

Hokey Cokey Playgroup and Railway Children Kids Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	205431
Inspection date	01/07/2009
Inspector	Donna Stevens

Setting address	The Railway Children Child Care Centre, Station Approach, Comberton Hill, KIDDERMINSTER, Worcestershire, DY10 1QX
Telephone number	01562 740182
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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 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

Hokey Cokey Playgroup and The Railway Children Kids Club is run by a registered charity and was registered on these premises in 1995. It operates from a purpose built building in Kidderminster. The setting serves the local and surrounding areas. The setting is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The group opens Monday to Friday, 50 weeks of the year. Sessions are from 7.45 until 18.00. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions.

A maximum of 38 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 71 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS). The setting also offers care to children aged over five years to 10 years in The Railway Children Kids Club, before and after school and during school holidays. The provision is registered on the Early Years Register and on both the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The setting provides funded early education for three and four-year-olds. It supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 14 members of child care staff and there are an additional two members of staff completing modern apprenticeships. Thirteen members of staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and the other is working towards Level 3. The setting receives support from the local authority.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Staff work closely with parents, carers and other professionals to gain a good knowledge of each child's individual needs allowing them to promote children's welfare and learning with success. Children are very well-cared for and thoroughly enjoy their time in the setting. They enjoy a range of exciting and purposeful child-initiated activities and play, that support their learning and development very well. Regular self-evaluation by the staff team with involvement from parents, carers and children results in a service that is responsive to the needs of its users, enabling staff and management to identify areas for future improvement and act on them.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- develop further enjoyable and challenging learning and development experiences that are appropriate to each child's stage of development as they progress towards the early learning goals
- promote further the good health of children with regards to nutrition and developing independence.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The children benefit from the staffs strong commitment to training and constantly reviewing and improving the good quality care provided. They have successfully introduced the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) using it as an opportunity to build on the range of activities and opportunities currently enjoyed by the children. Staff are proactive in seeking advice and support from other professionals, for example, interpreters to support communication with families for whom English is an additional language. Following the closure of the local school with whom, the nursery had established close links the staff have persevered in forming partnerships with other local schools which children will move on to. They work closely with other professionals to ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are well supported and fully included in all areas of nursery life.

Management places an important emphasis on including everybody in both evaluating the provision and making plans for future improvement and change. They are currently completing a quality insurance scheme with the Pre-school Learning Alliance. Regular questionnaires to parents are used by staff effectively to plan areas for future improvement. For example, parents felt that the toilets used by the older children were in need of refurbishing and this is being carried forward as the next area for modernisation. Staff have begun a system of child conferencing where children's thoughts, ideas and opinions will be sought by the staff and used to inform future plans. Management is also proactive in applying for grants to support specific areas of development. Recent successes have resulted in a refurbished outdoor area and the introduction of updated computer equipment for children in the pre-school room, enhancing and extending children's learning experiences.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good and valued by the staff team. Parents are involved in all aspects of their children's welfare, learning and development. When children initially start in the setting, staff will spend time with the parents obtaining personal information about their child's individual routines, likes, dislikes and stage of development. This enables staff to include the next steps of children's development in their planning and provide appropriate activities and support. Staff make a conscious effort at the start and end of each session to welcome parents into the setting and spend time exchanging information. Younger children have daily diaries where adults can provide more information about how children have spent their time and as children get older these will be used to record any specific issues, such as, eating or behaviour management. Parents receive regular reports detailing their children's progress in the six areas of learning. A comprehensive range of policies and procedures which reflect the good care provided have been developed and made available to parents. This enables them to have a clear understanding of the expectations of the setting, themselves and their children.

Children's welfare is well safeguarded as the staff ensure that the nursery and outdoor area remains safe, suitable and child friendly. Staff demonstrate a good

understanding of safety issues, for example, the outdoor area is adjacent to a public thoroughfare and is therefore checked each day before the children use it. Robust risk assessments are carried out regularly and high ratios of staff provide children with a good level of support and supervision. The staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues and have all completed training in this area. The manager is currently attending training to help her provide high quality support to children and families involved in safeguarding issues. A clear safeguarding policy in line with local guidance is in place and is shared by parents. Children are further safeguarded as all required information is obtained from parents and documentation is very well organised.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals and in all areas of their development. A high emphasis is placed on child-initiated play and providing activities that allow opportunities for experimenting, predicting, thinking critically and making decisions, as well as, discussing ideas and findings. For example, children had great fun with water, measuring, adding to dry sand, experimenting with pouring it into tubes and seeing where it went, working out how to make water pour out of tubing at the other end by lifting the tube off the ground, raising it high at one end. Children work together on these experiments helping each other with pouring and questioning each other about what happens and what else they can do. Staff plan themes and related activities but allow children to steer the project as they introduce their own ideas and suggestions. A recent theme of under the sea, sparked the children's interest in pirates and staff moved forward with this encouraging activities, such as, searching for treasure and designing treasure maps. Allowing children to take the lead in their own learning helps them to develop as independent, creative and inquisitive learners.

Good staff ratios in the rooms enable positive interactions between children and adults and children and children. This helps to develop children's conversation and personal skills. Relationships between adults and children are trusting and caring. However, adults questioning of children is variable, sometimes good and sometimes lacking sufficient challenge. More opportunities for children to answer questions of how, why and what if would extend children's thinking. Staff spend time observing children's play, assessing their development and identifying areas of interest, which staff can use to provide opportunities for children's learning. Children were observed making cakes during role play sessions so staff planned an activity where children enjoyed making flapjacks. They helped to mix ingredients together and were encouraged to explore the feeling texture of the porridge oats used. Their scientific learning was enhanced as the staff discussed what weighing scales were used for and how ingredients changed when they were heated and mixed together. Extending this activity to introduce the idea of a written recipe, encouraging the children to assist in weighing out the ingredients and allowing the children to observe for themselves as the changes took place would once again further extend their learning.

The nursery rooms are well laid out to allow children to move around freely and extend their play. Resources and equipment are stored in low-level easily

accessible drawers and open shelving, allowing children to be independent and make their own choices. Every day resources are used to enhance children's learning for, example, children use their imaginations as they play in the travel agents role play area, develop an understanding that writing carries meaning as they 'read' travel brochures and practise early mark making skills as they complete each other's holiday bookings. They learn to count and sequence numbers during everyday routines, such as, counting the numbers of children present and many were able to count up in twos, learning the early concepts of multiplication. Children's creativity is extended through arts and crafts activities and regular music sessions, where children sing confidently and enjoy playing musical instruments. Excellent information technology equipment introduces children to the modern age and they are confident in using a digital camera and simple computer programs.

Children learn about their own safety as they regularly practise the fire evacuation procedure and learn how to keep safe in the nursery environment, not running inside and picking toys up from the floor. Clear strategies for supporting positive behaviour allow children to develop a sense of responsibility for their actions and learn the importance of boundaries and rules. The opportunities for children to direct their own learning encourage them to become independent, confident and have good self esteem. They are encouraged to share, take turns and be polite and considerate towards each other and the adults caring for them. Throughout the day children enjoy spending time in the outdoor area enjoying exercise and fresh air. They begin to learn how to stay healthy outside as they wear sunscreen and hats in hot weather. Staff have also ensured that there is plenty provision for shade and children are encouraged to have regular drinks. Their good health is promoted as stringent procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection and encourage children to develop good hygiene habits at snack times and when using the toilet. Children learn about healthy lifestyles and ecology issues, helping to recycle, compost and use a wormery. Hot meals are provided by a local school catering service and although nutritious not all children are encouraged to try new foods and develop healthy eating habits. Improvements to meal and snack times would help all children to have the opportunity to learn about a healthy balanced diet, to develop independent eating skills and join in fully with the social occasion of mealtimes.

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?	2

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?	3
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

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

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