

Hingham Pre-School Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique reference number | 254116 |
| Inspection date | 26/06/2009 |
| Inspector | Gill Thornton |
| Setting address | Lincoln Hall, The Fairland, Hingham, Norfolk, NR9 4HN |
| Telephone number | 01953 850820 |
| Email | |
| Type of setting | Childcare on non-domestic premises |

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).

Description of the setting

Hingham Playgroup is managed by a voluntary management committee, made up of parents of children attending the playgroup. It opened in 1971 and operates from the Lincoln Hall in the village of Hingham in Norfolk. A maximum of 26 children may attend the playgroup at any one time. The playgroup is open on each weekday during term time only from 09.30 until 12.00 with a lunch club operating from 12.00 to 13.00 on Monday and Tuesday, and on Friday, the opportunity to do a full day from 9.30 to 15.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 47 children attending who are within the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) The setting is in receipt of funding for nursery education.

There are five members of staff. Three of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications and two of these are working towards a higher qualification. The playgroup receives support from a support teacher from the local authority and is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. The playgroup has achieved the Norfolk Quality Assurance Scheme.

Overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is good. Well developed knowledge of each child's individual needs ensures that staff promote all aspects of children's welfare and learning with success. Children are safe and secure at all times and enjoy learning about their local area and the world around them. Partnerships with parents and other professionals are effective in ensuring that all children are included and they receive any additional support they need to ensure their inclusion. Regular self-evaluation by the manager and staff team ensures that priorities for future development are identified and acted upon to improve the provision.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

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

- extend the use of observations and assessments to identify learning priorities and plan relevant and motivating learning experiences for each child
- develop further opportunities to work in partnership with other providers delivering the EYFS to ensure progression and continuity
- extend opportunities for children to access a range of ICT equipment and learn to operate simple equipment, such as CD players, tape recorders, torches and programmable toys.

The leadership and management of the early years provision

The manager, staff team and committee have high aspirations for quality which is evident through ongoing improvement. Self-evaluation is effective and responsive to the views of users, consequently, priorities for improvement are accurately targeted to improve outcomes for children. Exceptional practice is in place to support and encourage healthy eating, for example, inviting parents to a lunch time session to sample healthy alternatives as ideas for inclusion in their children's lunchboxes. Parents are provided with good quality information about the provision and effective strategies are in place to keep them informed and involved in their children's achievements and progress. For example, parents are provided with 'home link' activities to enable them to support their children's learning at home, and they receive personalised and informative reports on their children's progress at the end of each term. Parents are highly complimentary of the dedicated staff team and the outings and activities enjoyed by their children. The playgroup works closely with the local school to support children's transitions, however, they have not yet established an effective system of sharing information with each provider attended by children in their care to promote coherence and progression.

Stringent recruitment and appointment procedures ensure that children are cared for by suitably qualified staff who are well deployed to support children's welfare and learning. Comprehensive operational policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to ensure they effectively underpin the successful running of the group. Thorough risk assessments are carried out on all areas of the provision, including outings, to ensure children's safety and security at all times. Arrangements for safeguarding children are robust, regularly reviewed and carefully managed to ensure children's welfare and protection. The playgroup works actively with other agencies to engage with and support all children and their families to overcome barriers which may prevent their inclusion through the support of the group's difficulty fund.

The quality and standards of the early years provision

Children flourish and make good progress in relation to their starting points and capabilities. Staff are responsive to children's spontaneous play and build upon their interests to provide further enjoyment and challenge. They use their knowledge and understanding of the principles of the EYFS to provide children with an enabling environment strongly based upon learning through first hand experiences in the indoor and outdoor environment. Staff make observations and assessments of children's achievements, interests and learning styles which are matched to the expectations of the early learning goals. However, these are not used systematically to identify and plan for children's next steps in learning and development. In addition, planning is not sufficiently robust to ensure activities are consistently balanced across each area of learning and development. For example, the group have applied for funding for further Information and Communication Technology (ICT) equipment to replace their broken computer, however, planning does not include alternative opportunities for children to find out about and identify the uses of everyday technology within their everyday experiences.

All staff make good use of open-ended questions to promote children's thinking skills and help them make connections in their learning. They employ meaningful strategies during whole group activities to encourage children's participation and enthusiasm. Children have significant opportunities to learn the importance of good personal hygiene and confidently explain to others the possible consequences of not washing their hands after touching the pony that visited the playgroup. Consequently, they learn strategies for future independence to keep themselves safe and healthy. Communication, language and literacy are particularly well-promoted by all staff during everyday activities and routines, for example, by suggesting children get their own notebook to 'write in' because they were interested in watching a member of staff filling in an accident report. Children are learning to show care and concern for each other and their environment. Staff provide them with clear explanations and strategies to help them learn to settle simple disputes for themselves.

Children are curious, enthusiastic and eager to learn. They spend their time happily engrossed in activities of their own choosing, confidently negotiating and sharing ideas with others clearly. They develop their creativity and become absorbed in exploring their own ideas and making things while confidently selecting media and materials of their own choosing. The playgroup make very good use of the local environment as a learning resource, such as going on a number walk to identify and record numbers in the environment. Staff make good use of spontaneous learning opportunities while out on walks in the village, such as asking them how many times the church bells will ring at three o'clock.

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

Overall effectiveness

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| How effective is the provision in meeting the needs of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage? | 2 |
| How well does the provision promote inclusive practice? | 2 |
| The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement. | 2 |

Leadership and management

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| How effectively is provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed? | 2 |
| How effective is the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement? | 2 |
| How well does the setting work in partnership with parents and others? | 2 |
| How well are children safeguarded? | 2 |

Quality and standards

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| How effectively are children in the Early Years Foundation Stage helped to learn and develop? | 2 |
| How effectively is the welfare of children in the Early Years Foundation Stage promoted? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to stay safe? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to be healthy? | 1 |
| How well are children helped to enjoy and achieve? | 2 |
| How well are children helped to make a positive contribution? | 2 |
| How well are children helped develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being? | 2 |

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