

Hopton School House

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY239574
Inspection date	27 March 2008
Inspector	Hilary Elizabeth Tierney
Setting Address	18 Hopton Road, Cam, Dursley, Gloucestershire, GL11 5PB
Telephone number	01453 542489
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Registered person	Hopton School House
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 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?

Hopton School House Playgroup is a community playgroup, managed by a voluntary committee of parents. The playgroup opened over 24 years ago as Upper Cam Under Fives Playgroup, they moved into Hopton School House in April 2002. The playgroup is situated in a semi-rural location on the outskirts of Cam and serves the communities of both Cam and Dursley. The group operates from the ground floor of the converted school house. Facilities include three activity rooms, a kitchen, and two toilets. Outside, the playgroup use the enclosed garden to the front of the property, the enclosed activity garden to the side of the house including their 'pirate ship' and the adjacent school playground. The out-of-school group use the school grounds and playground when they operate.

The group may provide care for 30 children aged between two and eight years old. There is an out-of-school club which provides care for children between the ages of three and eight years. The playgroup is open during term time from 09.00 until 14.45 on Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays, and on Wednesdays from 09.00 until 14.45 for the rising five children. The out-of-school club operates Mondays to Fridays between 07.30 until 08.40 and 15.00 until 18.00. The holiday play scheme operates on Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays

from 08.00 until 18.00. There are currently a total of 32 children on the playgroup roll, including 20 funded three and four year olds. The out-of-school club currently have a total of 55 children on roll. The playgroup offers support for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who have English as an additional language.

A team of nine staff work with the children in the playgroup and out-of-school club. All staff are qualified to at least a National Vocational Qualification in Childcare and Education at Level 2 and the play leader has qualified teacher status. All staff hold current first aid certificates and six staff hold child protection certificates.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children have extremely good opportunities to explore and investigate during outside play. The enclosed garden is a lovely place for children to play, with a barked area, flower beds, paths and play house. Children develop their large physical play skills as they play on the 'pirate ship', climbing frame and bikes. Children have great fun as they play in the sand. Staff erect tents for them to play with. Children were seen enjoying developing their imagination, through careful direction from a member of staff. They pretend to be at the beach and go for a 'swim' in the sea and make sandcastles. There are excellent interactions between the children and staff. Children help with the gardening by clearing the leaves, they were seen wearing gardening gloves, using small brushes and buckets and having great fun collecting the leaves. Staff bring out tables and chairs so that some children are able to have the opportunity to use their creative imagination to create twigs with blossom. They use sticks from the garden and sheets of tissue paper which they stick onto the twigs. Children thoroughly enjoy this activity. The out-of-school children are able to use this area along with the school fields and playground. They were observed having great fun being outside and developing their imagination and large physical skills.

Children have an excellent understanding about personal hygiene procedures. All children, including the out-of-school children wash their hands, with little or no reminders from staff, before meals, after using the toilet and after activities. Paper hand towels are used to help prevent the spread of infection. Clear policies for sickness and health and safety are in place. Parents are contacted if their child becomes ill at the setting. Staff are confident in dealing with any minor accidents and understand the procedure to follow in the event of having a serious incident. Clear records of any accidents and any medication administered to children are kept and shared with parents. Staff are good role models and children see them cleaning tables with anti-bacterial sprays and washing their hands before meals.

Children understand about healthy eating. They enjoy snack times, which is a very social time for them. They chat happily with each other and staff as they sit for snack time. Snacks provided include a range of fruit and toast. Children are encouraged to pour drinks for themselves as staff come round with the jugs of milk and water. During the sessions children have easy access to their water bottles. Staff take extra drinks outside for the children as they play in the garden. Staff have a superb awareness regarding the dietary needs of children, because of these the whole setting is nut-free. Notes to this effect are posted around the rooms, to inform parents. Children who stay for lunch have a packed lunch provided by their parents. All of these are stored in a large fridge in the kitchen and got out for the children by staff at lunch time. The

out-of-school children are given healthy snacks as they come in from school, these include cheese, raisins, apples and crackers.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are welcomed into a welcoming, warm, friendly environment. Displays of children's work around the room give children a sense of belonging. Resources are of high quality, in good condition and are easily accessible for children to play with. There is also a large selection of resources stored which are used on rotation during the terms. Resources for the out-of-school children have been increased and are used effectively during the sessions.

Children are extremely safe as they play. Staff to adult ratios are kept high and the use of parent helpers ensures staff spend quality time with the children. Staff are vigilant about keeping children safe. They have clear procedures in place to keep children safe both inside and outside. Children understand the rules of the setting and the boundaries set for them. The out-of-school children are able to walk safely to the building from school. A member of staff from the club stands near the school entrance and checks children in the building as they arrive. She ensures all children are present. If a child does not arrive she checks with the school staff as to where the child is. When staff take the playgroup children outside to the enclosed garden, they take a bag with them which contains a first aid kit, parent numbers, mobile phone, and registers. They count the children before they go out, when they bring them back and during outside play. When outside younger children are encouraged to wear crash hats to ride bikes. All children seen riding bikes are happy to do this and understand they need to have a hat on before they ride a bike. Clearly written procedures ensure the safety of children. Detailed fire evacuation procedures are practised regularly with children and clear records kept.

Children are well protected. Staff are confident about how they safeguard children and have completed suitable training. They are clear about the procedures to follow in the event of having a concern about a child in their care. There is a detailed child protection policy which includes a procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff. Existing injuries of children are recorded and shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy to leave their parents as they enter the group. They are greeted by the staff as they come into the group and settle quickly into the routine. Children are able to access resources easily and staff put out a good selection for the children to play with. They were observed playing with the puppet theatre, they enjoyed this using the hand puppets to chat to each other and staff. They thoroughly enjoyed this. Other children were seen playing with a train track on the floor, they work together to make the track, join the trains and push them around the tracks. The group enjoy this and talk happily with each other. Children have a lovely time at the group and interactions between them are good. However, during times when staff have a larger group of children the transition time between activities, such as registration and going outside, are disorganised. This is because not all toys are tidied away, some children become easily distracted and children getting their coats becomes a slow process. Planning of activities for the younger children is done using the Birth to three matters framework and children's interests.

Children in the out-of-school club enter with excitement and enjoyment. They understand the rules of the group and put their coats and bags away before they have their snacks and continue playing. They are able to select the resources they wish to play with. Some children were observed playing outside in the school grounds and playgroup garden, others were seen doing craft activities and watching television. Children spoken to say they enjoy the club and the activities that are provided.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are provided with a range of exciting and fun activities which help them learn and develop. Staff work well together to help provide a pleasant, relaxed atmosphere for the children to play. Staff have a clear understanding about the Foundation Stage of learning and use this when planning activities. Planning and assessment is used to inform staff about children's needs, however, it is not clear how staff track children who need extension or extra support. Children are developing well in all areas of learning. They have a good understanding about mathematical language and staff use good open questions, such as 'How many have you got?', 'How many more do you need?' to help children think and learn. After registration time and the children had been counted, a child was heard to say '18 that's one less than 19'. The member of staff sat nearby praised the child when she heard this. Children are developing good relationships with each other and the staff. They have good self-esteem and confidence. They cooperate well together as they play games. They understand the boundaries of the setting, they sit well during snack and meal times. They are confident in dressing themselves when getting ready to go outside and are able to visit the toilet with little help from staff. Children have a good sense of community and talk about their families and friends happily.

Children are beginning to learn that words have meaning, they have easy access to books and writing materials. They were seen reading books alone and with staff. They turn pages confidently and join in with stories when being read to by staff. Staff use clear language when speaking to children. Children have the opportunity to start to make marks and develop early writing skills. Staff encourage children to write their names on their work after they have finished. Children are able to explore and investigate. They have excellent opportunities in the garden, where they look for bugs, worms, and talk with staff about the flowers growing in the garden. Children were seen having great fun developing their imagination in the garden, playing at being at the seaside. Children have a good sense of community and celebrations of recent festivals have been done well to help children understand them, for example children had a visit to the local Church for Easter. Children are able to expand their creative development through a lovely range of activities the staff provide, for example children were observed having their music time outside. Staff bring out the musical instruments and children choose the one they want. Then they all sit in their 'pirate ship' and sing songs and play their instruments. The children thoroughly enjoy this, all take part with great delight and excitement.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are supported well as they play and learn. The staff are confident and sympathetic in their understanding regarding the support they give to children who have English as an additional language and who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff work closely with parents to ensure the care provided is consistent. Children are treated with equal care and concern by all staff. They use the balanced range of resources effectively to help children learn about the world around them.

Children are well behaved. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Staff have a calm, consistent approach both in the playgroup and out-of-school club. Staff are good role models and speak to the children in a clear manner. There is a relaxed environment in the setting and children enjoy being there. They give careful explanations to children about why they need to be careful as they play, share, take turns and be kind to others. Children are polite and use 'please' and 'thank you' with little prompting by staff. Children are confident and are offered lots of praise and encouragement as they achieve. Children help to tidy up with enthusiasm and enjoyment. Children understand the rules and boundaries of the setting and the older children have devised their own rules for the out-of-school club.

Partnership with parents is good. They are welcomed into the group warmly. They are given detailed information about their child's progress and are involved in their learning. All parents are encouraged to take part in being a helper in the group, this enables them to see how the group operates. Detailed newsletters, notice board and easily accessible policies and procedures all help to keep parents informed. Parents are encouraged to share what they know about their child before they start attending the group with 'All about me' books. Parents have detailed information about the Foundation Stage of learning and the Birth to three matters framework and are encouraged to attend parents' open evenings. The staff regularly ask parents for their comments and the completion of questionnaires helps staff meet both children's and parents' needs. Parents spoken to are very happy with the care provided, feel involved in their child's learning and feel the staff are approachable. Parents are aware of the complaints procedure.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

All legally required documentation for registration is in place. Registers are completed in detail, with parents taking responsibility for signing their children in and out of the playgroup. Staff who work in the out-of-school club record when children arrive from school and parents sign their child out as they collect them. Attendance hours for staff are recorded clearly and a visitors' book is used. The registration certificate is clearly displayed which enables parents to see the conditions of registration. Paperwork is stored securely and is easily accessible for inspection. Staff are very aware of maintaining confidentiality. Detailed policies and procedures are in place and easily accessible for parents. There is a clear complaints procedure and system for the recording of any complaints, should they occur, in place.

Leadership and management are good. The team of staff work extremely well together and they work hard to provide good quality childcare. The key worker system works well and helps staff to build good relationships with children and their families. Both the playgroup and out-of-school club have completed detailed self evaluation forms regularly. This has helped them identify their strengths and weaknesses. The committee are very supportive and the chair has regular meetings with the play leaders of the playgroup and out-of-school club to discuss any issues, regular staff and committee meetings ensure communication is maintained between them. Regular appraisals are completed which help identify the staff's training needs. There is a clear recruitment and vetting procedure in place, which ensures that only suitable adults work with the children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

Care

The provider had five recommendations from the last inspection. These were to make sure that Ofsted is informed of committee changes at the earliest opportunity, and that all committee members are vetted; record all children's hours of attendance in the daily record of children looked after on the premises; make sure that parents provide written permissions to administer any medication, and that written records are kept of all medicines administered to children, and make sure that all outside play areas are secure and develop equipment and play materials for the out-of-school care.

Progress has been made in achieving these recommendations. The group have now kept Ofsted informed about the changes to committee members and all have been suitably cleared. The staff now keep details of all children's hours of attendance which helps to maintain the correct ratios. Parents have provided written permissions to enable the staff to administer any medication and clear records of any administered are kept and shared with parents. This ensures children's health is protected. The staff have put into place clear procedures to ensure that all play areas are secure and the out-of-school play equipment and materials are suitable for the children attending.

Nursery Education

There were two key issues raised from the last inspection. These were to continue to improve the use of evaluations to modify activities for individual children and to continue to develop the information for parents about the educational provision; and make good use of parental knowledge of the children in order to support children's learning.

These have been addressed and staff have adapted their evaluations and are developing children's activities for individual children, however, some work is still required on the tracking of children to ensure they provide the right challenges and extensions for children. Parental knowledge of their children is requested in the form of 'All about me' sheets that include what the child can achieve, family members, likes, dislikes, favourite things. This helps staff support children's learning.

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):

- review the organisation of larger groups during transition times, such as registration and going outside, so that children are not distracted (also applies to Nursery Education)

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):

- continue to develop planning and assessment so that all adults are informed and able to support children in their learning and development.

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