discussed and recorded on detailed children's records to ensure their specific needs are met well. A strong commitment from staff ensures the inclusion of every child and they work collaboratively with parents and other agencies to meet children's individual needs. Children engage in a range of activities to enhance their awareness of diversity including the celebration of Christian and cultural festivals. They build confidence and self-esteem as they are warmly greeted into the setting to foster their sense of worth and belonging. Sensitive recognition of their achievements is acknowledged as staff reward and praise their efforts.

Children gain high levels of self-control as they follow consistent methods and boundaries to increase their understanding of right from wrong. They understand about sharing and taking turns and older children show care and concern for younger children as they include them in their play. They sit in small groups to compile simple rules for the setting so they can take some responsibility for their actions. A strong emphasis is encouraged about what is acceptable rather than on what they should not do. Open questions from staff such as 'what could we do to ensure we are safe when playing in the sand?' provoke children's thoughts as they suggest 'keeping it in the tray so we don't slip and playing nicely so it does not go in our eyes'. They also suggest 'walking in playgroup so we don't bump into each other, or fall over'.

Children know when it is time to tidy away as they are given a five minute warning by staff that this time is approaching and are able to bring to a close any activities that they are involved in. Children respond extremely well to staff's use of praise and encouragement to promote a harmonious atmosphere based on positive contribution.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. A comprehensive prospectus provides detailed information about the group to provide parents with an understanding about policies and working practice. Children receive consistent care in line with parental wishes through the completion of excellent documents to provide staff with a clear picture of care needs and stages of development.

They are involved in the initial assessment when children commence the playgroup and in further assessments as children progress through their early learning. They attend bi-annual development meetings with key workers sharing valuable information about what children can do at home so this is included in their ongoing records. They support children's learning in the home from the next steps identified with staff and help children to bring items for 'show and tell' sessions which link to themes and topics.

Meetings with key-workers ensure they are kept informed about children's progress, and partnerships are further enhanced as staff engage in informal discussions as children arrive and are collected.

Children have good opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them. They learn about other cultures and beliefs through planned topics and enjoy books and activities to promote their awareness of differences.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Robust procedures for recruitment and employment ensure children are cared for by qualified and experienced staff suitable for their role. Careful procedures ensure children are protected from non-vetted persons, as visitors are not left alone with children and new staff are supervised during the induction and vetting procedure. Staff are deployed effectively to support children's care and an established key-worker system ensures their individual needs are met and pertinent information is shared with parents. Clear policies, which are successfully implemented, form a sound foundation to the good quality of care which children receive. Training and development needs are supported as staff attend various courses and events to further enhance their good working practice. Regular staff meetings are used effectively to plan and discuss action plans for future improvements to enhance the care children receive. A formal meeting, before each session, ensures staff are aware of designated roles and tasks to support children's care and enjoyment.

Registration systems accurately record children's attendance as staff sign them in and out as parents arrive and collect their children.

All required documentation that contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is established and regularly reviewed. Confidentiality is maintained whilst ensuring parents are suitably informed and involved in children's care and learning.

Leadership and management is good. Children benefit from a well-organised routine and a range of activities presented in a stimulating environment to maximise play opportunities. They spend their time purposefully as they are supported in their play, learning and development.

The care and education that children receive is supported because staff have a sound understanding of nursery education and a commitment to implement this effectively. The leader is committed to enhancing and developing the setting through her own working practice and attendance at further training. Staff work effectively as a team to identify areas of strength and improvement, and work conscientiously to ensure recording systems to monitor children's progress give clear direction for their ongoing learning and development. Individual learning outcomes are incorporated into the planning to ensure each child is valued and consequently make good progress towards the early learning goals.

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 setting was required to ensure that children have an appropriate range of resources that promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. Good progress has been made in this area with resources to reflect different lifestyles in play equipment. Books reflect other cultures and children enjoy themed activities to promote their awareness of celebrations for Christmas and festivals such as Diwali and the Chinese New Year.

They learn about disability and ways to promote this as they learn sign language in addition to vocals at singing sessions.

### **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):

- ensure that staff are informed and aware of the importance of good hygiene practices in order to prevent the spread of infection.
- take reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children are minimised, with reference to radiator temperatures, and these comply with health and safety regulations

#### **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):

- extend opportunities to increase children's self-help skills, independence and coordination, for example, at snack time with opportunities to pour their own drinks.
- improve the organisation of activities to promote physical development to ensure all children have sufficient time and opportunity to experience and consolidate skills such as riding and steering on wheeled toys and climbing on large equipment.

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)