

Heaton Playschool

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	315941
Inspection date	22/06/2011
Inspector	Lindsey Pollock

Setting address	Guide Headquarters, Opp Markland Hill School, Heaton, Bolton, BL1 6EJ
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Type of setting	Childcare on non-domestic premises

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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).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Heaton Playschool is independently owned. It was established in 1986 and has been registered at the present building since 1996. The playschool serves the local and surrounding areas. It operates from the Guide Headquarters building opposite Markland Hill Primary School in the Heaton area of Bolton. Children have access to a hall, toilet facilities and an outdoor play area.

The playschool is open Monday to Friday during term time only. Sessions are from 8am until 4.15pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playschool at any one time. There are currently 40 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The playschool is registered on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It provides funded early education for three- and four-year-olds. The group supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The playschool employs six members of childcare staff. Of these, all hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 2 and level 3 or above. One member of staff has Qualified Teacher Status. The playschool receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in this warm and welcoming playschool. One of the many strengths of the setting is the positive relationships between staff and children. Practitioners have a good understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage and children's welfare and learning is successfully promoted. Children make good and often very good progress in their learning in relation to their capabilities and starting points. Well-established relationships are in place with parents that helps to ensure children's needs are met. The leadership team are fully committed to the continual improvement of their practice. Consequently, the capacity to maintain continuous improvement is good.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- obtain parents signatures on all accident records to fully safeguard children
- improve the arrangements for children's sleep so this does not impact negatively on other children's play
- build on ways raise children's awareness of the importance of recycling.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The playschool is well-led and managed. The registered provider is very experienced in early years and supports the manager and staff team well in their roles and responsibilities. Rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures are adhered to ensuring the suitability of all adults who work with children. Robust safeguarding procedures are in place. All staff have a secure understanding of their responsibility to liaise with appropriate agencies if child protection concerns arise. Children are cared for in a very safe environment. Security at the nursery is good and effective risk assessments minimise risks to all attending the provision. Additional risk assessments are also undertaken for each type of outing to ensure children's safety when they are out of the building. Good deployment of staff ensures children are always well supervised. Documentation is well-organised. It is kept appropriately with the exception of some accident records which are not countersigned by parents to fully safeguard children.

The registered provider and manager work as a team and are very much 'hands on' and provide very good support for their staff. They are positive about the inspection process and all staff are keen to participate. Effective systems are in place for evaluation. Parents communicate their views about the services offered by the nursery through questionnaires and direct contact. Their responses are considered and changes can occur as a result. For example, parents requested more information on the Early Years Foundation Stage so staff displayed additional information on noticeboards to address this. All recommendations made at the last inspection have been addressed to improve the quality of care for children. This includes taking steps to ensure all fire exits are now clearly identified so the building can be evacuated quickly and safely in an emergency. The staff successfully overcome the difficulties of providing care from a community building. They work extremely hard to provide a stimulating, inclusive environment which is conducive to learning. Good provision is made for all children to benefit from the fresh air and they move freely between the indoor and outdoor environment. Toys and equipment are of good quality and promote children's learning well. Although staff plan topics around recycling they do not practise this with children on a daily basis to help raise their awareness of caring for the environment.

Comments such as 'I would recommend the playschool without hesitation' and 'I have every confidence leaving my child with the staff' typify those expressed by parents and carers on recent questionnaires. Information is shared daily between parents and staff to ensure individual needs are fully met. Effective systems are in place to enable parents to review their children's progress regularly and contribute to their child's learning and development record. Positive working relationships with external agencies such as speech therapists ensure each child gets all the support needed. Relevant information is shared with other providers of the Early Years Foundation Stage, for example, other early years settings and schools, to ensure continuity and progression in children's learning.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are very happy, active learners who relate very well to the adults who care for them. Close relationships are evident between the staff and the children and the key person system works well. Children approach staff confidently and with much affection. A very good range of activities keep children enthusiastic and purposefully engaged. Staff are continually using information from their observations of children to help with planning for the next steps in their learning. Children have their own learning journey containing photographic evidence relating to the six areas of learning. Summative assessments effectively help staff to track children's progress. These show that children are making good and often very good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children enjoy each others company and chat happily as they play and work together, for example, as they complete jigsaws or engage in matching games. They are well behaved and recognise the 'golden rules' of the playschool. They are friendly, speaking to visitors and greeting their friends as they arrive. Self-help skills are developing well, as children are encouraged to make choices about what they want to play with, pour their own drinks and as they get older, manage their personal needs. 'Trevor' the bear provides good home and setting links as children take turns 'caring' for him and documenting his time spent with them in a diary. Children's communication, language, and skills are developing extremely well. They mark make with confidence using a variety of media including pencils, paint, jelly and even porridge. Some older children are able to write their own names and other words. They self-register at snack time recognising their name cards and know which is their coat peg. They love stories, listening carefully and joining in with favourites. They use their imagination well, filling their cars up with 'petrol' and 'oil' at the garage and paying the 'garage attendant'. They have great fun and engage in sustained play in a den they have made in the book area. However, due to this area being used for a sleeping child throughout the afternoon this lovely imaginative play is unable to continue. Staff extend activities well to promote children's learning. For example, during the recent 'under the sea' topic children visited the local supermarket and bought fresh fish which they cooked and ate at the playschool. The provision for physical development is also extremely good. Children engage in planned gym sessions including dancing, cheerleading and exercising as well as enjoying using equipment outdoors. Children celebrate diversity through planned activities such as celebrating festivals. Their awareness is also raised as they play with resources with images which reflect the world in which they live.

Good standards of cleanliness are maintained throughout the whole playschool including toilets and nappy changing areas. This helps to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Children are learning about keeping themselves safe through instruction and everyday practices. For example, using tools such as, scissors and cutlery and by talking about and practising road safety.

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

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met