

Happy Hours Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 113510
Inspection date 12/07/2011
Inspector Helen Penticost

Setting address The Community Centre, Broadfield Barton, Crawley, West
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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

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Description of the setting

Happy Hours Pre-school opened in 1976 and moved to its current premises in 2001. It operates in a hall in The Broadfield Community Centre, in Crawley, with direct access to a kitchen and toilets and an outside play area. The facility mostly serves the local area.

The setting is registered on the Early Years Register and is currently caring for 65 children in this age range. The setting is in receipt of funding for early education for two, three and four year olds. There is provision in place to support children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. The setting also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens Monday to Friday during term time only, from 9.15am until 12.15pm, with lunch club running from 12.15pm until 1pm and afternoon sessions run from 1pm until 3.30pm. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are eight full and part-time staff who work with the children. All of the staff have a recognised early years qualifications to NVQ at level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from a teacher and mentor from the Early Years and Childcare Service (EYCS) and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Children are cared for in a fully inclusive setting where their individual care and welfare needs are fully highlighted and met well. They make good progress overall in their learning and development through the commitment of the well-established and experienced staffing team. The setting fosters positive relationships with parents, which ensure a consistent and cohesive approach. Improvements made since the last inspection and the setting's systems of self-evaluation, help to ensure children benefit from continuous improvement.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- maintain a regular two-way flow of information where children attend another early years setting, to help support and extend children's learning and development
- develop systems to enable children to self-select from the range of stored resources.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

Children are effectively safeguarded as staff have a good knowledge and understanding of their role in child protection and the processes to be followed. Policies and procedures which underpin the smooth running of the group are regularly reviewed and made available to parents. Comprehensive risk assessment, daily visual checks and vigilant monitoring of entry to the setting ensures hazards to children are effectively minimised, which enhances their safety. The well established staffing team are committed to improving outcomes for children. They have a strong awareness of their current strengths and weaknesses and well targeted plans for the future. Assessing and reflecting on their practice is becoming routine to the staff team as they seek advice and information from other professionals to ensure they have a realistic view of their provision. Professional development of staff is well supported, with staff updating their knowledge and skills through the completion of degree and other appropriate early years courses as well as workshop session and short courses.

The play environment is bright, clean and safe. A wide range of good quality resources are on offer and are effectively presented in low level storage systems where trays and boxes are clearly labelled. However, the storage of toys within the large cupboards does not fully support children's skills of self-selection as they are not able to independently choose from the full range. Staff work efficiently as a team, which benefits the children and enables the staff to have a sense of ownership. They are exceptionally well deployed throughout the setting at all times, which ensures that each individual child is supported at all times. All children are respected and valued in line with their specific beliefs and backgrounds, enabling them to make progress from their individual starting points. The clear equal opportunities policy is implemented well, ensuring inclusion is promoted and any form of discrimination is actively challenged.

The pre-school welcomes all children and is able to support children who are learning English as an additional language and those with special educational needs and/or disabilities through close links with other professionals. However, evidence to support communication links where children attend another early years setting is lacking. The group establishes positive working relationships with parents and this facilitates the good understanding key workers have of the needs of the children in their care, their backgrounds and their learning and development. Information sought from parents swiftly establishes starting points for children. Parents are kept well informed of their children's efforts, achievements and progress through a number of effective systems, such as verbal communication daily and the completion of learning journeys and next steps reports.

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

Children are settled well within group and spend their time engaged in interesting and meaningful play activities. They have formed good friendship groups with others and they sit together completing tasks, such as, computer games. They are gaining an understanding of their own personal safety and are enabled to take risk in safe surroundings, for example, as they use scissors and scale the climbing frame with increasing skill. The pre-school operates a positive approach to behaviour management where staff offer lots of praise and words of encouragement. This builds children's self-esteem and confidence and their behaviour is very good.

Children are active participants in a short circle time where they count up how many children are attending and have opportunities to ask questions or share their news. For example, children ask if they can water the potatoes, herbs and flowers that they planted in the garden. They discuss the reasons why the plants need watering and what other elements are required to help them grow. Children thoroughly enjoy singing and animatedly join in with the actions and they are able to control their voices to sing loudly and quietly as they song dictates. Concentration is good. Children sit for prolonged periods of time as they draw pictures of their family and as they use the threading boards to create pictures from the laces. They freely access the books corner, either sitting on their own making up a story with the aid of the pictures or enjoying sitting with staff members listening to a story. All of these activities promote children's early communication skills.

Children access the drinking water throughout their session, stating that they are thirsty. They are able to discuss those foods which are healthy and those that are not, which is supported by planned activities. Children access outdoor play on a daily basis and they thoroughly enjoy the freedom that the free flow system gives them. They are able to balance on the beams, roll large dice, pedal tricycles and the climbing frame is in constant use. Children use the play dough to make pretend cakes and use the tools to cut up and roll out the dough. They are able to sort and group a variety of objects, for example, they put together the family groups of varying animals.

Children re-create events through taking part in role play. For example, while the outdoor area of the setting was being built, children set up their building site and work out how to place together the soft bricks to make a secure wall. They all dress up in hard hats and tabards and enjoy using the tools. Children show great interest as they examine a large spider. They use magnifying glasses to look at it closely and they discuss their observations with the staff who ask open ended questions to extend their thinking. In the garden, children help to plant the 'mini meadow' with grass seed. They talk about how the soil feels in their hands using words such as 'damp' and 'crunchy'. They access a good variety of technological equipment, including a computer where they use mouse with skill, a child-friendly camera and walkie talkies. Children gain an awareness of different cultures through outing within the local community and also through visits from local police

officers. Positive links with home are actively encouraged, for example, through the use of Barnaby Bear who goes home with children to join them on their adventures.

Children are well supported by staff who have a secure understanding of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Observation, assessment and planning systems are well established and track children's progress from their starting points towards the early learning goals. Next steps are clearly highlighted from the observations and are used to tailor the planning for individual learning by building on their achievements. As a result, children are making good progress in their learning and development.

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	3
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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