



Gable House Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY272921
Inspection date	12 September 2006
Inspector	Elizabeth Patricia Edmond
Setting Address	20 Wellington Road, Bridlington, YO15 2BG
Telephone number	01262 676582
E-mail	
Registered person	Mrs Fiona & Mr Christopher Courtland
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

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?

Gable House Nursery School was registered to the new owners in 2003. It is situated in the centre of Bridlington close to the town centre and all amenities. The children are cared for in a four storey Victorian semi-detached house. Children are accommodated on the three lower storeys of the building grouped according to their age. There is a secure garden to the rear of the property with a covered outdoor play space. The nursery may care for a maximum of 50 children under eight years. Opening times are from 08:00 to 18:00 throughout the year.

The nursery is registered with the local education authority to provide funded nursery education to those children of eligible age. There are currently 103 children on roll of whom 25 receive such funding. The group receive support from the local authority. The owners employ 15 staff, the majority of whom have relevant qualifications in care and education. Additional staff are available for cover.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where they learn to follow sensible hygiene procedures. The pre-school children know about washing the germs away before they have their snack and after using the toilet and independence is encouraged. The clear procedures for nappy changing further promote the good health of the babies.

The interesting outdoor environment is used well to contribute to the children's good health. They develop an enjoyment of being active in the outdoors throughout the year. The children develop their physical skills, such as climbing and balancing and they use the wheeled toys with increasing strength and control. The additional covered outdoor area further promotes the children's physical skills when the weather is poor. The babies enjoy their developing mobility indoors. Encouraged by the staff, they beam proudly as they pull themselves up and begin to take their first few steps.

The nursery offer a cooked meal at tea time and procedures are in place to store and serve the children's packed lunches. The children enjoy the meals provided and menus include some items cooked using fresh ingredients. However, the new cook currently relies on many frozen items. Advice for parents on healthy eating means that most children with packed lunches also benefit from a good diet. The children's health also benefits from the good portion of fresh fruit served each day at snack time.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The management team provide a clear, emphasis on identifying and minimising risks for the children. The building presents challenges to the staff but effective management means that safety is given the highest priority. All risk assessment procedures are clearly documented and followed thoroughly.

The children learn the necessary skills to keep themselves safe. This is because the staff have an excellent understanding of how children need to make some mistakes in order to develop these skills. For example, the staff are caring and cheerful when the babies occasionally wobble over yet do not limit their development by being over-protective. Similarly, the older children are encouraged to use the climbing frame whilst staff watch carefully and remind them to hold on when necessary. The play equipment is in clean, safe condition.

There are clear procedures for managing child protection concerns; these are understood and followed vigilantly by all staff. All the necessary guidance is filed carefully for staff or parents to access. Consequently, the children are well protected and their well-being safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children are very settled in the happy nursery environment. The staff in the baby room are particularly skilled in creating a calm, relaxed atmosphere. The gentle music and the restful aura have an exceptionally positive effect on the children's demeanour and disposition. The babies enjoy babbling to their friends or to themselves in the low level mirrors. All of the play equipment in the baby room is stored at floor level. This encourages babies to crawl and explore the various resources or the stimulating sensory activities. For example, they are fascinated as they crawl through the pile of shredded shiny paper or they are motivated to pull themselves up at the sturdy storage containers to investigate the contents.

Although the accessibility of resources is less good on the ground floor, the children enjoy the broad range of activities provided. The staff rotate the equipment to provide as much choice and variety as possible for those children. The children join in enthusiastically with planned parachute games or role play activities. They develop their language skills to a very good level as they join in with well known songs and rhymes; they are particularly excited as they add the appropriate actions to the songs or use the musical instruments.

The outdoor area provides a wealth of good quality play and learning opportunities for the children. They busily engage themselves with the range of equipment which covers all areas of learning and interest. For example, they enjoy digging under the trees or investigating the sand and water activities. The layout of the building means that access to the outdoors is not very easy to arrange. However, effective timetabling for the older children means that they can play outside at some point every day; additional staff are used to ensure that the babies have satisfactory access to the outdoors.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The pre-school staff are dedicated to providing good quality nursery education. The staff plan worthwhile activities which they can choose freely during periods of free play and they establish daily routines which are meaningful and necessary. For example, the children happily help to tidy the equipment away when it is time for a snack or outdoor play and they are patient as they wait until everyone is ready. The children's assessments show good progress in their learning and activity plans cover all areas of the Foundation Stage. The staff support the children's learning very well at their self chosen play. For example, they skilfully use informal, conversational questioning techniques to help the children to think about the shapes that they make with the play dough or to think about the sizes of the animals.

The children are confident and work very cooperatively with their peers. Their good behaviour has a positive effect on all aspects of their learning. For example, they are motivated to explore the various activities yet easily able to sit and enjoy stories or listen to instructions when necessary. The young children develop good pre-writing skills. This is because the staff provide interesting opportunities for them to do this; the children have great fun making marks outdoors with the brushes and water or they jot down notes as they play in the garden. Some of the three year olds begin to attempt to label their own work. Considerable effort is made by the

staff to promote the children's listening skills. The staff devise fun games to promote this. The children learn to differentiate between the sounds of the hidden instruments or they play 'pass the sound' at circle time. The children learn to count well and they develop a clear understanding of more and less as they join in with their favourite number rhymes. Whilst a degree of number in the environment is evident there are some missed opportunities for consolidating the children's understanding of how numbers can be used for a purpose as they play. The children use simple mathematical language freely as they play. Even the youngest children are excited when they realise they have made the 'biggest, biggest circle.'

The children learn how to use scales to compare the weights of the various animals and they are fascinated to observe the mechanism of the scales. They learn about the world around as part of carefully planned activities and themes and learn to show respect for the natural world. They chat about the needs of various animals as they cut around the pictures for their collage work. Some children are particularly skilled in using information technology to support their learning. They confidently find their favourite matching or music game on the computer and can explain what the various icons mean.

The children's fine motor skills are very good. More able children cut carefully around pictures for their art work and they manipulate the computer mouse very well. The younger children roll and squash the play dough to make the shapes they want or they use the tools well to extend their ideas.

The children enjoy a good range of activities which enable them to be creative and respond to the world around them. They learn various paint techniques and are proud of their art work. They engage freely and confidently in role play indoors and outdoors. The staff provide various opportunities for the children to express their thoughts and ideas, as well as to consolidate their understanding in other areas of learning. For example, they demonstrate a clear understanding about the role of the vet as they play in the vet's surgery and they show a great deal of care and compassion for the animals they are treating. The children sing a range of songs from memory and again demonstrate their learning in other areas as they sing about animals or numbers.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

The staff get to know the children and their families exceptionally well and the children's individual needs are given the highest priority. This means that the children of all ages are truly respected and valued as individuals. Through detailed communication with parents and ongoing observation the young children are able to follow their own natural rhythms and have their developmental needs met. This is because the staff know and act on every detail which may affect their daily patterns and dispositions. The older children are secure and self assured and the staff enjoy the children's developing personalities. This promotes a very high level of self esteem and consistently good behaviour. The children learn to take responsibility for their actions due to the clear and sensitive explanations of the staff and the level of praise lavished on all the children for their behaviour and their efforts. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents is good and relationships are extremely positive. There is an excellent level of information for the parents about all procedural aspects of the provision. Parents are invited regularly to comment on the standards of care or suggest ideas for improvements. Additional advice on other child care related issues such as health or safety are also carefully and accessibly filed for parents to see. The babies' daily diary shows very detailed liaison between parents and staff regarding specific aspects of their care; the daily food diary informs the parents of the older children how well they have eaten. Information about the Foundation Stage is good and parents have opportunities to discuss their children's progress at the regular parents evenings. The photographs in the pre-school corridor show parents how their children learn through play. Regular newsletters inform parents how they can help their children to take part in interesting learning activities at home. For example, there are ideas on how to help their children to observe similarities and differences by looking at items as they float or sink.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are very happy in the well organised nursery environment. The design of the building presents a range of challenges. However, management and staff have an excellent approach to trying different routines so that children have as much choice and variety as possible.

The children benefit from the staff's dedicated approach to their professional development. The majority of staff enthusiastically work towards a higher level of qualification and are proactive in seeking out short courses on particular topics.

The professional approach to administrative duties means that all documentation is exceptionally well organised. Records are clear and comprehensive; a broad range of information and guidance is carefully filed so that it can easily be located and referred to. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the educational provision is good. The experienced nursery teacher leads an effective team. They work well together sharing roles for example, with assessments and planning which support the children's learning well. The staff welcome the local authority's advice on various aspects of the provision and have a close working relationship with them on supporting children with special needs. The pre-school staff have a positive attitude to evaluating the daily routines to offer as much active learning time as possible.

Improvements since the last inspection

Care

At the last inspection the provider was asked to ensure that parents sign the medication record to acknowledge their awareness. These records are now clearly signed which minimises the possibility of potentially dangerous misunderstandings. A further recommendation related to the privacy of the children when having their nappies changed. The provider has now added fold-out changing tables to the toilet area on the ground floor. This has improved the privacy issue whilst further promoting good hygiene.

Nursery Education

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- further promote the children's health by offering increased amounts of fresh vegetables in the meals provided.

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):

- further develop resources in the indoor and outdoor environment which will encourage children to practise their number recognition skills as they play freely.

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