



Hainford Pre-School Learning Alliance

Inspection report for early years provision

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Inspector Rosalie Mary Turner

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Type of inspection Integrated
Type of care 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.

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?

Hainford Pre-school is run by a committee of parents and carers. It opened in 1963 and operates from the village hall in Hainford, to the north of the city of Norwich. A maximum of 26 children may attend the group at any one time. The pre-school is open Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 09.30 to 12.00 during the school term-time. The children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 17 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these, 15

children receive funding for nursery education. The children who attend come from the local community and surrounding area.

The group employs five staff. Two of the staff, including the supervisor, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One staff member is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning the importance of personal hygiene because the staff have worthwhile procedures in place to promote children's health. For example, staff remind children to wash their hands after they use the toilet and before they eat, and use anti-bacterial spray on the tables that are used for the snack bar. Children are not allowed to attend if they are suffering from a contagious illness so that others are protected from the spread of infection. There are robust systems in place to record accidents and to detail medicines that are given to children. Staff are qualified in first aid and they have received specialist training to respond to possible anaphylactic shock. Consequently, children's well-being is safeguarded because staff can act quickly and appropriately if children are hurt or ill whilst in pre-school.

Children are encouraged to help themselves to fresh drinking water as a way to maintain their health, especially after physical exercise such as outdoor play. Children thrive because they have opportunities to make nourishing sandwiches and sample a variety of fresh fruits at the snack bar. As a result, children have an increasing understanding of what they should eat to keep themselves fit and healthy.

Children are developing a positive attitude to healthy living through the valuable range of physical activities provided indoors and outside. They are learning the effect that exercise has on their bodies when they clap their hands and stamp their feet to get warm. Children thoroughly enjoy using the crates as a balance beam or stepping stones to show that they are gaining control of their bodies. They are able to develop their spatial awareness as they pedal wheeled toys around the outside play area without bumping into each other and they skilfully move between the equipment in the large hall. Children have excellent opportunities to practise their finger skills. For example, they complete peg puzzles, use many small tools, including scissors, competently and show pleasing hand-to-eye co-ordination as they wrap the toys 'for Father Christmas'.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children happily separate from their carers because they receive a warm welcome. The staff work exceptionally hard to make the large hall a rich and stimulating environment for the children. For instance, staff display the children's art work and many colourful posters, and provide soft furnishings that are made from bright

nursery patterned materials. As a result, children settle well, stay relaxed and are emotionally secure.

Children are able to independently access a superb range of high quality toys that are safe and complete as the staff check the resources before and after each session to ensure that they are in good condition. They show the children how to use the equipment safely and encourage them to keep the floor tidy to avoid possible accidents. Consequently, children are learning to be responsible for their own safety from an early age.

Children are able to play freely because the staff carry out a vigorous daily check of the premises and take actions to reduce hazards. For example, they cover the stacks of adult chairs to prevent children from climbing and bind carpet edges to stop children from tripping over frayed edges. Children practise regular fire drills to help them to escape quickly in an emergency, therefore, they begin to understand the importance of keeping themselves safe.

Children are exceptionally well protected from risk of harm because the staff supervise children closely at all times and help them to be aware of personal safety. For example, staff are alert to 'stranger danger' and they do not let children leave with adults that are not known to them unless they have written consent from parents and carers. Staff place top priority on children's welfare and demonstrate that they can recognise, and respond to, the signs and symptoms of child abuse. Local guidance is kept in the pre-school to ensure all adults have a clear understanding of child protection. Consequently, children are safeguarded from the risk of possible abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and get on well with the staff who are kind and attentive towards them. The staff sit with children, join in with their play and are interested in what they do. They ask questions to make the children think, such as 'Is it the same?' or 'What do you think will happen?'. Consequently, children are motivated, keen to participate and extending their learning as they play.

Children are helped to build on their existing skills because the staff have realistic expectations of their abilities. They use the 'Birth to three matters' framework skilfully to plan activities that help young children develop into competent learners. The highly effective key worker system ensures that staff have an in depth knowledge of children's individual needs, therefore, they provide activities that help the children to make progress. For instance, staff recognise that many children show emergent writing skills so they ensure that mark making materials are provided at every session.

The high adult to child ratio ensures all children are well supported. In particular, the younger children benefit from personal attention to help them to develop confidence and talk about what they are doing. Children are helped to concentrate and take care with their work because staff make appropriate use of praise to help them to persevere with challenges. For example, a child is motivated to write her name when

staff provide encouragement saying 'That's right. Good girl, you have done well.'

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The experienced staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children develop and they all help to plan the educational programme. The staff are currently working with a link teacher from the local authority to improve planning but the short term plans do not yet differentiate between the more and less able children. As a result, some children may not make the best possible progress. There is no system in place to discover each child's starting point along the stepping stones to the early learning goals. However, key workers verbally consult parents and consolidate their findings by observing the children as they play and assessing the findings. For example, 'He selects his own card independently.' 'She initiates her own learning.' As a result, the staff provide children with activities that are not only appropriate to their stage of development but challenge them to extend their learning. Therefore, children are making good progress in all areas of their learning.

Children are eager to learn and they are keen to try new experiences. For example, at registration a child eagerly talks about his fireman's helmet as part of his 'special day' while others enjoy using binoculars to find birds in the trees or to make their friends appear closer. Children begin to work well together. They chat confidently, make their needs known within their play and they begin to take turns and share the resources. For instance, two children share the sticky tape when they wrap presents and show a pleasing concern for each other.

Children's imagination is well fostered through the varied use of the role play area to encourage them to express their ideas and feelings. They thoroughly enjoy pretending to sell toys in the toy shop, laughing and telling staff 'It's not open yet. Come back at five o'clock.' Children's senses are stimulated as they explore the textures of play dough or corn flour mixtures. They particularly like the slimy feel of the snails and the trails that they leave behind them.

Children have worthwhile opportunities to develop early writing skills within routine play and some form recognisable letters. The excellent use of labelling and displays within the pre-school helps children learn that print carries meaning and they can freely access a superb range of fiction and reference books. The staff follow text from left to right when they read stories, carefully linking the words to the pictures and asking children to tell them about what they see. As a result, children enjoy sitting together and using books for pleasure.

Children actively use numbers within every day activities. For instance, they count each other during registration with older children reliably reaching up to ten and beyond. Staff develop children's mathematical thinking when they ask them to calculate 'one more' or to make comparisons such as 'Who is the tallest? Make yourselves smaller.'. Children have worthwhile opportunities to match and sequence by number, shape, and colour as they participate in focussed activities, such as 'the hungry caterpillar,' or help to tidy the toys.

Children have free access to an exciting range of resources that encourage them find

out about technology and to question how things work. For example, the science tray contains a wealth of stimulating objects such as mirrors, magnets and spinning tops that play tunes when used. Children learn about their own culture as they celebrate bonfire night and Christmas but they also celebrate festivals from around the world to help them to value and respect diversity.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children from all backgrounds and of all abilities feel a sense of belonging because the pre-school welcomes and values what they have to offer. Children happily talk to staff about their families and home life and younger children receive sensitive support. For instance, staff readily provide lap time if they are ill or upset and, as a result, older children show a caring attitude towards the younger ones.

Children are helped to appreciate the wider world because they are able to access a multitude of resources that reflect diversity. All images are positive, particularly in the reference books that help children to learn about other faiths, such as Hinduism and Sikhism. Therefore, children are learning to recognise and value differences between each other.

Children behave very well because they know what is expected of them. They are guided by the staff who are very consistent role models to the children. They are calm, polite and use positive techniques for behaviour management that help children to manage their own behaviour. For instance, children are learning right from wrong because the staff explain why they ask them to change their behaviour. The staff are watchful and intervene quickly to divert children's attention and prevent disputes occurring. The staff's pleasing strategies contribute to the children learning to play and work harmoniously.

Children of all abilities are helped to reach their full potential because the staff are able to recognise, and respond to, any developmental delay. They work closely with parents and other agencies and are helped by the area special needs co-ordinator to develop individual educational plans. Consequently, children receive appropriate support to enable them to participate to the best of their ability.

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

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents are provided with worthwhile information that explains the care and education that is provided for their children. The weekly plans are displayed so that carers can be aware of, and involved in, their children's learning. Parents' views about their children's needs and interests are actively sought throughout their time at pre-school. For example, staff exchange information informally as children are delivered and collected. They request feedback in the parents' comments book and send out regular newsletters. Consequently, carers say that they know how their children are progressing and developing. The valuable, two way flow of information enables the staff to provide care and education that is current to children's individual needs. Most parents are highly satisfied with the provision although some do not like the cafeteria style snack

bar that has recently been introduced. However, there is a complaints procedure in place for carers to make their concerns known and the chairperson is intending to set up a complaints log. The supportive working partnership that is in place between parents, carers and staff significantly contributes to the good quality care that children receive.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the staff's commitment to ongoing training that ensures that their skills and knowledge are up to date. The staff make very good use of the available space so that children have plenty of room to move about freely. They can easily make choices from a balanced selection of resources set out on low tables, on the floor, or stored in containers that are within their reach. There is good access to the outside play area and children can choose to go out whenever they wish. Indoors, the children are provided with an area that has wipe clean flooring for messy play, tables where they can concentrate and a well presented, tempting quiet area where they are able to rest or relax. Consequently, the organisation of the space and resources contributes effectively to children's well-being.

All legally required documentation is in place and most is suitably maintained to promote the welfare and care of the children. The comprehensive range of policies and procedures is regularly updated and time is taken to make these specific to the setting. Information is organised clearly and is easily accessible. The robust records of attendances ensure that staff and children are kept safe in an emergency. However, visitors are not asked to sign in as soon as they arrive, so the pre-school may not always be aware of who is present, to safeguard children against possible risk of harm.

The leadership and management is good. The pre-school committee is effective in meeting the children's needs as they have thorough recruitment procedures in place to employ skilled staff and ensure that they are suitable to work with children. The supervisor, although new in her post, is aware of the strengths and weaknesses of the pre-school and has plans to improve the provision through revised planning and assessment of the nursery education. She gives pleasing support and guidance to the staff to enable them to deliver and monitor the educational programme and regularly reviews the provision to ensure that children's welfare and learning is effectively supported. The pre-school is guided by clear aims and objectives that enable staff to provide a stimulating learning environment as evidenced by the good progress that children are making towards the early learning goals.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure staff are deployed effectively and to provide activities to give more choices to children not wishing to play outside.

The staff position themselves at the children's level. They are able to intervene and re-direct children as soon as play becomes boisterous. Consequently, children remain engaged in meaningful play. The structure of the session has been greatly improved to allow children to freely access the indoor or outside play areas for most of the session. Therefore, children are more interested in the activities because they have increased choices.

The previous education inspection asked the pre-school to make full use of assessment information to plan appropriate challenges, to help children show initiative and to learn about the lives and cultures of others. The pre-school was also asked to continue to review the timetable within the session to support the younger children in their play and learning.

The staff are currently implementing a new planning format and, although planning has improved, it does not yet differentiate between the more and less able children. Children have superb opportunities to learn about their multi-cultural society and to appreciate the different lives and faiths of the wider world through planned topics such as 'Celebrations and Festivals.'. Consequently, they are learning to respect diversity. The children are more able to show initiative and their play and learning is better supported because free play time has been significantly extended. A cafeteria style snack bar provides further choices, causes minimal disruption to play and gives children increased opportunities to explore the activities provided. Younger children's learning is far better supported by this continuous play programme and, as a result, they are happy, well behaved and making pleasing progress.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004.

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.

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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):

- improve arrangements for registration so that records show when visitors are present.

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):

- continue to improve planning to include differentiation for the more and less able children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk