

The Hardman Centre Pre-School Playgroup

Hardman Centre, Dryden Road, Low Fell, Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, NE9 5HP

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| Inspection date | 06/10/2014 |
| Previous inspection date | 20/04/2009 |

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| The quality and standards of the early years provision | This inspection: | 2 |
| | Previous inspection: | 2 |
| How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend | | 2 |
| The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children | | 2 |
| The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision | | 2 |

The quality and standards of the early years provision

This provision is good

- The quality of teaching is consistently good. Staff provide a broad range of stimulating and interesting activities for children and extend their learning well through effective questioning, modelling language, explaining and exploring ideas.
- Children's sense of security is promoted by the effective key-person system, which helps them to form strong bonds and emotional attachments. Staff are kind, caring and attentive to what children say and do.
- Partnerships with parents are good. This supports a smooth transition between home and the playgroup, and promotes continuity in children's care and learning.
- Children are kept safe because staff provide good supervision during their activities. Staff understand the importance of following the correct procedures in the event of any child protection concerns.

It is not yet outstanding because

- Staff do not always ensure that the role-play area is equipped with real life resources that enhance children's imagination and further develop early reading skills.
- Arrangements for children's arrival and departure does not always allow parents an opportunity to see where their children play each day or the attractive displays of their children's artwork, to become more involved in their child's learning.

Information about this inspection

Inspections of registered early years provision are:

- scheduled at least once in every inspection cycle – the current cycle ends on 31 July 2016
- scheduled more frequently where Ofsted identifies a need to do so, for example where provision was previously judged inadequate
- brought forward in the inspection cycle where Ofsted has received information that suggests the provision may not be meeting the legal requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage or where assessment of the provision identifies a need for early inspection
- prioritised where we have received information that the provision is not meeting the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage and which suggests children may not be safe
- scheduled at the completion of an investigation into failure to comply with the requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage.

The provision is also registered on the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. This report includes a judgment about compliance with the requirements of that register.

Inspection activities

- The inspector observed activities throughout the playgroup.
- The inspector looked at children's records, observation and assessment files, planning documentation and a selection of policies.
- The inspector spoke to the manager, staff and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector took account of the views of parents and carers spoken to on the day.
- The inspector checked evidence of suitability and qualification of practitioners working with children, and the provider's self-evaluation.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Janet Fairhurst

Full report

Information about the setting

The Hardman Centre Pre-School Playgroup was registered in 1992 on the Early Years Register and the compulsory and voluntary parts of the Childcare Register. It is located in the Hardman Centre, Low Fell, Gateshead. The children who attend live in the local and surrounding areas. The playgroup uses the main hall and another small room, and there is an enclosed outdoor play area. Although, other community groups use the centre, the playgroup has sole use of these rooms during the times of operation. The playgroup is open Monday to Friday term time only, from 8.45am to 12.30pm. There are currently 27 children attending, who are in the early years age group. The playgroup employs five members of childcare staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications at level 3. The playgroup receives funding for the provision of free early education for three- and four-year-old children.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

To further improve the quality of the early years provision the provider should:

- build on the existing learning experiences for children to further use their imagination and develop early reading skills in the role-play area, by providing real life resources, such as, magazines, pots and pans and real vegetables
- enhance the already good partnerships with parents by finding creative solutions to enable them to visit where children play on a more regular basis, so they can become even more involved in their child's learning.

Inspection judgements

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend

Staff have a good understanding of the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. They know the children well and understand their individual developmental needs. Staff use their knowledge effectively to provide a broad range of enjoyable activities that support children's interests well and enable them to make good progress in their learning. They regularly observe children during play and carefully use what they see and hear to assess progress and plan for their next steps in their learning. A good focus is placed on promoting the prime areas of learning. Consequently, children have a firm knowledge base from which they can build on and learn new skills. Staff gather valuable information from parents about their child's individual needs and interests. This information is used well by staff to gain a better understanding of the children and to support them in meeting children's individual needs. All children have an individual learning journey book, which contains both photographic and written information of children's learning, achievements and work. These books are shared with parents, who are

encouraged to add any information related to experiences in the home. This gives staff opportunities to plan and build on children's interests from home.

Children are eager to come into playgroup. Although many of the children have only been in playgroup for a few weeks, at the time of the inspection, they are already used to the routines of self-registration and choosing activities freely. They quickly learn to follow rules for sharing equipment, such as hand held computers, knowing where to find the toys and equipment they wish to use or in taking responsibility for tidying up the hall. This helps children to develop their social skills, self-confidence and independence, and provides them with a very good range of skills for their future education. The constant emphasis on language development is a particular strength of the playgroup and underpins all activities. For example, while reading a story a member of staff introduces new words, such as habitat, and provides children with a simple explanation of its meaning. This successfully develops children's understanding and widens their vocabulary. Staff skilfully intervene in play to enable children to acquire the key skills needed in preparation for school. For example, while children are engaged in a number and colour matching activity, a member of staff asks good questions to stimulate their thinking, such as 'what other colours can you see' and 'how many blue ones do you have'. Books are plentiful and readily available so children can look at them independently, or invite a member of staff to share a story. Varied writing materials and paper give children good opportunities to extend their skills in making marks. They learn to recognise their names as they register their own arrival, and use their name cards for snack time.

Children use numbers for counting in their play and routines, and are beginning to categorise objects by colour, shape and size. They fix jigsaw puzzles of varying complexity, developing good problem solving skills and abilities. Songs, rhymes and stories are a strong feature of children's daily routine, enhancing their creativity, imagination and sense of fun. This adds meaning and purpose to their learning. All children enjoy role play and re-enact known and familiar situations. Children chatter on the telephones and thoroughly enjoy dressing-up in various outfits. However, the majority of resources used here are plastic and there are too few real-life items to help children make the link with their home. For example, real vegetables, pans, magazines or books that also help to develop children's imagination and enhance early reading skills further. Children have good opportunities to develop an idea of making marks on paper and learn how to control pens, pencils and paint brushes. They do this with enthusiasm, showing a developing range of control. There are regular opportunities for children to express themselves creatively, imaginatively and musically. For example, they select from an array of interesting craft materials to make collages and pictures to either take home or be displayed on the walls. Children become curious and inquisitive, developing the skills they need for future exploration and investigation. They learn how to operate everyday technology equipment, such as switching a torch on and off. The hand held computers are a popular resource in the playgroup. Children learn well and can carry out a number of actions as they confidently complete simple programs. They show much enjoyment, use the computers safely and often work without an adult. A wide range of activities promotes children's physical development well. Outdoors, they benefit from activities, such as, climbing, walking, riding wheeled toys and jumping. Indoors, they quickly develop skills of dressing, putting on coats and using zips, and they start to work with small tools, such as,

scissors, chalks, paint brushes, pencils and pens.

The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children

There are good procedures before children start at the playgroup to help support children's transition from home into the playgroup. Home visits and opportunities to visit the playgroup, along with exciting activities organised each day, enable children to settle in happily and become eager learners who achieve well. Every child has a key person who gathers valuable information from parents; this means the playgroup has a good understanding of children's individual needs and how to meet them. As a result, children make secure attachments with their key person. Time spent getting to know all about each child benefits children greatly because their individual needs are well known by staff and are incorporated into the planning each day. As children leave for school, their continued sense of security is fostered well. For example, teachers are invited to visit children at the playgroup. This provides an opportunity for children to meet them in a secure and familiar environment, and also enables staff to share with them children's achievements.

Children play in a well-organised, spacious and stimulating environment, with clearly defined areas of learning. They use a good range of age-appropriate toys and equipment which are placed at a low-level. This enables children to develop their independence and make choices. It also ensures inclusion for all children. Children are very familiar with the playgroup routines and are very secure in the warm, positive relationships they have with staff. As a result, the behaviour of children is good and they play effectively together, share toys and treat all resources with respect. Staff listen to all that children have to say. This has a very positive impact on children's self-esteem and confidence in learning. Staff help children to learn to value and appreciate the similarities and differences between themselves and others as they celebrate festivals related to their own or others' cultures and beliefs.

Children benefit from a safe and secure environment. They learn about possible dangers and how to keep themselves safe through timely reminders from staff and routines, such as practising good road safety when outdoors. They also learn the importance of good personal hygiene habits and a healthy lifestyle. For example, they benefit from healthy and nutritious packed lunches provided by parents and snacks provided by the playgroup, which include fresh fruit and vegetables. Interesting activities, such as growing cress, reinforces children's understanding of where food comes from in a meaningful way. Children decide when they would like to have their snack and confidently help themselves, which enhances their independence skills. Children have daily opportunities to play outdoors and enjoy fresh air and exercise and this contributes to their health and well-being.

The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager has a good understanding of her responsibilities in meeting the safeguarding and welfare; and the learning and development requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. She ensures all staff have a comprehensive knowledge of safeguarding and that they implement policies and procedures effectively. All staff attend safeguarding training and are fully aware of the possible signs of abuse and what to do or who to contact should there be any concerns. Children are further safeguarded by effective recruitment, vetting and induction procedures. These help to ensure children are cared for by suitable and enthusiastic staff committed to improving their practice. Effective staff deployment ensures children are successfully supported in their learning, as well as being supervised at all times. Written risk assessments identify how potential hazards have been identified and minimised to keep the children safe. Access to the premises is closely monitored by staff as children arrive and depart and the door is secured during the playgroup session.

All staff are well qualified and there are good arrangements for monitoring their ongoing performance and supporting their continuous professional development. For example, the manager works directly with children and this provides a valuable insight into the quality of practice. The manager also carries out supervision sessions with all members of the team, which includes identifying any further training needs. Robust systems for tracking children's progress ensure that the manager and staff have a good understanding of the achievement of individual children. This information is shared effectively with parents through children's learning journals and regular updates on progress. The way staff reflect on the impact of their practice on children's learning is good. Weekly meetings help them to build on children's interests and plan future sessions. They skilfully identify what they should do next to move forward the learning of individual children, while discussing things that have gone well and where alterations are necessary. Self-evaluation methods are effective, helping the staff to build on their strengths and to highlight significant areas for development. The views and feelings of the children and their parents are used to guide and inform practice through daily discussion, observation and feedback questionnaires.

Parents and children are warmly greeted by staff on arrival and some time is made for a friendly verbal exchange of relevant information. Information posted on the noticeboard, policies, procedures and newsletters ensure parents are fully informed of forthcoming events and future topics planned for their children. Furthermore, they provide some ideas of how parents can support their children's learning at home and in the playgroup. Children are encouraged to take home reading books to share with their parents. Parents' open days and coffee mornings are planned throughout the year. This provides them with a good opportunity to discuss their children's progress formally with their child's key person. Discussions with parents and carers at the inspection, demonstrate that they are completely satisfied with the care and support that their child receives. However, some parents comment that they would welcome more regular opportunities to come inside the hall to see where their children play each day, and to see the various attractive displays of their children's artwork. Staff understand the value of working closely with other professionals and have developed effective relationships with other provisions that children attend. Consequently, staff can gain a full picture of all of a child's achievements, in order to complement their learning fully. The manager has a good understanding of how to access external services as necessary to ensure that children receive targeted

support.

The Childcare Register

The requirements for the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are

Met

The requirements for the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are

Met

What inspection judgements mean

Registered early years provision

| Grade | Judgement | Description |
|---------|----------------------|--|
| Grade 1 | Outstanding | Outstanding provision is highly effective in meeting the needs of all children exceptionally well. This ensures that children are very well prepared for the next stage of their learning. |
| Grade 2 | Good | Good provision is effective in delivering provision that meets the needs of all children well. This ensures children are ready for the next stage of their learning. |
| Grade 3 | Requires improvement | The provision is not giving children a good standard of early years education and/or there are minor breaches of the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. We re-inspect nurseries and pre-schools judged as requires improvement within 12 months of the date of inspection. |
| Grade 4 | Inadequate | Provision that is inadequate requires significant improvement and/or enforcement action. The provision is failing to give children an acceptable standard of early years education and/or is not meeting the safeguarding and welfare requirements of the Early Years Foundation Stage. It will be monitored and inspected again within six months of the date of this inspection. |
| Met | | There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider continues to meet the requirements for registration. |
| Not met | | There were no children present at the time of the inspection. The inspection judgement is that the provider does not meet the requirements for registration. |

Inspection

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of provision that is registered on the Early Years Register. The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and care, known as the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Setting details

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| Unique reference number | 311883 |
| Local authority | Gateshead |
| Inspection number | 868052 |
| Type of provision | |
| Registration category | Childcare - Non-Domestic |
| Age range of children | 0 - 17 |
| Total number of places | 30 |
| Number of children on roll | 27 |
| Name of provider | The Hardman Centre Committee |
| Date of previous inspection | 20/04/2009 |
| Telephone number | 0191 4874248 |

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Type of provision

For the purposes of this inspection the following definitions apply:

Full-time provision is that which operates for more than three hours. These are usually known as nurseries, nursery schools and pre-schools and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the higher fee for registration.

Sessional provision operates for more than two hours but does not exceed three hours in any one day. These are usually known as pre-schools, kindergartens or nursery schools

and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. They are registered on the Early Years Register and pay the lower fee for registration.

Childminders care for one or more children where individual children attend for a period of more than two hours in any one day. They operate from domestic premises, which are usually the childminder's own home. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage.

Out of school provision may be sessional or full-time provision and is delivered before or after school and/or in the summer holidays. They are registered on the Early Years Register and must deliver the Early Years Foundation Stage. Where children receive their Early Years Foundation Stage in school these providers do not have to deliver the learning and development requirements in full but should complement the experiences children receive in school.

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