

Happy Hours Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	113510
Inspection date	02 November 2007
Inspector	Jacqui Lloyd
Setting Address	The Community Centre, Broadfield Barton, Crawley, West Sussex, RH11 9BA
Telephone number	07759920402
E-mail	
Registered person	Happy Hours Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Happy Hours Pre-school opened in 1976 and moved to its current premises in 2001. It operates in a hall in The Broadfield Community Centre, in Crawley, with direct access to a kitchen and toilets and shared use of an outside play area. The facility mostly serves the local area.

There are currently 56 children from two-to-five years on roll, of these 26 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. There is provision in place to support children with a learning difficulty and/or disability. The setting also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The group opens Monday to Friday during term time only. There are morning sessions from 09:15 until 11:45 and afternoon sessions from 13:00 until 15:30.

There are five full and part-time staff who work with the children. All of the staff have a recognised early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives support from a teacher and mentor from the Early Years and Childcare Service (EYCS) and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

There are good procedures in place to encourage children's healthy development. Children have regular access to an enclosed outdoor play area and therefore enjoy physical activity and exercise in the fresh air. This contributes towards their good health and the development of co-ordination and muscle control.

Children follow good personal hygiene routines. They clearly understand the need to wash their hands after using the toilet as many of them do this independently and without any reminders from adults. Children also clean their hands before eating and are able to explain the reason why they do this. When asked, children state that this is 'to get rid of the germs, otherwise I might have tummy ache'. This demonstrates that staff are successfully teaching the children the importance of good health and hygiene.

Children are well protected from the spread of infection as there are clear policies in place regarding sickness and exclusion. Staff maintain accurate records of accidents and always ensure these are shared with parents. This helps to ensure parents are kept fully informed about their child's welfare.

Children learn about healthy eating through well-planned topic work and discussions that arise during the daily routine. For example, staff regularly talk to the children about the benefits of eating fresh fruit at snack time. They also refer to the low level 'healthy eating' posters and displays which help children to develop an understanding of the importance of eating a balanced diet. Children freely access drinking water, which is readily available to them. This enables them to develop their independence and respond to their own needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff give careful consideration to the layout and presentation of the premises. The hall is very welcoming to the children as staff have created lots of low level, bright and interesting displays. Children's artwork is displayed throughout the premises and there are current photographs of the children displayed attractively. These help to create a very inviting and child-centred environment.

There is lots of space available to the children and staff organise this well to enable the children to access toys and activities easily and move freely around the hall.

Children enjoy playing with a wide range of good quality toys and resources. These are well organised and many of them are stored in low level storage units and clearly labelled, enabling them to see what is available and make independent choices about what to play with. This also enables children to develop their own ideas and follow their interests.

Staff give good attention to safety in most areas. There are good procedures in place regarding the security of the premises, meaning unauthorised visitors are unable to gain access and children cannot leave the building unsupervised. Staff supervise children closely and ensure unvetted persons are not permitted unsupervised access to the children. This is extended to the parent helpers, contracted workers and any other visitors to the community centre.

There are clear emergency evacuation procedures in place, however, these are not practised regularly enough. As a result some children, especially those who are new to the group, may not be familiar with the procedures to follow in the event of an emergency.

There are clear and effective procedures in place with regards to safeguarding children as all members of staff attend child protection training. All staff are aware of their responsibilities in this area and clear procedures about what to do if they have concerns about a child in their care are in place.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff have a very warm and caring approach and develop very positive relationships with the children, who approach adults with great confidence. Children are happy and enthusiastic on arrival, they settle quickly and are keen to take part in the exciting play and learning opportunities that are presented to them.

Staff are very sensitive to the needs of the children and their families. They have good procedures in place to help new children settle and this is always adapted to meet the needs of the individual child. For example, the number of 'settling in' sessions and the amount of parental involvement needed during this process varies from one child to the next.

Children develop close and caring relationships with their peers and staff, which helps them to feel settled and secure within the pre-school.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff make good use of all learning opportunities as they arise, by constantly questioning the children and therefore reinforcing their learning. Children have good opportunities to enjoy uninterrupted child-initiated play. This enables children to become fully engaged in play and learning and benefit from being able to follow their own ideas and enjoy their chosen activity.

Staff skilfully know when to participate in activities to encourage learning and when to allow children the freedom to explore their own thoughts. Staff make good use of observation records to record the children's progress and have a good understanding of the children's individual skills and abilities. Staff plan a good range of activities for the children, although they do not consistently evaluate these. This can restrict staff from being able to identify individual learning needs or plan specifically for the more or less able children in the group.

Staff place a great deal of emphasis on developing the children's social skills and support the children well in this area. Staff encourage children to treat each other with kindness and respect and develop positive relationships with one another. Children are taught from a young age about the need to share, take turns and play co-operatively with one another. In the role play area, children manage this quite effectively by themselves. For example, children are quick to remind each other that only two children may play in this area at any one time. Staff also use effective methods to reinforce this, for example, by compiling a waiting list with the children who are waiting to use the bikes.

Children have free access to writing materials and make good use of them. Children enjoy mark making activities and are developing good pencil control. Children recognise letters and sounds and make good attempts to write their name and practise writing skills.

Children communicate with each other and adults very confidently. They use language well and enjoy expressing themselves freely during play. Children are encouraged to develop their vocabulary and enjoy exploring language. For example, children playing with the play dough and rice, describe in great detail how they plan to 'squidge it and squash it' and listen to how 'scrunchy' it is. Children handle the books carefully and take great delight in listening to stories and sharing books with each other and with adults. Staff make good use of props with the children to support story telling activities. They also use simple signs to help children who are learning English as additional language access the curriculum and become integrated quickly into the pre-school.

Children use mathematics in many areas of the pre-school, throughout the daily routine. For example, children confidently count the number of children present at the group during the registration time. They also have access to a good range of resources that enable children to develop early mathematical skills such as colour and shape sorting toys, resources that enable children to think about size, pattern, money and number.

Children are motivated to learn and show an enquiring interest in their learning environment. They are curious about how things work, they notice changes and are keen to ask questions of the adults to help them develop their understanding. This is encouraged by the provision of well planned outings and activities. Children thoroughly enjoy visiting a local farm, observing the life cycle of frogspawn and discussing the weather and role of others. Children develop an awareness of other cultures and faiths as a result of topic work, informative posters and resources that reflect positive images of diversity within society.

Children have regular access to information and communication technology, such as the computer. As a result, children are confident with this equipment and use it skilfully.

Children enjoy regular opportunities to develop their physical skills. They play with a range of equipment to help them develop their dexterity, such as threading toys, scissors and peg boards. This is in addition to large play equipment such as ride on toys, parachute games, balancing apparatus and ball games. These all help them to develop co-ordination, physical skills and keep healthy.

Children are very creative during play and enjoy lots of opportunities to express themselves freely. Painting easels are readily available to the children. A good range of resources to support imaginative play and role play are available and well used by the children. The role play area is often changed to fit in within the children's interests or planned themes. This enables staff to plan for a range of different learning outcomes. Children are fascinated by the texture of the play dough and observe how this changes and how it feels as they add uncooked rice to it. Children are proud to show adults their creations and discuss the firework pictures they have made using chalks.

Staff are very responsive to the children and take into account their interests and requests when planning activities. For example, if children have asked for specific activities or resources, staff make a written note of this and incorporate it into their planning for the forthcoming week. This helps to build upon children's thoughts and ideas and demonstrates to the children that staff value their contribution.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff have a very high regard for the individual needs of the children and strive to welcome all children into the group and treat them all with equal concern. Children are encouraged to learn about the wider world and benefit from seeing positive images of diversity displayed throughout the pre-school and reflected in the toys and resources that they have access to. Posters that encourage children to celebrate similarities and differences and learn about different faiths and cultures have been carefully selected by staff. As a result children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Staff support many children who speak English as an additional language. They use effective strategies to support these children and their families. This enables all children to access and enjoy all aspects of the pre-school experience.

Staff are familiar with the process for supporting children with additional needs and are quick to seek advice and support from external agencies. Staff are proactive in promoting the welfare and development of all children. They work closely with other professionals to devise individual play plans for children with learning difficulties or disabilities. This helps each child to become fully involved in the pre-school and therefore reach their own individual potential.

Staff use very positive behaviour management strategies to encourage good behaviour. Staff constantly praise good behaviour and use lots of positive language. As a result, children generally behave well and benefit from the happy and positive atmosphere that is created. Any unwanted behaviour that arises is dealt with calmly and fairly. Staff use calm quiet voices and clear explanations to help children learn right from wrong. Taking into account the children's level of understanding, staff use appropriate questions and explanations to help children resolve issues and develop an aware of acceptable behaviour.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Staff provide a wealth of information for parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Parents are encouraged to take an active part within the group and become involved in their children's learning. Staff are always available at the beginning and end of each session to discuss the children's developments and achievements. Parents are also invited to visit the group to view the children's records of progress and discuss their individual learning needs. This helps parents to become fully involved in their child's learning and understand their developmental needs.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A very strong and effective team of staff work within the pre-school. They have worked together for many years and are very clear about their roles and responsibilities. The group benefits greatly from the fact that all members of the team hold a recognised early years qualification. This exceeds the requirements of the National Standards and contributes towards the safe and efficient management of the group. The staff are committed to the ongoing success and improvement of the group. They regularly attend workshops and short courses to help them further their knowledge and keep up to date with changes and developments in early years care and education.

Staff organise the space and resources well to meet the needs of the children and the high staff to child ratios result in children being offered high levels of support and individual

attention. Staff are very well deployed around the pre-school and staff often spend time in small group situations with the children. This allows children the time and opportunities to develop their confidence, to talk and listen to each other, build relationships and feel valued as individuals.

Clear and comprehensive documents and records are in place. They are well maintained and used effectively to support the smooth and efficient organisation of the group. Policy documents are clearly written, made available to parents and implemented consistently by the staff.

The leadership and management is good. The supervisor has many years of experience and a thorough understanding of the National Standards and the Foundation Stage curriculum. She acts as a good role model to the other members staff and leads by example. She is enthusiastic and motivated in her role and committed to providing good quality care and education. Staff make effective use of planning meetings to evaluate their practice.

The setting meets the needs of the children for whom it provides care.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children's Act inspection a number of recommendations were raised. These related to arrangements regarding hand washing, the collection of children, record of visitors and complaints procedure. Staff have reviewed all of these aspects and made changes accordingly. The procedures for hand washing have improved and as a result children are better protected from the spread of infection. Written permission and a record is now maintained when someone other than the child's parent is collecting a child. A written record of any visitors to the group is now maintained. These help to safeguard children.

The complaints procedure has been updated to include the correct contact details for Ofsted, in line with the requirements of the National Standards.

At the last education inspection, a number of recommendation were made. These related to developing the children's speaking and listening skills, developing an awareness of other cultures and learning about initial sounds and the links between sounds and letters.

Staff have fully addressed these issues. There are many opportunities during the routine for children to speak and listen, either on a one to one basis or in a group situation and as a result children communicate very effectively. Staff also provide many different worthwhile opportunities for children to learn about their own culture and those of others. This helps children to develop an awareness of the wider world and respect for others.

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 good.

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 emergency evacuations are practiced regularly to enable all children to become familiar with the procedure

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):

- make regular use of evaluation to help identify individual learning needs of the children and to contribute towards future planning

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