



The Horseshoe Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY224879
Inspection date	28 June 2006
Inspector	Cilla Burdis
Setting Address	The Horseshoe, Follonsby Terrace, West Boldon, East Boldon, Tyne and Wear, NE36 0BZ
Telephone number	0191 4698333
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Registered person	Horseshoe Day Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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

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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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Horseshoe Day Nursery opened in 2002. It operates from three rooms in a purpose built premises. It is situated in a rural area of West Boldon and is close to a major road network. A maximum of 42 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to enclosed play areas.

There are currently 46 children aged from six weeks to under eight years on roll, of

these, 14 receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel to the nursery from surrounding areas. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs 12 staff to work with the children. There are six members of staff, including the manager and the owner, who hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are five staff members who are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy a varied range of activities that contribute to good health. The babies' mobility skills are developed as they move around the floor and pull themselves up on the sofas. Staff readily support the babies as they attempt to extend their skills. The older children enjoy ring games and action rhymes. Children have access to enclosed, outdoor play areas where they can climb, ride wheeled toys and develop skills, such as running, hopping and skipping. Children can also ride the nursery's pony.

Children and babies sleep in accordance with their individual needs. They sleep in a designated area of their activity rooms. Babies sleep in buggies, the older children have sleeping bags and sleep on the floor. Staff remain in the rooms to monitor the children, however, no records of checks are maintained.

The sickness policy helps to protect children from illness and infection. This information is shared with parents before their children attend nursery and parents receive a copy of the policy. The nursery follows guidance from the environmental health office to inform parents about the infectious periods of illnesses. This reduces the risk of infection being passed onto other children.

Care routines develop children's understanding of good hygiene practice. The routines include hand washing before having meals and snacks. Children's independence is encouraged by the provision of child level resources in the toilet and washroom. Children learn why they wash their hands and the older children explain that hands are washed to clean off the germs. Staff follow good hygiene routines when changing the babies, which includes the wearing of disposable gloves and aprons, the cleaning of the changing mat after use and immediate disposal of the nappies.

Children's individual dietary needs are clearly established before the children attend the nursery. The information is recorded on the children's registration forms. Special requirements are documented and given to the cook for her reference. On a daily basis, the information about children's attendance and any specific dietary needs is passed to the cook. The nursery promotes healthy eating and includes a variety of fruit and vegetables in the daily menu plans.

Documentation to safeguard children's health is maintained. Written parental consent

is requested prior to the administration of medication. The procedure for administering Calpol in an emergency, however, does not always follow this procedure, which compromises the health of the children. When parents provide medication for their child, the staff must ensure that it is stored safely and not in reach of the children. Accidents are recorded and the details are shared with parents. Written parental permission is obtained to allow the staff to seek emergency medical advice or treatment for their child. Most staff hold current first aid certificates.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean, well maintained environment, which is made attractive to the children with wall displays that include their own art work. The rooms are effectively organised so that the children can move around freely and independently. Toys and resources are set out attractively in the nursery, which enables the children to see what is available and to make choices. The toys and resources are appropriate for the children and suitable for their needs. All toys and resources are clean and well maintained. However, children's access to real and natural resources is limited.

Generally, children's safety is promoted well and staff have satisfactory levels of awareness with regard to promoting children's safety. Staff deploy themselves effectively to ensure good levels of supervision. However, there are occasions when one member of staff works alone in the pre-school room, which is not easily monitored by other staff due to its location. This has an impact on the amount of close supervision and support she can provide. Staff are responsible for providing a safe environment for the children, however, no formal safety checks are undertaken to ensure the premises remains safe throughout the day. Staff are responsible for monitoring the radiator temperatures, ensuring safe storage of medication, storing cleaning fluids safely and restricting access to the kitchen. At times, medication and cleaning fluids are stored at a level that is accessible to children and the kitchen door is not kept closed at all times. This compromises the safety of the children. There is a clear procedure to follow when taking children on outings, which includes a risk assessment and identifies the children who are to be supervised by a specific member of staff.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by staff who have a good level of knowledge with regard to child protection. They have a sound understanding of their responsibilities and know the procedure to follow if they have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The children have settled well and are happy in the nursery. The nursery has a settling-in procedure, which is adapted to meet the needs of the individual child. The children have formed good relationships with staff and many are developing good

friendships with other children. Staff know the children well and provide good levels of support. The staff respect children's feelings and acknowledge what they have to say. Children seek out support and comfort from the staff and display a sense of belonging. The older and more able children are confident communicators and are able to make requests and express their needs. Staff encourage conversation with children throughout the nursery. They ask children questions and encourage them to talk about what they are doing or have done in the past. This develops children's memory and thinking skills.

Staff working with the younger children are following the Birth to three matters framework to support their planning. The framework is used to guide staff in providing activities for children, whilst supporting their development and learning. The Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage of learning is used to plan activities for the pre-school children. The daily routine throughout the nursery includes time for free play and some focussed, adult-led activities. Staff make observations of children's achievements, which are recorded in each child's individual file.

Children are involved in a variety of activities that are appropriate to their age and stage of development. Toys and resources are made accessible to the children to encourage independence and choice. Generally, children's independence is well supported, however, there were missed opportunities at meal and snack times to develop the independence and skills of the more able children. The babies are provided with a range of resources, which they can easily access, including musical toys, pop-up toys and shape sorters. Staff closely monitor the non-mobile babies and interact effectively with them by providing good levels of eye contact and support. All the children have the opportunity to be involved in creative activities. Older children enjoy listening to stories, playing imaginatively and exploring the environment. Children's sensory awareness is not fully developed due to limited access to natural resources.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and how children progress through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Activities are planned and include all six areas of learning. Staff make observations of children during activities and record their achievements in individual developmental files. However, activities are not evaluated in accordance with the planned objectives of the activity. Observations of activities and individual children are not being used to inform future plans to ensure all children continue to make good progress.

Staff understand how children learn through play based activities. They provide a well organised environment where children can freely access toys and resources. Children enjoy playing imaginatively and re-enacting what they see adults do for example, washing the doll's hair and protecting the doll's eyes from the soap. Staff provide a good balance of adult-led activities during which, they monitor and assess the children's achievements. Staff respond well to the children, they ask questions and encourage children to recall what they have been doing. Children are very happy in the pre-school and are interested in the activities provided. They remain focussed for periods of time and persevere until they complete what they are doing. They work

together well with other children and often seek out others to join them in play. They are learning that they must consider the needs and feelings of others through sharing, turn taking and the sensitive reminders provided by staff. The development of caring and empathy is also encouraged when children handle the rabbits and feed them.

Children display emerging self-confidence in speaking to others. They enjoy the social occasion of meal times, when they talk about their interests and listen to what others have to say. They use mathematical language in play, discussing shape, size and number. Children explore a variety of materials including sand, water and clay. They use tools and resources to develop co-ordination skills, such as threading buttons and painting pictures. However, there are limited opportunities for the children to practise writing for different purposes, such as during role play. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world around them is developed well. They have planted sunflower seeds and are carefully monitoring their development. Visitors to the setting share information with the children on topics, such as keeping themselves safe and taking care of their bodies. They are taken on outings to extend their knowledge of topics covered in the nursery. They have recently travelled on the metro system as part of their topic on transport. Children's understanding of the wider world is developed through activities that raise their awareness of cultural celebrations from around the world.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued as individuals and there is a positive approach towards inclusion. There are effective procedures in place to ensure staff receive clear details from parents about the individual care needs of their child. There are good support systems in place for any child identified as having learning difficulties. Children are encouraged to respect others and to show consideration to the needs and feelings of others.

Children learn about the wider world through access to resources and by learning about a range of cultural celebrations. However, resources reflecting positive images of disability are limited. Visitors to the setting share their knowledge with the children and raise children's awareness of the local community. Photographs show children on a visit to a local community farm.

Children's behaviour is good. Children are showing respect for the environment by using resources with care. The older children take an active role in tidying up and enjoy helping staff to clean the floor. Staff take a consistent approach in managing children's behaviour. They use age appropriate strategies with the children and offer good levels of constructive praise to reinforce good behaviour.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children benefit from the settling-in procedure and the initial sharing of information to inform staff of each child's needs. Daily diaries are completed for the children in the Foals room. The diaries record information to share with parents, including nappy changes and food eaten. Diary sheets record relevant information for parents of children in the

Yearlings room. Diaries and diary sheets are used for the daily sharing of information with parents. Information is shared verbally with the parents of the pre-school children. Parents meetings are held every six months in order to keep parents fully informed of their child's achievements. Each child has their own development file, which they retain throughout their time in the nursery. The file contains information on children's developmental achievements and evidence of their creative work. However, there are no systems in place to enable parents to contribute to their child's development records with examples of what the child has achieved at home. A notice board keeps parents updated about general aspects of the provision. Parents also receive monthly newsletters.

Overall, the setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management of the nursery is satisfactory. The manager is committed to the ongoing development of the nursery and the professional development of her team. She has high expectations of staff with regard to attending training sessions and staff meetings. Staff are expected to develop good partnerships with parents. The induction procedure works effectively by ensuring staff have a clear understanding of their role and responsibilities within the nursery. The staff appraisal system offers further support and provides a good channel of communication between staff and management. The manager meets regularly with the staff and helps to keep them motivated by giving positive feedback and offering good levels of support. The manager has an understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage of learning. This enables her to continue to develop appropriate practice throughout. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and documentation relating to individual children is stored confidentially. This ensures children's well-being and privacy are respected.

The effective organisation of the nursery and the planned daily routines ensure a variety of play opportunities are provided for the children. Plans are displayed in the rooms to guide staff, with regard to the planned activities for the day and the learning objectives of focused activities. There is a good balance between adult-led and child initiated activities and children have regular opportunities for outdoor play. Staff generally deploy themselves effectively to provide good levels of support to the children. However, this is difficult to maintain at all times in the pre-school room when only one member of staff is working with the children. Staff display a strong commitment to developing their skills through training.

Most documentation is well maintained. However, the registers do not always accurately record the attendance of children and staff. The system is currently under review. The responsibility to record arrival and departure of the children is the responsibility of the parents and this is not working effectively.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to include in the child protection policy, a procedure to follow in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member. This procedure is now included and the staff have a good understanding of what they must do in order to safeguard the children's welfare.

The nursery was also asked to keep an accurate record of attendance, to provide age appropriate activities for the children and to consider when they will use the separate area in the baby room for non-mobile children.

The nursery uses a signing in and out method to register the attendance of staff and children. This is not working effectively. Parents do not always remember to register the time of arrival and departure of their child. As the registers are still not providing an accurate record of attendance, a recommendation has again been raised at this inspection.

Activities for the children aged under two years have been reviewed. Staff are now using the Birth to three matters framework to plan an appropriate range of activities for the children. They now ensure that children are free to move on from an activity as soon as they are ready and do not need to wait until the other children are finished.

Staff have reviewed the use of the separate area in the baby room and currently use this area for sleeping children. In order to ensure the safety of the non-mobile babies, they are supervised by staff when playing on the floor and children playing with large toys are kept to the other side of the room.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 12 Working in partnership with parents and carers. The concerns were originally shared with another agency. A childcare inspector from Ofsted Early Years then visited the provision on 2 May 2006. An action was raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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.

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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 medication is inaccessible to children at all times
- put measures in place to guide staff in assessing and monitoring the safety of the premises both indoors and outside
- develop the independence of the older children at meal times
- expand the variety of resources and toys to include more natural items and resources that reflect positive images of disability
- ensure registers accurately record the times of staff and children's arrival and departure.

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):

- provide opportunities for children to write for different purposes
- use the assessments of activities and individual children to inform future plans by identifying the levels of support and challenge each child needs in order to make progress
- consider ways to provide parents with the opportunity to inform and update staff of their child's achievements at home.

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