



Hambleton Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY221176
Inspection date	24 November 2005
Inspector	Jacqueline Patricia Walter
Setting Address	Gateforth Lane, Hambleton, Selby, North Yorkshire, YO8 9HP
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Registered person	Hambleton Playgroup
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

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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?

The Hambleton Playgroup has been registered for many years and relocated to its current setting in 2003. It is a committee run playgroup and operates from one room in a pre-fabricated building in the grounds of Hambleton Church of England School, which is situated in the village of Hambleton in North Yorkshire. A maximum of 16 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup opens for seven sessions a week during school term only. Sessions are from 09.00 -11.30 hours and

12.30 - 15.00 hours. The children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor area.

There are currently 28 children aged from 2 to 4 years on roll. Of these 15 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions and come from the local community. The playgroup currently supports children with special educational needs.

The playgroup employs three staff. Two of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. One member of staff is currently working towards a recognised childcare qualification. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because practitioners are active in following current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. For example, staff implement appropriate systems to promote health and hygiene such as, wiping tables before snack time and following appropriate procedures when changing children's nappies or soiled clothing. A qualified first aid person is available at all times and a first aid kit is appropriately stocked and stored, which ensures children are able to have first aid treatment administered as required. Staff are fully aware of the comprehensive sickness policy and implement good procedures such as, excluding children with infectious conditions to help prevent the spread of infection. Both parents and staff work well together in order to promote children's health. For example, parents are fully informed of all accidents and there are good systems that work in practice, to ensure the safe administration of medication.

Children are developing an excellent awareness and understanding of simple good health and hygiene practices. They are familiar with daily routines of washing their hands before eating food and after using the toilet and most of the children know why it is important to do this. Children are well nourished and have good and enjoyable opportunities to learn about healthy living. Staff provide fresh fruit everyday for their snack and children participate in activities such as, growing their own vegetables, which helps them to consolidate their learning. Older children are confident in knowing that some foods are healthy or not healthy. For example, they know that eating the carrots they grow makes them big and strong and eating lots of sweets is not good for them. Children's health and special dietary requirements are fully taken account of through staff working well with parents. They are offered milk or water during snack time and are able to access drinking water independently when outside during warm weather. However, due to limited space within the setting, they rely on staff reminding them of the importance of drinking plenty and that they can access water at any time.

Children have very good opportunities to enjoy and develop their physical skills. They

are able to independently access a rich and imaginative well resourced outdoor area throughout most of the session. They enjoy practicing and developing skills with a wealth of both small and large equipment. For example, paintbrushes, various wheeled toys, plastic crates and tyres on which they climb and build, are readily accessible. Older children have good spatial awareness and are developing extremely good manoeuvring skills. For example, they are able to race around the vehicle track on scooters, manoeuvring carefully around bikes and stop abruptly, but safely. Children also enjoy experimenting with movement when playing inside the setting as they confidently engage in role play activities and dance to musical tapes. More able children are developing understanding of the effects of exercise on their bodies and know they are able to rest if they get hot. Staff plan and support appropriate periods of rest for younger children through quieter activities such as, snack and story times.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and appropriately maintained environment, which has good evidence of their play and activities displayed throughout the setting. The space in the setting is limited, However, the staff organise it effectively and creatively so that children can move around freely and safely to independently select from a wealth of stimulating toys and equipment that is appropriate for their ages and stages of development. Risk of accidental injuries to children are minimised through vigilant staff who implement thorough risk assessments on a daily basis and the children benefit from a good range of safety measures. For example, fire fighting equipment is regularly serviced and visitors can only enter the setting if accompanied by staff.

Children are developing a clear understanding about safety inside the setting, through practising emergency evacuation procedures and through age appropriate discussions and support from staff. For example, staff repeatedly discuss and show them how to transport scissors safely. They are developing a very good understanding of safety outside their environment through themed activities that incorporate visitors to the setting such as, the Police and a 'Lollipop Lady'. As a result, they know they must seek out an adult when the fire whistle is blown and must hold hands with adults when crossing the road.

Children's welfare is well protected in most aspects of child protection. All staff have good knowledge of signs and symptoms of child abuse through their qualification training and the setting's child protection policy. Most staff are fully aware of the procedures to follow if concerns are raised on the children. However, their procedures do not reflect the correct Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) procedures, in the event of an allegation being made against staff. As a result, both the children and the staff are left in a vulnerable position.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are extremely confident and self-assured within their setting and benefit from staff who know them well and have superb relationships with them. They are happy and settle very quickly, moving freely around the room selecting activities independently. They are very motivated and interested in their environment and use their initiative extremely well. For example, they make collages using materials that have just been introduced to them and most confidently select equipment that they require and they request changes to routines such as, having a 'picnic type' snack instead of the normal format of sitting at tables. Children are confident in approaching staff for help with their activities and some of the more able children express their likes and dislikes with ease. For example, they tell staff they do not want to play outside confidently using facial gestures as well as words. They are developing a good self-esteem through lots of praise from staff for both effort and achievement. As a result, they are proud of their work and willing to show it to others.

Children are fully involved and acquire new knowledge and skills through a wealth of stimulating toys, equipment and activities. They flourish from high quality interaction from staff, who fully understand how they learn and continually challenge and extend their learning. As a result children are eager to participate in activities. They are very interested in their environment and ask questions and respond enthusiastically to challenges. For example, when discovering a puppy needed naming in the role play area, children gave suggestions by writing their ideas on a white board and selecting one at a later time. Staff are currently updating and developing their knowledge and understanding of the Birth-to-three framework, which in turn will ensure younger children develop to their full potential.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching overall is good. Staff have attended numerous training courses that reflect the Foundation Stage and successfully put this into practice. Planning is comprehensive and covers all the six areas of learning, providing a broad, balanced and purposeful curriculum. Detailed planning on focused activities ensures clear learning intentions are identified for the children. However, there are minor weaknesses in the assessment system as it does not indicate what needs to be included in the next steps for learning. Staff have an excellent understanding of how children learn and use methods that help all children learn effectively. For example, they continually help younger children acquire new skills that enable them to progress in learning such as, holding scissors. They use varied and suitable teaching methods such as, effective interaction in children's play to give clear explanations and offer challenging question. As a result, children are able to focus, often resist distractions and persist for some time with their activities.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Both 3 and 4-year-olds separate from carers with ease. They show increasing confidence in linking up with others, and have a positive approach to new experiences. They are beginning to show care and concern for themselves and are developing very good skills in independence. For example, most are fully independent with personal hygiene and are confident in initiating their own activities. They also demonstrate good flexibility and confidently adapt their behaviour to changes in routine. Children listen and respond with enjoyment and attention to favourite rhymes and songs. Older children are confidently able to take part in conversations and pay attention to

what others say. They show a good interest in books and are able to handle these correctly. More able children are frequently attempting to write for different purposes. For example, they write their names in order to take turns on equipment and make shopping and appointment lists. More able children can write their own name and can hear and say some initial sounds. Most 3-year-olds can count and recognise numbers reliable up to five and some older children beyond this. They are developing some calculation skills through group activities such as, singing number songs and rhymes. Older children are beginning to show confidence with numbers by initiating number activities. For example, they count of how many pieces of fruit they have eaten. Children show interest in the lives of people familiar to them and are developing a good understanding of the natural world through activities such as, taking walks in the local environment and replicating this in their role play areas. Younger children show awareness of technology around them and experiment using phones and calculators in their role play. The more able children are confident in the use of a computer and are able to complete a simple programme. Children successfully use all their senses to explore a wide range of materials. They use imagination well in all areas of the learning and more able children are developing skills in acting out narratives as part of a group.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff value children as individuals and there are effective arrangements in place to care and educate children with special needs. For example, staff work actively with other agencies such as, a Speech Therapist and Portage Staff and are successful in meeting children's individual needs and developing skills. Children are developing a positive attitude and good understanding about others and the wider world through celebrating festivals and participating in village events, such as, Oak tree growing. They are fully involved and are able to make lots of choices and take decisions. For example, older children become involved in the setting of standards regarding behaviour and safety during their last term in the setting.

They are developing a good understanding of responsible behaviour and behave very well because the staff have clear strategies and are consistent in applying agreed procedures. They are successfully learning to work harmoniously with others through staff's sensitive explanations and encouragement in finding solutions. For example, older children are encouraged to write their name on white board to indicate their turn in using the computer. Staff fosters children's spiritual moral and cultural development well and older children are beginning to show consideration for others. For example, they occasionally instruct other children in appropriate and fair behaviour.

The partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from good information sharing with parents on both the general and educational information of the setting. For example, there is an information booklet, which includes information on the Foundation Stage given to all new parents, regular news letters, a notice board and a good selection of children's work and activities are displayed throughout the setting. However, staff are not familiar with recent current changes in legislation and have

therefore not devised an appropriate complaints policy or advised parents of the procedures to follow. Staff seek views of parents and value their observations. They encourage them to share what they know. For example, parents are asked to complete a 'This is me booklet', on their children when entering the setting and verbal information is acted on effectively to meet children's individual needs. There are good opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning. For example, they are invited to visit and share their professional expertise with children and participate in easing the transition from home to the setting by accompanying children for as long as necessary. There are some effective systems in place to discuss children's progress. For example, parents are able to discuss their own child's development and progress at individual parent meetings. However, not all parents are fully aware that profiles which identify how children are progressing are available to them at any time.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The registered person implements appropriate systems regarding the recruitment and vetting of staff, which ensure children are well protected and cared for by staff that have knowledge and understanding of child development. For example, job descriptions are held, qualifications are checked, interviews, health declarations and staff induction courses are also implemented appropriately. However, they are still in the process of updating and implementing new systems regarding criminal record checks on any new staff.

Staff have high levels of awareness of the comprehensive policies and procedures of the setting and of their individual responsibilities. They are fully aware of the aims and objectives of the setting and as a result most policies and procedures work in practice and effectively promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution.

Staff work effectively as a team and cover and support each other extremely well. They use time effectively and have routines in place that help young children feel safe and secure and work with children for much of the time. They demonstrate a high regard for the well being of all children having completed numerous training opportunities relating to both care and education. For example, they have completed basic food hygiene and Foundation Stage training in maths, communication and knowledge and understanding of the world.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Management reviews the strengths and weaknesses of the setting through staff appraisals and evaluations of activities and areas of play. However, there is more scope in assessing the children's progress. There is clear commitment by the registered person to improve the care and education of the setting. For example, staff welcome the involvement of a new initiative known as 'KEEP' (Key Elements of Effective Practice). This includes the implementing of suggestions and the welcoming of training by advisory teachers and the sharing effective practice with other settings.

The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the provider has taken positive steps to encourage good hygiene practice. The staff have reviewed their practice and now implement appropriate systems such as, cleaning tables that are used for snack time. In addition, they actively encourage children in daily routines such as, washing hands before eating food and after using the toilet. Staff also talk to the children about the reasons why good hygiene is important and as a result most children are independent in following personal hygiene skills and know why they have to follow the good routines.

Staff have also taken positive steps to improve the nursery education in their provision. They have developed and successfully implemented a systematic appraisal system to assist in assessing staff's development and training needs. This ensures the teaching practice is of an appropriate quality, enabling children to develop to their full potential.

They have introduced new opportunities such as, a 'three dimensional' model making area and have effectively re-organised their creativity area, enabling children to access materials and resources independently, to develop individual creativity.

They have reviewed the practices of grouping children for certain educational activities such as, story sessions and now implement appropriate systems such as, smaller groups with younger children.

They have also developed knowledge and understanding of mathematical development and implemented activities such as, number rhyme activities and focus activities to promote the learning of simple addition and subtraction. They have also introduced more mathematical resources in to the maths area to assist this learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see by request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- ensure that the procedures followed when allegations are made against staff are consistent with requirements of the Area Child Protection Committee (ACPC) and that staff are fully aware of their responsibilities in child protection matters
- develop vetting procedures to reflect current legislation, with regard to completing Criminal Record Bureau checks on staff, and ensure a system is in place for recording complaints.

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):

- develop ongoing effective channels of communication with parents to discuss children's progress, development and any concerns
- develop the assessment system to clearly identify what needs to be included in the next steps for learning.

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