

Hollingbury Park Playgroup Tennis Pavilion

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	130692
Inspection date	20 November 2007
Inspector	Brenda Spencer
Setting Address	Ditchling Road, Brighton, East Sussex, BN1 7HS
Telephone number	01273 551 847
E-mail	
Registered person	Hollingbury Park Playgroup
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

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hollingbury Park Playgroup first opened in about 1970. It is operated by a management committee comprising parents whose children attend the group and also includes past parents. It is registered to provide care for 40 children aged two to five years. The group is open from Monday to Friday from 09.00 to 15.00 term time only. The group occupies a tennis pavilion. There are two playrooms, a small office, a kitchen and storage rooms. The secure outdoor area is currently unused as the decked area with seating under trees is unsafe. The playgroup uses the area in front of the building while the improvements are being planned.

The playgroup currently has 52 children on roll. Of these 16 are funded three year olds. There are no funded four year olds. The playgroup provides care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Including the supervisor there are seven members of staff of whom three hold relevant childcare qualifications and two are job sharers. Staff receive support from the local authority. The playgroup is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Staff care for children well in a safe and hygienic premises. Children are taught to prevent spread of infection, for example, by encouragement to cover their mouths before coughing. Staff ensure all surfaces are disinfected before children are given regular opportunities to eat and drink, and this promotes their well-being. Snacks which are provided are nutritious and staff take careful account of children's allergies. However, although children enjoy a range of healthy snacks including fruit, their understanding of a healthy balanced diet is not secure and opportunities are missed in activities such as role play to extend this feature of their learning. They do learn that it is important to keep warm by dressing dolls appropriately for cold weather. Children thrive because of the close attention paid to their emotional welfare. This is done by making good use of parents' notes about their children's interests and worries. All necessary arrangements are in place to ensure medicines are administered safely.

Even in the event of poor weather, appropriate arrangements are made to give children enjoyable physical activity. This develops their ability to make refined movements, such as using a paintbrush and colouring pencils and moulding play dough. It also helps them to enjoy physical exercise. Children balance, use low level stilts, bowl with skittles, jump and play hoola hoops with energy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The setting makes good effort to ensure the premises are safe and secure and that resources and equipment are clean and well maintained so that children's safety is assured at all times. Risk assessments are in place to evaluate the safety of the premises and this promotes children's well-being. Only adults can open the doors but evacuation plans are practised regularly with the children so that they are ready in case of an emergency. Electrical switches and sockets are all out of reach to children.

There are sensible rules on display encouraging children to be kind, walk, to sit when eating and to share and take turns. These are all having a positive impact as the children's behaviour is very good contributing to their own sense of safety. Communications with parents cover use of sun cream and healthy diets and help parents to be involved in their children's care. All staff hold a first-aid certificate and have been subject to police checks to ensure they are suitable to work with young children. Although all members of staff have been trained in safeguarding children and know the procedures, some of their knowledge is out of date.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The very warm relationships between children and adults are conducive to children's learning and development. Staff are sensitive to each child's needs and make good use of what parents have told them, for example, getting a favourite book about cars to soothe a child. Planning takes account of the different stages of development of children. Concepts of number are appropriately learned through songs and actions. Reading stories is a valued time to be intimate as well as to foster literacy skills. Children have lots of opportunities to choose what they want to do and learn to sustain interest in what they are doing. Sometimes the expectations of

children are not well pitched, for example, some very young readers are not supported in recognising their name label by giving them only a few from which to choose. They are inhibited from developing their own mark making and creativity by the use of templates and worksheets. This lack of challenge diminishes children's achievement.

The quality of teaching and the children's learning is satisfactory. Relevant training means the staff are able to plan for learning in line with the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff keep records of this learning and development but they are not detailed in comparison with those observations concerning emotional development and welfare concerns. This limits effective planning of next steps to ensure children make good progress.

Children's personal, social and emotional development is good. They behave well and are considerate to one another. Points of conflict are quickly resolved, for example, who should have a favourite doll, because staff help children to be thoughtful. Children choose from the activities on offer and become very involved. However, there is not enough choice in the materials and resources made available, for example, when making a picture. Templates and worksheets also limit both children's creativity and the challenge in their activities. Conversations are promoted through use of interesting questions. However some questions only encourage one word answers and do not develop children's communication skills sufficiently well. There are two book corners but children do not choose to go there, although they greatly enjoy the stories adults read to them. In role play, children develop their emotional skills well, for example, when considering whether the baby dolls might need cardigans to keep them warm in the cold weather. There are some missed opportunities for children to rehearse the literacy and numeracy skills they learn, for example, by reading telephone numbers or writing out shopping lists as they play out every day events. This slows their potential progress. Children learn about shapes, the passing of time using an hourglass and many can count to ten. Children's understanding of every day technology is improved with the purchase of programmable toys and a computer.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children have a strong sense of identity and learn how to behave well because staff are respectful and affectionate. Children feel their questions and needs will be taken seriously so are open, enquiring and friendly. Photographs of them around the setting create a sense of belonging. Displays, such as those of children making divas for Divali, show appreciation of the cultures of children's diverse backgrounds. The particular needs of children are accommodated within the routines, whether they are to have a rest, be shown how to say a word correctly or hear a well-chosen story. So children feel confident to make decisions about what they do, for example, seeing how many can fit in the box which held large equipment counting as each child steps in. The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is good. Excellent use is made of the information parents provide to help new children settle. Good communication is maintained with parents to provide effective support of children with learning difficulties. The good liaison with parents means staff are well informed about children's needs and are able to refer to specialist services if required. Planning the curriculum is shaped by the knowledge staff gain from parents about, for example, children's favourite stories. The observations staff make of children focus in greatest detail on aspects of care and welfare. This means opportunities are sometimes missed to work with parents to enhance the challenge in children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The turnover of staff is very low reflecting a happy working atmosphere and a strong sense of teamwork where all staff work to care for the needs of all children. All the necessary arrangements are in place to safeguard children from unsuitable adults and this ensures their safety. The required records are kept regarding attendance, qualifications and policy decisions. Although the setting is already organised effectively it, is keen to improve further and looks at how well it is doing very regularly. In order to improve provision training is held on site for all staff to gain a shared understanding of how to care and educate the children well. Plans are being made to ensure all staff are familiar with the renewed requirements for care and education of young children.

Participation in a national quality assurance scheme has involved for example, scrutiny of the relationships, parental involvement and the physical environment. As a result the provision has improved over the last eighteen months. The leadership and management of the setting are good. Resources and the environment are well-organised enabling children to gain confidence and enjoy their time at the playgroup. The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting was asked to make the flooring in the focus room safe. The unsafe flooring has been replaced. It was asked to review nappy changing arrangements and these are now secure and hygienic. The setting was requested to review its deployment of staff and ensure records were accurately maintained. The organisation of snack time now uses staff effectively and records of accidents and use of medicines are fully in place.

The setting was asked to increase staff knowledge of the early learning goals and provide more opportunities for children's reading and technology skills. Staff are promoting reading and the knowledge of everyday technology because they have received training on the early learning goals and the expectations of nursery education.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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 satisfactory.

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):

- develop opportunities to further children's understanding of a healthy diet
- ensure child protection training is routinely updated

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):

- ensure the challenge of children's activities matches their capabilities and develops their literacy and numeracy skills in all their play and learning
- use detailed observations of children's learning to plan the next steps in their development

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education* (HMI ref no 2599) which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk