



High Cross Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	140419
Inspection date	13 March 2006
Inspector	Gabrielle Pollock

Setting Address	High Cross Church, John Williams Hall, Colsterworth Rd., LONDON, N15 4BN
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Registered person	High Cross 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

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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

High Cross Playgroup is a voluntary organisation that is run by a management committee. It opened in 1982 and operates from a church hall and has access to a large hall, a kitchen and toilet area. There is a fully enclosed garden for outside play.

The playgroup opens 5 days a week, term time only, from 09:30 to 12:00 and from 13:00 to 16:00.

There are currently 32 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll, including 7 funded 3-year-olds. The setting currently supports children with special educational needs.

There are 3 staff who work with the children, 2 of whom have early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a satisfactorily clean, child centred environment. They follow good personal hygiene routines which helps to prevent the spread of infection and some of the older children can wash their own hands or wipe their nose and dispose of the tissue appropriately in the bin.

Children's health is promoted as staff have relevant first aid training and have a clear understanding of procedures to follow should a child become ill in their care. Details of their individual health needs are readily available in the event of an emergency.

Children benefit from healthy snacks that comply with their dietary requirements. Children cannot, however, access water for themselves throughout the session.

Children enjoy a good range of play opportunities and experiences that promote their physical well being and development. They ride bikes, climb on and crawl through play equipment skilfully. Children use their hands and tools, such as, buckets and spades when digging in the sand or using the computer to further develop fine physical skills. All children are able to be active or have quiet times according to their needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe and learn about potential dangers as staff explain safe practises to children, for example, to be careful and not to take toys with them when climbing on the climbing frame. Daily safety checks by staff, written risk assessments and removal of most hazards, further ensures children's safety.

Children move safely and freely around their environment, making their own choices about their play. Space and play materials are organised appropriately to allow children opportunities to be active or work at table top and floor activities.

Children access a satisfactory range of play equipment and resources, some of which is presented at the children's level. The learning environment is generally stimulating and welcoming to both children and adults, which enhances children's learning and increases self-esteem, for example, as they notice their creative work

displayed.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues and are aware of procedures to follow should they be concerned about a child in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy their time at the setting. They arrive happy and confident and quickly settle, making their own choices about their play. Caring, nurturing relationships between staff and children help younger children who are upset, to settle and become familiar with their surroundings and the daily routine. For example, children who are settling have their own comforters until they are confident with their environment to be without them. Children are interested in activities and involved in their learning. Children are progressing because staff use their understanding of children's development, to provide satisfactory quality care and learning experiences. Staff know children well and talk to them about their family and what they have been doing at the weekend. This interaction, and the implementation of a key worker system, helps to secure relationships between children and staff developing a sense of trust.

Children enjoy opportunities to express imagination through role-play. They love dressing up and acting out scenarios when going to work or at the hairdressers. They experience a range of media and materials encouraging them to explore, for example, through junk modelling and painting. Staff know the children well and how they are progressing. Staff plan activities according to interests and topics, such as, families or Black History Month. They recognise the value of play in a child's development and introduce a range of experiences, enabling all children to learn to play and work together in groups as well as independently.

Children enjoy the textures of messy play materials, such as sand, which they happily explore with buckets and spades or their hands. Young children develop early communication skills as they are free to express their views and opinions to staff and their peers during activities and at circle time. Staff listen with interest and praise and encourage children as they make up their own songs about their family.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make progress because staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage and of how children learn and know the children in their care well. Staff observe the children and plot their progress on a developmental chart. However, the individual observations and assessments do not inform planning of the next steps for children's individual learning. This impacts on children's progress and opportunities of challenges.

Children's attitude towards learning is good. They are able to concentrate at self-chosen and group led activities, and they persevere until finished. They show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff on arrival. They show and speak proudly about their paintings that are shown at circle-time. They are

engaged in their play and some of the older children take responsibility for their own personal care. However, there is little opportunity for children to develop their self-help and independent skills, such as, at snack-time or when putting on their coats to play outside.

Children count confidently and understand one-to-one correspondence. However, staff do not develop children's awareness of comparisons of numbers; addition and subtraction during everyday activities, which restricts children's learning.

Children talk freely about their home and what activity they are doing. Children interact well with each other; they negotiate and take turns when playing hairdressers or when swapping toys in the sand. They sit together and listen eagerly at circle time and enjoy re-counting past projects and activities they have taken part in that morning and listening to stories. Children use a range of tools and materials, which they use to represent their own ideas. For example, when making a collage picture of themselves using fabric and wool.

The nursery routine provides children with opportunities to engage in physical activities and explore creativity using a range of media such as sand, glue and paint. They learn about themselves and the wider community through discussion and topic work.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have good levels of confidence and value themselves and one another. Children are learning about diversity through positive play materials that are provided. They show respect for their peers, for example, by saying please when sharing play materials. Children with special needs are generally well supported as staff work closely with their parents and the local inclusion team. A positive inclusive environment is encouraged and staff adapt activities to ensure that all children can play alongside their peers. Children behave well as staff are positive role models and use consistent methods of explanations and distraction to manage children's behaviour. Children are learning to negotiate, take turns and share play materials. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The individual needs of all children who attend are met, as staff exchange information with parents of children's activities and care, through daily discussions. Relationships with parents are friendly and they are welcomed into the group on the parent/carer rota, through the committee and invited to come on outings. Policies for the group are available to parents in a file and they are discussed during the settling in period. This contributes to consistencies in the children's care. On the day of inspection, parents expressed how happy they are with the service provided. The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Children's progress is monitored by staff, however, parents are not involved in their children's assessments or receive information about their next steps for development, which affects opportunities for them to fully contribute to their child's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The registered person uses effective recruitment procedures which ensure that staff working with the children are appropriately vetted. Staff are experienced and work well together. The setting have not notified the regulating body of committee member changes. This is a breach of regulation but the impact on children is limited.

Staff attend training to update their knowledge and understanding of good childcare practises and are aware of improvements they need to make as the setting evaluate their practises.

Records are in place and most are inclusive of all necessary detail. They are appropriately maintained and stored confidentially.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Management use staff meetings and general discussions to monitor the curriculum and the impact on children's progress. Staff have access to training through the local authority. The management team are currently aware of the areas that need improvement.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the group were asked to ensure Ofsted are notified of any significant change or event; devise and implement procedures for lost or uncollected children and to ensure that all required records relating to day care activities are readily accessible on the premises and available for inspection at all times. The group have notified Ofsted of staff changes, however, not of the changes to the management committee. This has been raised again at this inspection. Procedures are now in place for lost or uncollected children and all required records are maintained on the premises and available for inspection, thus, improving children's safety and welfare.

The previous nursery education inspection recommended that the group continue to develop the record-keeping system to show more clearly children's progress over time within the six areas of learning and use this information to plan for individual learning needs and to continue to develop planning. This should show what children are intended to learn from the activities provided and this information should be easily accessible to parents to keep them fully informed about the curriculum. Efforts have been made to address these issues, however, not sufficiently to ensure the children's individual next steps of development are planned for and parents receive comprehensive information. Therefore, further recommendations have been made.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

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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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):

- increase opportunities for children to develop their self help and independent skills
- improve systems for notifying the regulating body of any significant changes

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):

- improve opportunities to build on children's knowledge to compare and use numbers to solve problems
- improve opportunities for children to practice mark making in everyday situations
- develop a system to ensure children's assessments inform planning and the evaluation of activities identify the next steps for individual learning and to ensure that parents can be fully involved in all aspects of their child's care and learning

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