



Helsby Link club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY338901
Inspection date	31 January 2007
Inspector	Ron Goldsmith
Setting Address	Helsby Hillside Primary School, Bates Lane, Helsby, FRODSHAM, WA6 9LN
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Registered person	Marie Guinness
Type of inspection	Childcare
Type of care	Out of School 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Helsby Link club is one of two link clubs provided by the named registered person. It opened in 2006 and operates from the school hall in Hillside Primary School. The school is situated within the village of Helsby. A maximum of 24 children between the ages of four and eight years may attend the link club at any one time. There are currently 30 children on roll. The link club is open each week day after school, from 15.00 to 18.00, term time only. Children have access to the school grounds for outdoor play.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Good routines and procedures are followed for children to stay healthy. Staff wash the fruit they give to children to prevent cross-contamination. Children learn about personal hygiene

throughout the daily routine, they are used to washing their hands before snacks and know this is to remove the germs. Floors, furniture and equipment are kept clean. Emergency arrangements in case of accident and illness are in place to ensure children receive appropriate care, and staff are suitably qualified to administer first aid. Staff follow comprehensive written sickness and exclusion policies and all medication is recorded, along with parental consent. The environment where children play is suitably clean and well maintained. All children's accidents are recorded.

Children have lots of opportunity to enjoy fresh air and exercise as they play vigorously outdoors, which helps them to develop physical strength and stamina. They enjoy wall tennis, basketball and general running games. There is a good range of equipment for them to use for physical games indoors and outdoors. Facilities for preparing food are good and children enjoy healthy and nutritious snacks. Staff encourage children to eat brown bread as they make their own sandwiches from a choice of fillings and they are offered a choice of water or diluted juice. Individual children's food requirements are considered and met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a safe and secure environment, that is appropriately organised to minimise the risk of injury. Staff gently remind children not to run indoors because of the risk of accidents. Good procedures are in place to ensure unknown persons do not enter the premises. The main entrance is kept locked at all times. Staff closely monitor all visitors.

Children settle well as soon as they enter because the room is laid out with equipment which is appealing for them to use. The building, furniture and equipment are well maintained but there is little opportunity for children to be able to display their own art work and there is no space to allow children to play or relax quietly. Although there are books in the setting, they are not available at all times and therefore the choices which children make are limited to those resources which staff put out for them or which they specifically request.

Staff conduct good safety measures to help protect children from harm. Risk assessments are conducted daily on toys and premises, and staff follow comprehensive health and safety procedures. Children learn about safety. They develop an awareness of what to do in the event of a fire or in an emergency as they practise the evacuation procedure with staff, although the frequency of the fire drill is insufficient. Throughout the daily routine, staff gently remind children to be careful when running around.

The children's welfare is further safeguarded as staff have a good understanding of child protection issues. All staff have completed a training course. They follow a comprehensive written policy and know what to do and who to contact should they have any concerns about a child. Staff vigilantly supervise children and good staffing ratios are maintained at all times.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children remain very happily engaged throughout the session in a variety of activities which they are free to select themselves. They play imaginatively with small world figures and they enjoy drawing, cutting and gluing as they make models from the good junk modelling resources provided. Children express pride in their achievements and concentrate for long periods in creative activities. They make necklaces which they wear and show off proudly, and they are focused and intent on creating models which are completed and well constructed. Children enjoy art and craft activities and explore different textured materials, to make colourful and tactile displays. They have fun making hair from shredded coloured paper, or faces from paper plates which they decorate and pierce with holes to make eyes. When they play outdoors they are exuberant, enthusiastic and energetic, organising their own games or dancing spontaneously in small groups.

Staff create a happy atmosphere through the good relationships they establish with the children. They show an interest in what children tell them about their experiences. As children play, staff sit along side, joining in and helping when asked. They act as good role models as they talk quietly with the children and encourage sharing and cooperation. Children are relaxed as they play. They exchange friendly banter with each other, and communicate well with adults who they do not know by answering questions thoughtfully and helpfully. Many say that taking part in crafts is their favourite activity.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's choices are respected and staff get to know children well to understand their individual needs. They access some toys and resources reflecting positive images of race, culture, gender and disability, helping children to learn about diversity. However, there are not many positive images displayed to reflect the wider diversity of society and to stimulate discussion about this. All children are valued and staff have a good understanding of their individual needs.

Children are well behaved, polite and considerate to each other, learning to share and take turns during play. They are usually able to resolve their own disputes because the staff teach them skills of negotiation. Although there are some opportunities for children to take responsibility over the running of the session, this is not fully exploited when putting out of equipment or when organising snack time.

There is good partnership with parents, who make very positive comments about the service. However, limited information is displayed for parents about how the service operates. Newsletters are periodically sent out to keep parents updated and the provider ensures records and details are maintained and updated. Staff and parents are seen to use opportunities well to exchange information about the welfare of the children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision ensures that children are appropriately cared for and provide good outcomes for children under being healthy and enjoying and achieving. There are effective procedures in place for the recruitment and vetting of staff and Ofsted are informed of any changes. Records of staff vetting, qualifications and training are not kept on the premises. Good staffing ratios are met, helping to protect children and promote their welfare. Staff training needs are identified through regular staff meetings and discussion. Staff attend a variety of training events to further their professional development.

The room is organised so that children have good access to resources. The range of resources is satisfactory but limited for reflecting diversity and for encouraging greater choice. Staff follow policies and procedures well for children's safety and have good access to them for reference. Information is stored securely for confidentiality and records about individual children are shared with the child's parents. Records are well maintained for safeguarding children.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

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):

- ensure a sufficient number of fire drills are carried out

- ensure there is space for children who wish to relax or play quietly, equipped with appropriate furniture
- ensure records of staff qualifications, training and recruitment are kept on the premises.

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