



Hawkshead Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY313900
Inspection date	01 March 2006
Inspector	Lesley Ormrod

Setting Address	Hawkshead Esthwaite Primary School, Main Street, Hawkshead, Ambleside, LA22 0NT
Telephone number	01539 436 354
E-mail	
Registered person	Hawkshead Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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?

Hawkshead Pre-School is run by Hawkshead Pre-School Committee. It opened in 2005 and operates from one room in a portacabin. The pre-school is situated in the grounds of Hawkshead Esthwaite Primary School in Hawkshead, Cumbria. A maximum of 20 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open on Mondays 09.15 to 11.45; Tuesdays and Thursdays from 09.00 to 11.30; Wednesdays from 09.00 to 15.00, with a birth to 5-years-old session on Fridays from

09.30 to 11.30. It opens during term-time only. All children share access to the school playground.

There are currently 13 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll and of these, 7 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the village of Hawkshead and nearby villages. The pre-school supports children with special educational needs.

The pre-school employs four staff and of these, three including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications, with one member of staff working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health care needs are known and provided for as staff share their health policies with parents and follow satisfactory medication and accident recording procedures. Their care in the event of an accident is provided for as staff are trained first aiders, although the contents of the first aid box are not in order. Children's understanding of caring for their health is focussed on during routines and as they learn about 'myself' in a topic. They know that a graze might need a plaster, although their understanding of good nasal hygiene routines is weaker. Children have good personal care routines. They visit the toilets independently and attend competently to their personal care needs. Children know that they wash their hands before baking or having snacks. Their hand-washing skills are good, although their understanding of how this prevents harm from germs is not always consistently reinforced by staff.

Children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks and drinks. They eagerly choose from a good variety of fruit that is attractively presented in bite-sized pieces. Their independence skills are promoted as they make their choice of milk or water and pour out their own drinks. Children's social skills are encouraged at lunchtimes through the use of appropriate utensils, although plates are not used at snack times. Their lunch club arrangements are supported through advice to parents about nutritional food items and the sharing of the food and drink policy. Children's special dietary needs are met as staff discuss these with their parents. Their food is served following satisfactory food hygiene procedures, although fridge and freezer temperatures are not yet recorded. Children's understanding of eating healthily is covered in topics and talks to parents about healthy foods by the adviser from Asda. Children can ask for a drink of water but their independent access to fresh drinking water is not provided for through easily accessible options.

Children enjoy being active and are eager to go out for play during each session. They have a wide range of planned physical activities and free play choices. They enthusiastically march up and down the hills in Fletcher's Field as they sing 'the Grand Old Duke of York'. Children delight in developing their idea to have a spontaneous game of rolling down the hills and staff join in the fun. Their large

movement skills are good. They can run competently and quickly grasp how to climb up and jump off the large climbing apparatus. Children can confidently move under, over and through the items of the obstacle course. They regularly participate in activities that encourage their control and use of their body parts. Older children can hop on one foot and most can touch their toes as they concentrate to respond to the 'Simple Simon' instructions. They imaginatively move to music as they pretend to be crawling lions. Children's understanding of how being active keeps them healthy and how their bodies feel after being active is not always consistently encouraged by staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safe use of space has been competently considered in the planned layout of the areas in the new pre-school unit. All children are confident in safely moving around the areas set up to promote their free play ideas. Their safe use of resources and equipment is planned for through the good thought given to the continuous provision set out. Children eagerly choose from the varied selections set out and play safely, as there are good schedules in place for ensuring that equipment is clean and safe for their use. They are confident in selecting their resources from the safe accessible storage, such as finding the furniture they want to set up in the play house. Children are consistently encouraged to understand how good tidying up routines keeps them safe. They confidently explain that it stops trips, falls or hurting others, and prevents things getting broken.

Children's understanding of how to play safely is fostered as the staff place high importance on regularly discussing with them how to stay safe. They know what the rules are for playing safely outside, such as stay within the yellow lines. Children explain that they might trip up and hurt themselves if they run down the ramped access. They have a good understanding of how to stay safe in an emergency as they participate in regular emergency evacuations. Children visit the fire station and find out about fire safety as they chat to the fire officers. Their safe care is promoted as the staff are vigilant in managing security. The arrangements for children's safety are detailed in the good health and safety policy and effective risk assessment procedures. Children have a good understanding of road safety as they take part in planned activities. They learn the road safety song and know how to use the song to cross a road safely when out and about. Children make a road and zebra crossing, and practice safe road crossing as they role play outside.

Children's welfare is protected as the staff are trained and have a good understanding of how to use the child protection procedures if necessary. The arrangements for the protection of children are shared with parents through the detailed policy, although the coordinator's name and referral numbers have not yet been inserted. Children's understanding of how to protect themselves and what to do if they do not feel safe is fostered. They participate in planned discussions and planned activities, such as meeting the police officer and talking about being safe. Children know that if they are lost they look for a safe person, such as a shop assistant or a security officer.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive confidently and go to play readily. They greet staff happily and separate with confidence from their carers. Children are enthusiastic about their play as they team up together to share ideas and decide what they will do in the choosing times. They eagerly develop their ideas, such as getting out the musical instruments to create rhythms for a spontaneous dance. Younger children's learning is accurately assessed on admission using a developmental checklist and the stepping stones of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Their learning needs are met by setting appropriate individual learning targets using a combination of the early stepping stones and the transitional steps of the Birth to three matters framework. Younger children's learning needs are considered in regard to the Birth to three matters framework, although staff have not yet finished the full integration of the transitional elements of this curriculum into the detailed planning systems.

Children aged under 3-years-old make good progress as their learning is accurately observed and assessed to inform the next steps to learn. They are keen to learn and play, and team up happily with the older children to share ideas. Younger children concentrate intently to achieve a task, such as using a pair of scissors to cut wool for a collage. Their skills in all areas of development are fostered. They have good hand coordination skills as they participate in making cheese straws, using the techniques of rubbing-in, moulding and rolling out. Their thinking skills are encouraged as they discuss how to make the pop-up button activate on the toy cannon. They are eager to count and are proud of their skills as they decide how many pieces there are to tidy up.

Children have well planned opportunities to become accustomed to school routines as there are close links between the teachers of the host school and the pre-school staff. They join the reception class for story time each week and regularly attend assemblies. The skills that children need to confidently transfer to school are agreed and fostered by the pre-school staff prior to leaving the setting. Their transition to school is carefully planned out through meetings with parents, the reception teacher and pre-school staff.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good as children settle happily in sessions and are keen to play and learn. They feel secure in the well planned daily routine that includes a good balance of choosing time, group times, physical activity and focussed work. Children are confident learners, as the staff have enabled their free access to a wide choice of resources and activities in the enhanced learning areas set up in the continuous provision. Their learning is competently planned for through good, effective planning systems that clearly facilitate the meeting of each child's next steps to learn. Children enjoy stimulating activities that promote their learning in the carefully thought out medium-term topic planning. Their achievements are targeted through differentiated learning outcomes, very good setting of individual learning targets and good focussed short term plans. Children's learning is effectively encouraged as the staff have a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and use

effective teaching skills. Their language and thinking skills are consistently encouraged through the good use of questioning in routines, free play and activities. They are given many opportunities to use their mathematical skills, as staff consistently encourage their use of counting, calculating and problem solving skills in a variety of contexts. The opportunities for children to develop their competence in the use of sounds to letters skills are not fostered consistently by staff in sessions. Children's achievements and attainment are accurately assessed and very regularly recorded. Their learning is effectively and regularly observed throughout sessions through a good use of informal and formal observations. Children make good progress overall towards meeting the early learning goals by the time that they leave the pre-school.

Children competently use their mathematical skills to count, compare and solve problems as they play. They enthusiastically count the number of children present, with accuracy by 4-year-olds, and count to 10 independently as they play a game of hide-and-seek. More able children can write numerals for a given number. Their calculating skills are encouraged as they compare the fruit needed for two tables of three and four children. They chat to each other about how many will be five and go to school, and compare to the number of three and four year-olds. Children show a good knowledge of size and shape. They develop their recognition of shapes in stimulating activities, such as using Chinese tangram puzzles. Their learning is extended as they role play in the Chinese restaurant with the challenge of sorting and matching the sizes of the utensils needed for a doll, a child or an adult. They weigh out the bricks on the scales and decide that they are heavy. Children have good problem solving skills and persist for long periods to solve a problem, such as how to fix the shaped pieces of the large castle together. All children make good use of the writing areas and readily use mark makers to express their ideas. Their free drawing skills are good as they create recognisable faces, vehicles and houses. They use a good range of language to ascribe meaning to their marks, as they tell staff what to write about their drawings. More able children can write recognisable letters for their names. All children can recognise their own names, although their skills in linking sounds to letters are weak. Children competently use their thinking skills throughout sessions. They think about what their ambitions might be as they grow up. Children concentrate hard to describe what the expressions are on the faces of the emotions dolls and what this means about how they feel. They use a wide range of expressive language to describe their experiences as staff extend their recall skills. Their attention skills in story time are weak at times as they become distracted through some behaviours occurring.

Children have good opportunities to explore and investigate through a range of planned activities and free play. They eagerly participate in the weekly baking activity with its focus on the science of changing properties through heat, cold, mixing. They use their tactile skills to change the ingredients as they rub fat into flour. Children discuss the change of the dough into cheese straws. Children are confident in the use of the computer. They know how to use the mouse to click on the buttons and follow the directions on the screen to complete the program. Children find out about living things as they participate in the topic of trees. They eagerly discuss with the staff what lives in the grass of Fletcher's Field and know that they need to be careful when walking there. Children chat enthusiastically as they develop their design ideas

for their feelings masks. They excitedly extend the initial idea and decide that their masks will be a pancake or a flying ship. Children can accurately describe the features of familiar places, such as where they live. They show good creative skills as they readily draw and paint. They chat to staff about their imaginative ideas as they create their paintings. Children eagerly choose their resources to carry out their ideas. They build up complex collages on the paper plates using a range of natural and man made resources, such as wool, shiny foils and buttons. Children handle tools competently, such as the scissors to cut foil or wool strips for their designs. They enjoy singing and can ably carry out the actions to familiar songs. Children enjoy imaginative movement as they fly like a butterfly and pretend to land on two flowers. They persist at their free play ideas and concentrate in some structured work activities for good periods of time. Children, when motivated, will intently concentrate to solve problems, such as fixing the castle together. At times some children lose concentration and become disruptive in circle times or group work. They are skilfully encouraged by staff to regain their interest in their play and learning. Children have very good self-dressing skills and persist at challenging tasks, such as fastening their zips and putting on their gloves. Children can relate, with staff support, to times that they feel happy, sad or angry. They concentrate hard to show how their faces would look to show their different feelings.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are known and met as staff discuss these in detail with parents and record the information accurately. They are consistently encouraged to share as they play. Children serve each other drinks without prompting. They help each other do up the zips on their coats. At times their sharing skills are poor and staff remind them to let others have their choice of fruit. Their choice making is actively encouraged in choosing time and in group sessions. They are confident as they decide on their play choices. Children have good self-esteem as they chat confidently about what they want to do and their experiences. They are proud of their achievements. Children play equally together without bias. Boys and girls equally participate in the baking activities, dressing up and role play. They have good opportunities to learn about diversity and cultural differences. They participate in special events, such as Grandparents Day, Halloween, Divali and Christmas. They have a good understanding of Chinese customs and traditions as they make dragon masks, look at factual books on China and use the Chinese cookery books. Children write about the Willowware story as they discuss the picture on the plate. Their understanding of their own beliefs and customs is extended as each day they choose to say a thank-you verse, such as 'Blessings on the Blossom' before receiving their snacks. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children with a special educational need are given appropriate support, as the coordinator is trained and works closely with the early years support professionals. All children's development is monitored by staff and any identified needs are identified with appropriate levels of support discussed. Children are fully involved in deciding on the pre-school rules. They decide to add a new rule, as the staff help

them to understand why tipping their drinks over is not a wanted behaviour. They discuss what is right and wrong as the staff consistently encourage their understanding of desired behaviours, through agreed strategies to reduce instances of poor behaviours. Children are encouraged to settle and participate as the staff give time to negotiate, discuss and space to think. Their good behaviour is consistently praised and their achievements celebrated.

The parent partnership is good as the arrangements for children's care and learning are shared fully with their parents. Children's parents are given good, detailed information in the well presented documents, such as the attractive prospectus, the welcome folder, policies and procedures. Their planned experiences and activities are shared with parents in the regular, informative newsletters. They are given good support to settle into the pre-school as staff place a strong emphasis on working closely with parents. Children's experiences and learning are shared with parents through scheduled meetings, good daily handovers and detailed weekly diary sheets. Their progress is reported to parents at the parents' evening, with a written report provided and discussion of their child's stepping stones' assessment sheets. Children's learning is not yet enhanced through regularly offering suggestions for home-link activities to support parental involvement in their children's learning at home. Parental information about children's achievements is not regularly collected to inform the planning to meet their individual needs. The arrangements for children's care include a complaints procedure although this has some minor omissions. Their care is not yet supported through the availability of a complaints record. Children's care and experiences at the pre-school are praised by parents, who consider that their children make very good progress. Their parents are highly committed to the pre-school and are proud of their achievement in providing the new resourced unit for their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are protected as they are cared for by staff who have been appointed through sound recruitment and employment procedures with records of suitability checks made. The leadership and management are good as children receive good quality care and teaching from staff who are well qualified and take up regular training to enhance their skills. The quality of children's learning is identified through informal systems to monitor the quality of teaching, such as staff discussions. Children receive a high level of individual attention as the staff-to-child ratios are favourable and the key-worker system is used effectively. The attendance of staff and children is recorded, although actual times are not clearly specified. The quality of their care and learning is overseen by a committee, whose members have good, clear specifications of their roles and responsibilities. The provision for children's care and learning is regularly discussed by staff with strengths and weaknesses identified. Children's access to extended learning experiences are clearly planned for through good development target setting for the pre-school.

The arrangements for children's care include comprehensive documentation that is regularly reviewed and shared fully with parents. The outcomes for children have

been assessed and evaluated in detail with future development targets identified. Children's parents are regularly consulted for their views about aspects of the provision and possible developments.

The good quality of the provision means that overall the setting meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since registration.

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.

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 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 arrangements for children's health care are promoted by reviewing the contents of the first aid box and providing easy access to fresh drinking water at all times
- ensure that the arrangements for children's care include a complaints record and update the complaints procedures to reflect the current requirements.

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):

- extend the opportunities in activities and routines for children to develop their competence in linking sounds to letters
- enhance the opportunities for children's learning by providing suggested home-link activities for parents to support their children's learning, and regularly collecting parental knowledge of their children's achievements to inform the planning to meet individual needs.

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