

Happy Days Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number 256767
Inspection date 14/03/2011
Inspector Susan Ennis

Setting address Stafford Hall Community Centre, Hampton Court,
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Type of setting Childcare on non-domestic premises

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by Ofsted under Sections 49 and 50 of the Childcare Act 2006 on the quality and standards of the registered early years provision. 'Early years provision' refers to provision regulated by Ofsted for children from birth to 31 August following their fifth birthday (the early years age group). The registered person must ensure that this provision complies with the statutory framework for children's learning, development and welfare, known as the *Early Years Foundation Stage*.

The provider must provide a copy of this report to all parents with children at the setting where reasonably practicable. The provider must provide a copy of the report to any other person who asks for one, but may charge a fee for this service (The Childcare (Inspection) Regulations 2008 regulations 9 and 10).

The setting also makes provision for children older than the early years age group which is registered on the voluntary and/or compulsory part(s) of the Childcare Register. This report does not include an evaluation of that provision, but a comment about compliance with the requirements of the Childcare Register is included in Annex B.

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Description of the setting

Happy days Pre-school registered in 1971. It operates from one main room in a community centre building in Westwood, Peterborough. The pre-school serves the local area and has strong links with the school. The pre-school is accessible to all children and there is a fully enclosed area available for outdoor play.

The pre-school opens Monday to Friday during term times. Sessions are from 9am until 12pm. Children are able to attend for a variety of sessions. A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. There are currently 24 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage. The pre-school provides funded early education for two, three and four-year-olds. It supports children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs three full-time and one part-time member of childcare staff. All staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. The pre-school receives support from the local authority.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good.

Staff create a very welcoming and safe environment in which all children thrive. Planning is flexible, taking into account children's likes and dislikes, enabling them to enjoy their time at the setting and make good progress in their learning and development. The staff build trusting relationships with parents and carers and keep them well informed about their child's development and the day-to-day running of the setting. Staff work effectively together and are committed to continuous improvement for all children and their families.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the early years provision the registered person should:

- improve the use of information gathered about children's learning to enhance their good progress towards the early learning goals
- develop further the use of reflective practice to identify the setting's strengths and areas for improvement.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effective implementation of the setting's comprehensive policies and procedures support the daily running of the setting and ensure that children are offered a safe and secure environment. For example, there are robust procedures for checking that staff are suitable to work with the children and a rolling program

of training to further increase their childcare knowledge. They also have an appropriate understanding of the procedures to follow relating to safeguarding children, ensuring that their welfare is promoted and that they are fully protected at all times. Staff are vigilant about visitors to the setting, thoroughly checking their identification and recording their presence in their visitors book. They further protect children's safety by taking effective steps to minimise any hazards. They carry out daily safety checks of the areas used by the children and complete comprehensive risk assessments at least once a year. They also monitor any accidents to ensure that a pattern is not starting to emerge.

Children's individual development is effectively promoted because the setting has good procedures in place to support, monitor and evaluate their progress. The interesting range of available resources is positively used and the inclusive, child-friendly environment is conducive to children's learning. Children are confident in asking for the resources they would like out. The pre-school is currently making a laminated resource book that will ensure that the children can see the whole selection available and will encourage children with limited communication skills to also make their choices. Staff also make good use of the outdoor play area giving children the choice to go outside or not. Children develop their creative skills as they enjoy making music by tapping the different sized saucepans hanging from the fence. They also participate in group activities such as playing football with the staff.

The pre-school effectively promotes equality and diversity enabling them to offer a service that is inclusive for all children and their families. Staff work closely with the parents to ensure that they understand each child's background, needs and beliefs. For example, staff learn phrases in children's home language to help them effectively communicate with the children and help them feel more secure. The pre-school helps children learn and understand about the society in which they live by celebrating festivals such as Chinese New Year when children try eating noodles and prawn crackers with chopsticks. Resources such as dressing-up clothes, hand puppets and play figures reflecting other cultures and those with disabilities also broaden children's knowledge and experiences.

Effective links with parents, carers and other providers positively promotes continuity of care and education for all the children. Parents are kept well informed about their children's development and are included in their progress. They are invited to discuss their children's achievements at a meeting with their key worker. This is arranged at a time convenient to them and staff work closely with them to calm any concerns they may have. For example, staff offer to video a pre-school session to demonstrate how their children are developing socially. Parents are also invited to share activities with their children at home. They can take a book to read at bedtime or use the information sent home about extending children's language skills through singing and action rhymes. Parents are regularly informed about the setting's good practice and working ethos through comprehensive policies, a parent noticeboard, and daily interaction with the staff who make themselves readily available to talk to them at all times. Wider partnership working is encouraged as the pre-school builds relationships with the other settings and schools in the area. Children are invited to play in the school grounds and some reception teachers visit the pre-school to get to know the children before they

transfer. The pre-school shares relevant information where possible and works together to provide a consistent quality of care for all the children.

Staff show a genuine desire to promote the best care and opportunities for children and are committed to sustainability. They work well together to make effective improvements and plans for the future. For example, they have been congratulated by other settings for their recording of children's achievements introduced since their last inspection. They have started to reflect on their practice by partially completing the self-evaluation form. They also gain feedback from parents through use of regular questionnaires and a suggestions box. However, there is currently limited evidence identifying their strengths or areas for improvement. Therefore further progress may be limited.

The quality and standards of the early years provision and outcomes for children

Children are offered interesting and stimulating opportunities to help them effectively progress and develop across all areas of learning. Information is gained from parents about children's home lives and their likes and dislikes. However, as limited evidence is in place about children's developmental starting points, this information is not used to inform initial assessments. Therefore, areas of concern or further challenge are not immediately highlighted. Staff record children's attainments through use of observation, assessment and planning for their next steps. Each child has a record of achievement which highlights their progress within each area of learning through written observations and photographs. However, as the system currently in place does not show children's overall progress during their time at the pre-school their development is not optimally promoted.

Children's learning is effectively encouraged through a range of adult-led and child-initiated activities. Flexible planning ensures that children's interests are taken into account. For example, when children make a bus from the chairs available, staff extend their imagination skills by asking them where they are going and who is going to be the driver. A range of adult-led activities also extend children's learning opportunities. During a finger painting activity the children develop their mark-making skills as well as their vocabulary as they describe the paint as 'slimy' and 'swirling'. They also develop their knowledge of the world around them as they use glue and brushes to stick dried leaves and twigs to make an Autumn scene. Staff also use their knowledge to incorporate learning experiences through a range of regular activities and routines. For example, all children develop their sense of belonging as they identify their name to self register on arrival.

Children enjoy their time at the setting, forging friendships with the staff and each other. Children are confident in coming to the staff when they need some emotional support and comfort. For example, feeling unsure of when their parent will arrive to collect them, children are reassured by staff showing them on the clock which number the hand has to reach before home time. They then provide a toy clock to reinforce the explanation which children happily play with. Their behaviour is good as they follow the positive role modelling of the staff and learn

the consequences of their actions such as apologising for accidentally hurting a child's finger. Children are learning to take turns as they use an egg timer to identify who has the next go of, for example, a large sit-in hoop and often remind each other of the rules in place. They are quick to tell another child that running is not allowed inside and are enthusiastic about helping when it is time to tidy away the toys.

Children's health and welfare are actively promoted as the staff take effective steps to minimise the spread of infection and develop children's understanding of healthy living. For example, they learn to wash their hands before eating snack and are competent at using the antibacterial gel also provided. Their independence is encouraged as they choose which colour plate they would like for snack and whether or not to use a grater or knife to cut up their cheese. They confidently help themselves to water throughout the session and discuss with staff whether the weather outside means that they will need their coats on. Children are also learning about their own safety as they, for example, participate in activities about road safety. Role play situations develop the children's understanding as they follow the road marked out by the staff and wait to let others cross the road before refuelling at their own child-sized petrol pump.

Annex A: record of inspection judgements

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Grade 1 is Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Grade 2 is Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Grade 3 is Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Grade 4 is Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

How well does the setting meet the needs of the children in the Early Years Foundation Stage?	2
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	2

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	2
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	2
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	2
The effectiveness of safeguarding	2
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	2
The effectiveness of partnerships	2
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	2

The quality of the provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage

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Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	2
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	2
The extent to which children feel safe	2
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	2
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	2
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	2

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Annex B: the Childcare Register

The provider confirms that the requirements of the compulsory part of the Childcare Register are: Met

The provider confirms that the requirements of the voluntary part of the Childcare Register are: Met