

St Hugh's Pre-School Play Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	253570
Inspection date	10/07/2009
Inspector	Gill Ogden
Setting address	St Hugh's Church Hall, Harewood Crescent, North Hykeham, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN6 8JG
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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).

Description of the setting

St Hugh's Pre-School Play Centre registered in 1984. It is run by three partners and operates from St Hugh's Church Hall in North Hykeham, using the main hall, toilets and kitchen. There is an adjacent outdoor play area. Children attend from the local community. Opening times are from 09.20 until 11.50 each weekday morning and 12.40 until 15.10 on Monday and Wednesday afternoons during term time only.

The group is registered to care for a maximum of 30 children at any one time aged between two and five years on the Early Years Register and normally takes children from the age of two-and-a-half years. The group receives funding for early education. There are currently 60 children on roll who attend for a variety of sessions. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are accommodated by the group. Of the eight staff who work with the children, seven hold relevant childcare qualifications.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Each child's individual needs are met effectively within the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Close attention is paid to every child's welfare needs and those children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities are very well included. All children make good progress towards the early learning goals and some have achieved most of them by the time they leave to go to school. The whole staff team reflect well on their practice and have clear targets for the ongoing improvement of the provision. Very good relationships exist with parents and children benefit well from the systems that are in place for each child's smooth transition to school.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- consider the organisation of large group times and key group times to improve children's concentration and learning
- increase the opportunities parents have to become involved in their children's learning with particular regard to enabling them to access their child's progress records more easily.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

All the required records are in place and along with clear policies and procedures provide a strong framework for the care of the children. The risk assessment record and daily checks ensure children experience a safe environment at all times. All staff are fully aware of their safeguarding responsibilities and recruitment procedures include robust vetting for their suitability to work with children. They all

attend ongoing training to meet their development needs, the needs of individual children and to benefit the group as a whole. Knowledge and skills acquired from training are shared with the whole team and the managers are very receptive to any new ideas that staff have. Regular staff meetings ensure all staff are kept up-to-date and are also used to plan for each six week block. The staff work exceptionally well together as a team and this is a key strength of the group.

As well as taking action on the recommendations made at the last inspection, which has improved children's safety, increased their learning opportunities and the involvement of parents, the group is proactive in making improvements. For example, the lack of an outdoor area was something that the group regretted and through hard work and commitment there is now an area which children can access freely throughout each session and which has a very positive impact on every child's experiences. There are clear targets in place for future developments such as improving how the key person system works.

Also work is being done to improve parental involvement further and to this end questionnaires have been sent out which included questions that were unique to the setting and the results are in the process of being acted on. Others who are involved with the children, such as childminders, comment very positively about the staff's willingness to share information about the children to ensure continuity of care and learning. The group has successfully encouraged staff, from all the schools that children go on to attend, to visit and so enable a good transitional experience. Parents are generally very pleased with the information they receive and the friendliness of the staff. However, they perceive that they have limited opportunities to view their children's progress records.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Every child is totally at home in the relaxed yet busy and stimulating environment that is provided for them. They relish the opportunities they have to play and learn outdoors which also allows them to get plenty of fresh air. Children learn good hygiene habits and soon become independent in their self-care and help themselves to play resources that are in drawers or on shelves near relevant activities. The introduction of an ongoing snack time has resulted in children taking responsibility for deciding when they are hungry and having added opportunities to talk about their friends and families, reflect on activities they have done in the group and generally reinforce their learning whilst at the same time enjoying a substantial, nutritious snack. Plenty of water is available for children both indoors and outdoors and they help themselves to it frequently so are well hydrated. Staff very rarely have to prompt children about safe behaviour because they move around carefully and show care and concern for each other and toys and equipment. They also have good opportunities to learn about how to keep safe outdoors through activities such as the 'lollipop' lady visiting.

All aspects of all the areas of learning are provided for effectively as a result of staff's planning for both continuous, child-initiated play and key activities led by adults. Staff are deployed very well to ensure every child has access to an adult if they need them and to enable staff to ensure that children get as much as possible

from their activities. Particular attention is paid to imaginative play areas where staff often discover what children are really learning. For example, children enjoy pretending to have a barbeque and all of them use oven gloves when they are handling tools and food which shows that they know how to prevent themselves from getting burnt. However, the organisation of large and key group times does not always work well enough to best support children's concentration and learning. Observations of children's achievements are recorded clearly and checked against the development steps so that staff can easily see how children are progressing and make plans for their next targets. Parents are involved in assessing children's abilities when they first attend so that staff have a secure starting point for each child's learning journey. Children who have additional needs are included well and staff work very closely with other agencies to review these children's progress and make further plans. Staff work hard to ensure they have the knowledge and skills to provide for these children well.

Children work well together and cooperate in construction play and role play activities. They share their resources such as spoons which they use to pour sand onto sticky pictures and show appreciation of each other's kindness. All the children demonstrate a high level of curiosity and notice things like only one fish being in the tank. They question appropriately about why things are as they are. Children enjoy looking at books and listening to stories as a result of staff always being around so that they can help them to enjoy and use books correctly. The use of resources such as shapes that attach on to peg boards help children to think through where they need to position pieces to achieve the desired result which contributes towards them developing problem solving skills. Children know that staff will try their best to provide activities to meet their interests even if they were not planned such as a disco dancing session as a result of a child's fascination with the disco lights that were set up. Many children spend considerable time outdoors where they are able to take part in most activities that are also available indoors, as well the more usual outdoor activities such as riding on tricycles and playing ball games, because learning outdoors better suits them. All in all, children develop well the habits and behaviour appropriate to good learners, their own needs, and those of others.

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?	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

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