

# Hackleton Pre School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	220222
<b>Inspection date</b>	20 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Margaret Coyne
<b>Setting Address</b>	Dudley Winterbottom Memorial Hall, Chapel Lane, Hackleton, Northampton, Northamptonshire, NN7 2AH
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Trustees of Hackleton Pre-School Playgroup
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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](http://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?

Hackleton Pre-School opened in 1966 and operates from the Dudley Winterbottom Memorial Hall in a village close to Northampton, Northamptonshire. The group have access to a large hall, a smaller room, a kitchen and toilets. All children have shared access to a secure, enclosed outside area. A maximum of 38 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The group is open each weekday from 09.15 to 11.45 for approximately 38 weeks of the year. The pre-school is managed by a committee.

There are currently 24 children aged from two years six months to under five years on roll. Of these, 13 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area.

The pre-school employs six staff. Of these, two staff including the manager hold an appropriate early years qualification and three staff are working towards a qualification. The pre-school receive support from a qualified teacher and the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Staff have good routines in place to keep the hall, equipment and toys clean and hygienic for the children's use. They follow appropriate guidelines and procedures to protect the children from infection. Effective systems are in place to enable staff to act in the children's best interests if they become unwell or require medical attention. Through the good examples set by the staff, discussion and regular routines, children understand simple health and hygiene practices which prepare them for future self-care. For example, children wash their hands after using the toilet and use bowls of water, which are changed frequently, before snacks and after messy play activities. They understand about using tissues and covering their mouths when coughing. This helps prevent cross-infection and promotes good hygiene practice with the children. The group have a secure system to record any medication administered to a child and any accidents that occur. This information is shared with parents. A high level of staff hold a first aid certificate and are confident to administer this to a child to prevent them from becoming distressed.

Children are well nourished. The food offered is healthy and nutritious and provides variety and choice. Children enjoy a rolling snack time program. They find their name cards, select their own snack and drink and clear away after themselves. Snack times are relaxed, social occasions where small groups of children and staff sit together around the table to enjoy their food and each other's company. Healthy eating is promoted as they enjoy snacks of fresh fruit and vegetables with bread sticks, cheese and crackers. They can access water at any time during the session. Children have fun learning about the benefits of a healthy diet and develop their knowledge and understanding of food. For example, they help in some food preparation and enjoy food tasting sessions, trying different tastes and experiences including food from different cultures. Staff work closely with parents to provide snacks which appeal to the children as well as meeting their health and dietary needs.

Children enjoy activities which develop and enhance their physical skills. Staff make good use of the indoor space and the garden area providing a range of small and large equipment for children to become adept at balancing and co-ordinating their bodies. Children cut with scissors, manipulate playdough, sand and water. They use tools and vessels and make marks with various writing implements. For example, children manage one-handed tools such as hole punches, pencils and scissors. They move their bodies along beams in different ways and manoeuvre sit-on rides in various directions. They develop their physical control with obstacle courses, balls, hoops and balancing beams. They extend this as they crawl up, over, through and under objects.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children's safety is given a high priority. They are cared for in a welcoming, secure and safe environment. Staff set the room up before children arrive to make it welcoming and encourage them to participate in the activities. Children move around freely to play and access an abundance of good quality resources. Comprehensive risk assessments are carried out regularly to check and minimise any potential hazards. Staff are deployed to supervise the children in all areas used by the pre-school including the toilets where children are escorted. They monitor visitors and only release children to adults who have been authorised to collect them. All staff are inducted in best practice to keep the children safe. For example, not being alone with

children, good practice on outings to ensure children's safety and with fire evacuation. The fire drill is practised and records kept to ensure staff and children know how to get out quickly and safely to protect themselves from the dangers of fire. A fire box is used which contains all necessary equipment and records if the group have to leave the premises in an emergency.

Children develop a secure understanding of the boundaries in place which help keep them and others safe. Exciting activities, simple pre-school rules, staff interaction during play and regular discussions reinforces safe practices. For example, they pick up toys from the floor in case others trip and fall and learn about pushing the chairs under the table to prevent accidents. They understand about using equipment safely such as the balancing beams, sand and water. Children have recently taken part in a safety week where they learnt about road safety and keeping themselves safe. This was extended with discussions about safety with fireworks. Through topics and themes they become aware of people who help us, such as, fire officers and police officers. They enjoy visits from the local community police officers who talk to the children about keeping safe, including stranger danger.

Children's welfare is safeguarded. Staff understand their responsibilities with regard to child protection and there is a designated person to deal with any issues that may arise. Training in this area is updated on a regular basis. Relevant information, should staff have a concern about a child in their care, is to hand. They are aware of the signs which may give them cause for concern and the procedures to follow in accordance with the Local Safeguarding Children Board. However, the child protection policy has not been updated with reference to the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. This means that parents and staff are not aware of the current procedures the group is working towards in the protection of children.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are happy, settled and secure. They have a sense of belonging as they come into the pre-school and know the routine. They know where to hang their coats and the early morning routine as they sit together in a group for registration time, sharing personal news and talking about the days of the week and the weather. They relate well to each other and socialise together seeking out friends to share activities. Children spend their time in a purposeful manner as they move freely around the activities throughout the session. They enjoy exploring new and familiar concepts as they take part in creative activities, play in the garden and work in the role play post office. Most children are able to concentrate and persist at self-chosen activities and know they can ask staff for a favourite toy to share with their friends. Staff are kind and caring helping children to feel settled, raise their confidence and sense of security and develop their play ideas to help them make progress. Staff are on hand to support and engage those children who's concentration is limited to help them gain control of their feelings and show an interest in an activity. Children wandering between activities are guided by staff who sit with them supporting their play and engaging them in some worthwhile activities. For example, asking a child to participate in the role play area, making a post box or engaging them in the book area or creative activities.

Staff value all the children. This helps them feel secure with adults, able to talk and take part in discussions. They have lots of fun together and are able to freely move around the indoors and outdoor areas. Most children are excited by the interesting activities and are keen to participate. For example, the glitter playdough was a favourite with children. They bring in the toy farm vehicles to fill with dough and scoop it up. The post office provides an imaginative time for children to use their skills writing letters, weighing these and posting them. A high

level of interaction and language takes place between the children as they play together imaginatively. Children enjoy singing, action rhymes and using musical instruments. They have made musical shakers from rice and conkers exploring the loud and soft sounds that are made. A secure balance has been created by staff between adult-led and child-initiated activities. Children have ample opportunities to express themselves spontaneously using their own skills and imaginations in many areas of their play. Children exhibit great pride in their work as they take it home for parents.

Staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan stimulating and interesting play and activities which help the children develop. Throughout the session, children are engaged and learning throughout their play. Their achievements are observed and used by the staff to inform what they need to be doing next with each individual child for them to make progress.

### Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a reliable awareness of children's starting points and use this to plan the next steps in their development. They are cheerful communicators with the children, they know the children well and give attention to each child. They are secure role models and inspire, praise and encourage children to try things for themselves. They encourage children to gain the confidence to succeed in most areas and support them well as they aspire to do so. Children are making sufficient progress, supported by the staff's team generally secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They use a range of teaching methods and understand how children learn and progress in most areas. However, children's independence is not fully promoted as they are not able to select resources or tools for activities for themselves. Staff are enthusiastic and this impacts on the children's enjoyment and learning. Children are challenged in a positive way to increase their capabilities in most areas of learning.

Children are engaged and happy as they move around the pre-school taking part in activities. They enter the group confidently and separate from their carers with ease. They have a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and eagerly seek out friends to share their play with. Behaviour is generally good as the children know the routines and what is expected of them. They respond well to the staff and know when it is important to listen. They play cooperatively together and this is demonstrated well during role play as a group of children play in the post office. They become postmen weighing and sorting the letters out, sticking on stickers for stamps and handing out mail to other children. This is a worthwhile activity which encourages the children to use their imaginations, incorporates their mathematical knowledge and gives them many opportunities to use their language and mark making skills. Children enjoy books and seek out an adult to share stories with while enjoying a cuddle together. They use pencils successfully while making marks and colouring. Some will attempt to write their own names on their work. However, more able children do not have clear opportunities to access their name cards to copy their names on to their own work. Some children are able to recognise their own names at registration time and snack time. However, staff miss opportunities to introduce the initial letter sounds to develop children's understanding of early phonics. There are no labels around the room on familiar objects to develop children's emergent reading and word recognition skills. Children enjoy taking turns to take home the 'travel bear'. They record his adventures with their parents which helps them gain an understanding that words have meaning.

Children are confident counters and can recognise written numbers, count and match objects and are becoming adept at simple problem solving. For example, they work out how to make

things the same size when building with construction and can compare and sequence different objects such as beads and the Compare Bears. At snack time they work out how many chairs, cups and plates they will need for the number of children and how many more to add. Children demonstrate their knowledge of shapes and colour through everyday activities. During their play in the post office they recognise numbers that have personal significance such as their age or door number. Staff provide children with opportunities to extend their knowledge and understanding of the world around them. They discover how things grow and change while watching eggs develop in the incubator. When the chicks hatch the children nurture them experiencing the changes that occur. They have opportunity to handle them whilst learning about being gentle and kind. They feed them and watch them grow. A laptop computer is available for children to gain an understanding of information technology. They have various programs that they can choose that supports their learning in other areas such as literacy and mathematics. Children enjoy trips into their local environment as they discover the parks and other places of interest. This extends their local knowledge and sense of community.

Children's physical skills are well developed through the wide range of activities they take part in both in and outdoors. They use a variety of equipment and tools to promote this area of their development. Their hand and eye coordination and dexterity is further promoted as they take part in a wide range of activities to develop these skills. For example, as they manipulate small objects, build with construction, use tools to create shapes in the playdough and manage a variety of one-handed tools to glue, make marks and paint. Children have planned creative activities to stimulate their senses and extend their creative development. They take part in music and singing, dressing up and role play and engage in a variety of art work with both individual and group displays. Children have many opportunities to create spontaneously using their own skills and imaginations. They have enjoyed getting messy making paper-mache globes in line with their theme 'Around the world'. These will be used to decorate their Christmas tree as hanging ornaments. Many different types of role play help children develop their imaginations and extends their language skills. These are developed in line with a theme or topic such as a doctors surgery, an estate agents, a lifeboat and a clothes shop. They learn about different peoples roles and jobs through their imaginative play.

Planning is detailed and covers the areas of learning adequately. This gives a clear picture of the aims and objectives of each activity. An evaluation of this ensures it is meeting the needs of the children in most areas. The medium term and short term plans are sound working documents that enable staff to plan themes, topics and activities that stimulate and challenge the children through the early learning goals. Although staff know the children well and can extend activities for more able children, this is not documented in the plans to enable all staff to work consistently together to provide sufficient challenge for older or more able children. Plans also do not document the key vocabulary staff can introduce to the children to extend their language development and introduce new words during an activity. Staff are involved in the planning they develop for the children. Consequently they are enthusiastic and take responsibility when presenting the activity to the children.

Children's achievements are clearly linked to the stepping stones. Staff use on-going observations to plan the next steps in children's learning. Each child has a file containing examples of their work, photographs and clear comments from staff. These provide detailed observations about their progress under the six areas of learning. Tracking observations are conducted to help staff identify children's development. The assessments clearly identify any gaps in a child's progress and are used to inform future planning to help each child make progress.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a meaningful range of activities and resources to promote a positive view of the wider world and increase their awareness of diversity. They develop a positive attitude towards others because they are valued and respected. All children receive a warm welcome and take part in the full range of activities. Children are able to experience different cultural celebrations such as Diwali, Hanukkah and Christmas. If any children are attending with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or particular health issues, staff have suitable systems in place to support them. This ensures particular developmental or health needs are catered for and all children are included.

Children work harmoniously together as they share and take turns. They behave well and are learning right from wrong. Staff are positive role models and manage children's behaviour effectively. For example, they offer praise and encouragement and value children's accomplishments. Children develop respect for others because staff are sensitive encouraging children to understand that their behaviour may have an impact on others. Staff reinforce the rules and boundaries at group time. This helps children take some responsibility for their own behaviour as they learn to manage and control their emotions. They are given responsibilities to be helpers and achievements are rewarded with stickers. They are beginning to develop care and concern for others and learn to share well together. Staff use positive language when talking to the children which helps children learn in a clear manner about what is expected of them. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive good quality information about the Foundation Stage and are encouraged to take part in their child's learning. These home and pre-school links provide consistency in the children's care and helps them make progress. The notice board, newsletters and parent's pack provide information about the care provided and the nursery education. Parents are invited to look at their child's progress records at any time with the friendly and approachable staff team. A formal consultation time is arranged between key workers and parents to go over each child's progress and achievements. Children are cared for by staff who work closely with parents to meet their individual needs. They share information before and after sessions and at the time of placement. Regular newsletters provide information about the routine, themes, topics and any changes in policy. The notice boards display comprehensive information about the care and education that the children receive. Parents are encouraged to play an active role in their child's care to support this partnership. For example, they are invited to take a turn as parent helper, make any comments about the provision through the suggestion box or questionnaires, to view the photograph albums, policies and procedures and with a two-way sharing of information about their child with daily diaries. The complaints procedure ensures parents are aware how and to whom they can raise any concerns or complaints and that suitable action will be taken to address these. A complaints record is kept which parents can view by request. This enables them to monitor the care the children receive.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The thorough recruitment, vetting and induction procedures play an important part of the children's safety, well-being, play and learning. They benefit because they are cared for by staff who have or are working towards a suitable qualification and have the experience required to offer a high level of care. Comprehensive policies and procedures have been devised to run

the pre-school effectively and keep the children safe, healthy and safeguard their welfare. Ratios of staff are maintained at all times so that the children receive high levels of support and staff are very well deployed throughout the sessions. Children enjoy various small and whole group times throughout the sessions, as well as one-to-one care if required. The organisation of space, resources and the daily routine allows children to play freely and benefit from both physical and quiet activities. There is an effective keyworker system in place. This provides both children and parents with a point of contact with the person responsible for monitoring the care and development of individual children. Children are stimulated and sufficiently challenged as they take part in the activities.

The leadership and management is good. The manager works well with her deputy and the committee to promote the professional development of all staff. The children's care is enhanced by efficient and effective organisation. Staff understand and implement the setting's policies and procedures. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities and a dedicated staff team has evolved which impacts on the children's enjoyment, sense of belonging and achievements. Staff share information regularly and plan activities to help children make progress in an enjoyable way. They have a clear sense of purpose and commitment to continual improvement. The staff are enthusiastic and enjoy the company of the children. They know the children well and this impacts on how they are supported as they learn through their play.

All records and documentation are reviewed regularly to support the settings good practice and to enhance the care, play and learning for each child. Records are up to date and stored in a confidentially manner. The group evaluates their own practice and produces action plans to move them forward. They have a positive vision for the future particularly with staff's personal development to enhance the educational program for the children. The group work closely with the local authority development officer and with qualified teacher support to develop their practice and therefore improve the care and education offered to the children. An inclusive environment has been created which clearly shows that each child is valued, important and matters. Overall children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider agreed to ensure children have access to fresh drinking water, to develop their policies and procedures, to ensure resources are available showing positive images of cultural and disability. They also agreed to develop the range of mathematical activities, to provide regular opportunities for children to experiment with musical instruments, to provide more choices for children to express their own ideas and work imaginatively, to use evaluation purposefully to plan next steps in children's education and to monitor and evaluate the provision to ensure children make progress towards the early learning goals.

Children have free access throughout the session to fresh drinking water from a dispenser. The policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated with regard to the policy for illness or infections, the complaints procedure and the child protection procedure. However, some additional amendments are required to this with regard to information concerning the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. Extra resources are in place that show positive images for children with regard to culture and disability.

Children take part in a range of mathematical activities through everyday play as they learn about different concepts such as weighing and measuring, sorting, pattern making, number, size and positional language. They solve problems for themselves using their own mathematical thinking. Children have regular opportunities to use musical instruments discovering how sound

is made. They use ethnic instruments and make their own from everyday resources such as rice and conkers. They take part in music and movement and play party games to music. Children have some choice over activities within the creative area to help them self-select resources independently and work imaginatively, although this is not extended in other areas of play. Staff use evaluations daily and weekly to plan the next steps in children's learning and inform future planning. The group evaluates their provision to help children make progress through the stepping stones towards the end of the Foundation Stage.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 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):

- ensure the child protection policy is updated for example with reference to the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures.

#### **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):

- develop planning to ensure there are regular opportunities to provide further challenge for older and more able children and to identify key words for staff to introduce to children
- ensure children's independence skills can be extended with self-selection of activities and tools
- extend children's emergent reading and word recognition skills with emphasis on the sounds of letters in familiar words and labelling around the room on familiar objects
- provide regular opportunities for children to write or make marks on their own work, for example, by using their name cards.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)