

Happy House Playgroup

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique reference number	309328
Inspection date	16/02/2010
Inspector	Joan, Patricia Flowers
Setting address	Spring Meadow, Leyland, Lancashire, PR25 5LX
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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 House Playgroup is privately registered to provide places for up to 26 children aged two to under eight years. The group has been registered since 1992 and is based in Spring Meadow Community Centre, Clayton-le-Woods, Chorley. The premises consist of a large main hall, adjacent smaller room and associated facilities. There is access to a secure, purposed designed, outdoor play area. Registration is effective on the Early Years Register and the voluntary and compulsory parts of the Childcare Register. The registered provider employs six staff, five of whom hold appropriate childcare qualifications or are trained. Sessions operate on Monday, Tuesday and Friday between 10am and 2pm, on Wednesday 9.30am and 12.30pm and on Thursday between 10am and 2pm.

The group offers a service during the summer holidays on Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. There are 36 children on roll, and children with special educational needs and/or disabilities attend. Advice and training is obtained from the local authority Sure Start advisory team and the setting is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance. Lead practitioner status was awarded in 2010.

The overall effectiveness of the early years provision

Overall the quality of the provision is outstanding.

Every child attending is making outstanding progress, because the staff team have well-developed knowledge of supporting children's learning and development through precise observations and individually targeted planning to meet their specific needs. Excellent arrangements exist to ensure children's safety, health and well-being within this established playgroup environment. Staff recognise and value the uniqueness of each child and work hard to ensure that the environment is welcoming for all children and their families. Highly valued partnership working with parents, carers and other professionals ensures that the staff know all the children well and are able to consistently support their individual needs. The registered provider works closely with staff to review practice, and so together, are well placed to identify the setting's strengths and areas for future development to a high degree.

What steps need to be taken to improve provision further?

To further improve the high quality early years provision the registered person should consider:

- review the current system of how children's existing injuries are recorded, ensuring that any entry made is countersigned by that child's parent or carer.

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

The registered provider and staff evaluate the playgroup conscientiously and robustly. The recommendations of the last inspection have been dealt with thoroughly and there is excellent capacity to sustain continuous improvement. The purposeful leadership makes a significant contribution to children's learning, development and welfare. Staff work closely as a team, plan together and know the children well, using key working to personalise children's care and learning effectively. Strong management steer ensures that children are able to learn and develop in a highly enjoyable, exciting and safe environment. Because every member of the staff team knows the children well, they are well placed and vigilant in ensuring that every child is fully included in all activities. Staff are supported by clear and helpful policies and guidelines for all aspects of their important work. Safeguarding arrangements are exceedingly thorough. Procedures for recruiting new staff and checking on their suitability to work with children are very tight, so all potential risks are assessed thoroughly. Self-evaluation systems are robust. However, parents counter signatures on one record have been overlooked. The provider and staff meet regularly to review the effectiveness of procedures and to review any comments or views of parents. These are sought and taken into account, building on the outstanding working relationships established with them. The recently introduced suggestion box builds on this good partnership working practice even further. The staff use the information they gather very effectively to evaluate their own effectiveness, so that they have a very clear picture of what is working well and what they can improve. As a result, the playgroup goes from strength to strength, a view endorsed by parents. The provider uses a wide range of outside sources to review and build on the settings strengths. This is extremely effective in driving continuous improvement. The registered provider is an excellent role model for adults and children alike, which has a considerable impact on the high quality of what is offered here.

The leadership and management are strong and there is a clear focus on improving standards within the setting. Comprehensive systems underpin the smooth operation of the setting, and as a result, children's welfare, learning and development are well catered for. The provider and all her staff are enthusiastic, dedicated and work as a strong and supportive team. Regular staff meetings and individual appraisals mean that each member of staff is able to share their ideas, opinions and thoughts about the planning of the sessions. The majority of staff are appropriately qualified and trained, some of whom have been working at this setting for many years. They all demonstrate a strong commitment towards ongoing training and professional development. All staff are key workers and work closely with parents and carers to ensure children's individuality and learning is fully supported. Families are invited to share information about their cultures, religions, family customs and languages, celebrating differences and valuing the diversity of the children's backgrounds. Parents speak very highly and positively about their satisfaction with the provision, citing the stable and familiar staff group as a very positive aspect. This enables them to speak with staff who knows their children's characters and abilities very clearly and to involve them in their children's development and progression. Parents are invited to add comments to

children's home link books in order to give staff information that is used to plan for the next steps in their child's development. The playgroup has strong established links with other providers in the area, as well as specialist workers whose advice is sought for those who need additional support. Strong links are made with the local schools, which ensure children make a smooth transition when they leave the setting to start school.

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

Children thrive in this rich, caring environment and are progressing at a pace towards achieving the early learning goals. This is because staff plan and provide highly appropriate activities that take account of children's individual learning styles and needs. An effective balance of adult-led and child-initiated activity is delivered to encourage the development of independent thought, critical thinking and creative activity in every child. This is well pitched for the older children giving them the opportunity to make choices for themselves and begin to understand the need for some structure when preparing for the transition to school. Children have access to a child-centred environment with a wide range of resources, offering increasing opportunities for independence, time to follow their own interests and free-flow to the outdoor area for part of each session. They benefit from their positive interaction with knowledgeable staff, who take time to listen to their views and utilise all opportunities to support and reinforce their learning, such as discussions about shape, size, number and colours during construction and creative activities. The wonderful new outdoor environment is used to its full and very effectively provides a great range of opportunities, which encourages and continues children's learning and enjoyment in the fresh air. They enjoy the freedom to explore, engage in physical play with wheeled toys and reinforce their understanding of the world around them when searching for mini beasts under the logs. Regular assessments demonstrate clearly that all children are making great progress in relation to their starting points, with rigorous tracking in place to ensure this is across all of the areas of learning.

Children's language and literacy skills are developed through fun and relaxed activities, such as joining in with familiar nursery rhymes. The environment is rich with letters and symbols, with all children encouraged to look for and select their name card at the start of the session. Props are used to bring stories to life and children regularly take the story and number sacks home to share with their families. This effectively encourages children and adults to enjoy reading together. Children enjoy using the large cardboard boxes in the construction area to build towers and to explore the shapes using different sizes and different materials like wood and plastic, as they learn about how weight can affect their constructions. They love dressing up in animal suits and move around growling and pretending to be tigers and leopards. Staff then extend children's knowledge and understanding of the world when discussing winged insects, asking if they have seen a dragon fly and they explore the soil and sand with the play animals and insects as one child recognises that the centipede has many legs. One child confidently counts all the chairs up to 20 as he touches each chair in turn. They use glue and colourful collage materials to create pictures, as their fine motor skills are developed as they

carefully place the jigsaw letters onto their creation. Children gain skills by using a range of technology to promote their learning. This includes exploring programmable toys and interactive resources, such as electronic tills, telephones, calculators and keyboards. Children participate in activities and events throughout the year, which help them to gain an appreciation of the wider world. For example, they join in with fun activities linked to cultural festivals and events, such as Chinese New Year and Christmas. There is a strong emphasis on caring and sharing, with staff using a positive, consistent approach to managing behaviour, taking into account children's understanding and maturity. Children are helped to develop their social skills well and learn about sharing, being kind and of taking care of their toys.

Children's welfare is highly promoted. They feel safe and effectively develop their understanding of issues relating to safety. They regularly practise leaving the building in an emergency and are shown how to handle tools safely. Children learn to adopt healthy lifestyles in the setting through their excellent access to the outdoors, to a varied healthy diet, which includes daily fruit and constant drinks, which ensures they are well-hydrated especially after outdoor play. There are high standards of hygiene for children, staff and the premises to reduce the risk of cross-infection. Children are polite and behave well because of their high levels of independent choice about activities and staff response to their individual needs. The children have many opportunities to work together, developing collaborative skills, learning to share and take turns and thus develop skills for future. Children are highly prepared for the future, including transition from the setting to school, through developed learning, self-care skills and confidence to take responsibilities.

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?	1
The capacity of the provision to maintain continuous improvement	1

The effectiveness of leadership and management of the early years provision

How effectively is the Early Years Foundation Stage led and managed?	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
The effectiveness with which the setting deploys resources	1
The effectiveness with which the setting promotes equality and diversity	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding	1
The effectiveness of the setting's self-evaluation, including the steps taken to promote improvement	1
The effectiveness of partnerships	1
The effectiveness of the setting's engagement with parents and carers	1

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	1
The extent to which children achieve and enjoy their learning	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children make a positive contribution	1
The extent to which children develop skills for the future	1

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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