

Hallow Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	205269
Inspection date	04/12/2008
Inspector	Valerie Fane
Setting address	Hallow Parish Hall, Main Road, Hallow, Worcester, Worcestershire, WR2 6PH
Telephone number	01905 641834
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration whichever is the later, which require Ofsted or the provider to take action in Annex C.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

Description of the setting

Hallow Pre-School is a committee run group that was registered in 1979. It operates from the village hall in Hallow in Worcestershire, serves the local area and has strong links with the school. The setting is accessible to all children because ramps have been fitted and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The group opens Monday to Friday during school term-times. Sessions are from 09:15 until 14:45. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 16 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 27 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. No care is currently available for the older age groups. The pre-school supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs six members of child care staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications to Level 3 or above. One member of staff is working towards Early Years Professional Status. The setting receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Children of all ages are very settled and enjoy their time in this small and friendly village pre-school. They make good progress in their learning and development because staff provide interesting activities that are planned to support children's individual progress. The pre-school is inclusive in all respects and children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive carefully planned, individual support. Many ongoing improvements have been made since the last inspection and the managers and staff are in the process of completing the formal self-evaluation document. However, there are a small number of minor weaknesses regarding policies and procedures that have not been addressed.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- update the child protection policy to ensure that it is in line with Local Safeguarding Children Board guidance and procedures
- improve the procedures to confirm the ongoing suitability of staff.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

Children thrive in this flourishing pre-school where the managers and the committee work well together to provide good quality care, learning and

development. Children benefit greatly from the expertise of well-qualified staff because all staff have at least a Level 3 qualification and several have or are working towards higher level qualifications. In addition, minimum staff ratios are routinely exceeded and individual support is available for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The recommendations made at the last inspection have been met and the managers have carried out ongoing informal evaluations of the provision. These have resulted in other ongoing improvements such as the purchase of better display boards that children can work on themselves and equipment to support their development of problem solving, reasoning and numeracy skills. The committee work hard to ensure that the group is accessible to all children and have set up a fund to provide some financial support to families in need.

In most respects, children are cared for well but there are a few minor weaknesses that potentially compromise children's welfare. Although employment procedures are robust and all staff undergo initial Criminal Records Bureau checks, there are no procedures in place to assure the ongoing suitability of existing staff. Both staff and the committee chairperson have a sound knowledge of safeguarding procedures but the child protection policy has not been updated in line with changes to local guidance from the Local Safeguarding Children Board.

Children benefit from continuity of care because staff work in close partnership with their parents and some other providers who share the care of particular children. There is an effective key person system so staff and parents share information verbally on an ongoing basis. In addition, parents receive and comment on children's reports at the end of each term. The reports include specific targets for children's learning and development for use in pre-school and at home with parents. Children's transfer to primary school is helped by the close links between the school and pre-school. Older children visit the school regularly to use the computer equipment and to attend special events such as school plays.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children behave very well because staff are excellent role models and use appropriate strategies to reward good behaviour or manage unwanted behaviour. Children are enthusiastic learners and enjoy a wide range of free play and carefully planned activities that are adapted to their particular learning needs. As a result, they make good progress towards the early learning goals. Younger children can choose to take part in a variety of craft activities. For example, they make Christmas tags and choose the shape for their tag such as a bell or an angel. They decide how to paint the tags. Some use tools such as cotton buds while others prefer to do finger painting on their tag. They develop their observation skills as they notice that the water changes colour when they wash their hands after painting and talk to staff about their observations. They explore different textures as they use different media such as clay. Children have a wide range of opportunities to develop language and literacy skills through everyday routines. For example, they respond to their names in the register and they learn to recognise their names on their place mats at snack time.

Older children attend Forest School regularly. They improve their social skills and become independent learners as they take part in problem-solving activities such as designing and building a group shelter using a tarpaulin, bungee cords and sticks. They develop their understanding of the world around them as they grow and harvest crops such as beetroot, beans and lettuce. They help with tasks such as feeding hens and collecting eggs. They become involved in their village community because they attend a monthly group at the local church where they listen to a story and enjoy singing, dancing and craft activities related to the story. They become aware of our diverse society because they use equipment that reflects other cultures and take part in related activities. For example, they talk about countries such as China and Japan and use the role play area as a Chinese restaurant. When children from other cultures attend, they celebrate relevant festivals and parents are encouraged to come in and share their culture with the group.

Children with specific learning difficulties and/or disabilities make good progress. Staff liaise closely with their parents and with outside agencies to support children's particular needs. Such children have an individual education plan and this is reviewed regularly by all involved adults.

Children develop healthy eating habits because staff serve snacks of fresh fruit and toast. Parents are given leaflets to encourage the provision of healthy foods in children's lunch boxes. Children become aware of their own safety because staff use events such as Bonfire Night to promote their awareness of fire safety. They enjoy visits from people from the local community such as Fire Officers who talk to the children and advise staff on effective methods of practising the emergency evacuation procedure with young children.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

Overall effectiveness

How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
How well does the provision promote inclusive practice?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement.	2

Leadership and management

How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	2
How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement?	2
How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others?	2
How well are children safeguarded?	3

Quality and standards

How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?	2
How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?	2
How well are children helped to stay safe?	2
How well are children helped to be healthy?	2
How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve?	2
How well are children helped to make a positive contribution?	2
How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being?	2

Any complaints about the inspection or report should be made following the procedures set out in the guidance available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk

Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met

Annex C: complaint/s made to Ofsted

This section of the report includes details of any complaint/s made to Ofsted when:

- we took action for the provider to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- we asked the provider to take action in order to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register; or
- the provider had already taken any necessary action to meet the requirements of the Early Years Register.

We will not report on any complaint where the provider met the requirements of the Early Years Register or did not require any action by Ofsted or the registered provider.

Detail of the complaint/s

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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.