

Heather Playgroup

North Heath Lane School, Erica Way, Horsham, West Sussex, RH12 5XL



Inspection date

13 July 2015

Previous inspection date

7 November 2011

The quality and standards of the early years provision	This inspection:	Good	2
	Previous inspection:	Good	2
How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend		Good	2
The contribution of the early years provision to the well-being of children		Outstanding	1
The effectiveness of the leadership and management of the early years provision		Good	2
The setting meets legal requirements for early years settings			

Summary of key findings for parents

This provision is good

- Staff give extremely clear messages that help children develop a very successful understanding of a healthy lifestyle. For example, children enjoy visits from dentists and they grow, pick and prepare their own fruit and vegetable snacks. In addition, they make collages showing healthy and not so healthy food.
- Staff plan an extremely good range of activities to help children prepare for school. Children practise physical educational sessions and staff provide school uniforms that children enjoy dressing up in. The children receive visits from school teachers as well as visiting their future school on several occasions. This effectively eases children's move to school.
- Staff skilfully promote children's independence and confidence, particularly in self-care skills. For example, they encourage children to put on their own waterproof trousers before going outside. Children help prepare snacks, lay tables and place their dirty crockery in a bowl when they have finished.
- The leadership and management team involves parents, staff, other professionals and children in helping to evaluate the service accurately. It takes positive steps to respond to areas for development and this improves children's learning experiences.

It is not yet outstanding because:

- Some staff do not take all opportunities to encourage children to discuss their thoughts and link their ideas. This slightly restricts the children in coming up with their own ideas and becoming good communicators.
- Staff do not fully support children's home languages during play and learning in order to support their language development at home.

What the setting needs to do to improve further

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

- improve the consistency of teaching to enable all staff to help children to think of, and discuss, their own ideas
- improve the steps taken to provide opportunities for children to use their home language in the setting.

Inspection activities

- The inspector held ongoing discussions with the staff, the manager and children throughout the inspection.
- The inspector examined a range of documentation, including a sample of policies and procedures, including safeguarding.
- The inspector observed staff interactions with children inside and outside.
- The inspector took into account the views of parents spoken to on the day.
- The inspector carried out a joint observation with the manager.

Inspector

Jacqueline Walter

Inspection findings

How well the early years provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend. This is good

The quality of teaching is consistently good and some is excellent. The staff promote communication and language well overall. For example, they ask lots of questions which require children to provide a more detailed answer rather than 'yes' or 'no'. Staff effectively supervise and challenge children to explore movement and jump as far as they can from climbing equipment. As a result, children thoroughly enjoy taking controlled risks, effectively developing their confidence and physical skills. Children enjoy engaging in mini-beast hunts. They successfully use magnifying glasses to observe bugs and record what they have found on laminated sheets. This successfully helps them develop a good understanding of the natural world in addition to developing their early literacy skills.

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

The staff gather detailed information from parents which helps them tailor settling-in sessions to meet the children's individual needs. This makes an extremely strong contribution to providing consistent care for children. Children show extremely high levels of confidence in social situations. For example, they independently introduce visitors to staff that have recently come on duty. Staff use innovative methods to help develop the children's understanding of safety. For example, the local fire authority visits regularly to discuss safety issues with children. Children also thoroughly enjoy engaging in activities such as 'Test it Tuesdays' where they regularly observe smoke detectors being checked and go over the evacuation procedures with staff. This successfully helps them to develop an extremely good understanding of how to keep themselves safe.

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

Staff value and develop very strong partnerships with parents. They work effectively with other professionals in supporting the children with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This contributes well in helping these children to make good progress. The leadership and management team has a good understanding of how to meet the safeguarding and welfare requirements. It carries out effective recruitment and induction procedures to ensure all staff are suitable and aware of their responsibilities to protect children. Strategies such as these effectively help to promote the children's safety. The leadership and management team closely monitors the progress of children. It also uses good strategies to help identify weaknesses in staff practice and set targets for improvement. As a result of attending training in behaviour management, staff are now more confident and consistent in challenging inappropriate behaviour. Consequently, children are developing extremely positive relationships. For example, the more able children help others find their names at snack time by sounding out the initial letters.

Setting details

Unique reference number	113519
Local authority	West Sussex
Inspection number	839870
Type of provision	Sessional provision
Registration category	Childcare - Non-Domestic
Age range of children	0 - 8
Total number of places	24
Number of children on roll	40
Name of provider	Heather Playgroup Committee
Date of previous inspection	7 November 2011
Telephone number	01403 262320

Heather Playgroup registered in 1978. It operates within the grounds of North Heath Primary School, in Horsham, West Sussex. It operates during term time only on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9am to 2.45pm, and on Tuesdays and Fridays from 9am to 1pm. The pre-school also offers a pre-school transition session on Fridays during the summer term from 1pm to 2.45pm. The setting is in receipt of funding for the provision of free early education for children aged two, three and four years of age. The setting supports children who are learning to speak English as an additional language. The provision employs eight members of staff. Of these, seven, including the manager, hold recognised childcare qualifications.

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