

# The Hardman Centre Preschool Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique reference number</b>	311883
<b>Inspection date</b>	20/04/2009
<b>Inspector</b>	Kathleen Snowdon
<b>Setting address</b>	Hardman Centre, Dryden Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE9 5HP
<b>Telephone number</b>	0191 4874248
<b>Email</b>	hardmancentre@btconnect.com
<b>Type of setting</b>	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**

Registered in 1992, the Hardman Centre Pre-school Playgroup is located in the Hardman Centre, Low Fell, Gateshead. It is a single storey building close to local schools and nurseries. The children who attend live in the local and surrounding areas. Indoors, the playgroup uses the main hall and another small room and there is an enclosed outdoor play area. Although other community groups use the centre, the playgroup has sole use of these rooms during the times of operation.

The playgroup is open Monday to Friday, in term times only, from 08.45 to 11.15. Children may stay from 11.15 to 12.15, if parents wish them to, to eat a packed lunch. The playgroup is on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is registered to look after a maximum of 25 children aged from two years in the early years age group. Currently, there are 28 children on roll.

Four staff work directly with the children and all hold appropriate qualifications. The playgroup receives professional support from local authority advisors and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## **Overall effectiveness of the early years provision**

Overall, the quality of the provision is good. Staff's inclusive approach ensures that children's individual needs are met in full. As a result, they make good progress in their learning and development, although opportunities for children to explore aspects of the natural world during spontaneous, self-initiated outdoor play activities are rather limited. Good priority is given to children's welfare and partnerships with parents and other agencies are sound. Self-evaluation is effective and the scope for continuous improvement is good.

## **What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?**

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

- increase opportunities for children to find out about the natural world in spontaneous, self-initiated outdoor play activities, for example, provide chimes and streamers to investigate the effects of wind.

## **The leadership and management of the early years provision**

Documentation is well organised, readily available and stored securely on site to protect confidentiality. Details are amended as soon as changes occur to keep information up to date and accurate and all essential records and policies are in place. The registration and public liability certificates are prominently displayed, as is a poster explaining how to make a complaint.

Staff are enthusiastic and work well as a team. They reflect on and assess their practice in weekly brain storming sessions and make necessary improvements or changes. They have forged sound links with other professionals involved with the children, such as teaching staff from local schools and advisors from the local authority, to provide personalised, inclusive care and education to the children on roll. As well as this, staff take part in ongoing training; recent courses include first aid and child protection.

Good priority is attached to safeguarding. Staff's awareness of the signs and symptoms that indicate abuse and neglect is sound. Recruitment procedures are thorough. Anyone working directly with the children must be vetted to protect them from unsuitable people. Daily risk assessments minimise accidents indoors and out and children are taught effective ways to stay safe; they take part in fire drills, for example, and talk about road safety.

Partnership with parents is good. A dedicated notice board, regular newsletters and daily discussions keep parents and staff abreast of the children's recent experiences and forthcoming events. Parents have highly positive views of the service. They describe staff as 'great' and add that they are 'friendly and approachable'. Parents like the central location of the playgroup and value the fact that the children wear a uniform, which, they think, gives them a sense of belonging.

## **The quality and standards of the early years provision**

Staff make perceptive observations and assessments of the children and use this information to establish their starting points and abilities. Plans cover all areas of learning. They are clearly linked to the Early Years Foundation Stage and include prompts that encourage staff to reflect and assess how effectively activities meet the needs of individual children.

Bright, defined and well-resourced indoor play areas encourage children to initiate activities of their own choice while effective support from staff helps them to sustain concentration and remain focused on the task in hand. These factors give children ample scope to pursue their own interests, enjoy themselves and enable them to make good progress towards the early learning goals.

For example, they take delight in looking through good quality texts, such as 'A Squash and a Squeeze'. They listen attentively as stories are read to them then make impressive attempts at re-telling the tale using writing and drawing to do so. These highly beneficial opportunities promote children's communication, language and literacy skills.

The children role play enthusiastically, which encourages them to use their imagination and they learn to count, reason and solve problems by using their fingers to work out quantities. Children find out about the natural world during planned outdoor activities but opportunities to do so in spontaneous and self-initiated outdoor play situations are limited.

The children's health and well-being is given good priority. Consistent routines, such as frequent hand washing, contain the spread of common illnesses and infections, as does the sensible policy for sick children. The children learn that exercise is fun by using bikes, balls and other equipment while a 'snack bar' arrangement enables them to select nutritious and appetising snacks whenever they want to, encouraging independence and choice.

Relationships between children and staff are excellent, so children are happy and secure. They receive sensitive guidance from staff, which teaches them how to behave acceptably and understand right from wrong. In addition, children learn to respect diversity by celebrating world festivals, exploring aspects of other cultures and seeing positive images of gender and disability in a wide range of good quality resources.

## 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

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

### Leadership and management

<b>How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?</b>	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

<b>How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop?</b>	2
<b>How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted?</b>	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](http://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
--	-----