



Grey Fell Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY248187
Inspection date	06 June 2006
Inspector	Jill Lee
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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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Grey Fell Academy Day Nursery was registered in 2003. It is a privately owned day nursery in the Shepley district of Huddersfield. The owner and her family live on the premises.

Children are cared for in five rooms on the ground floor of the premises. They are grouped according to age, with babies under 12 months in one room, toddlers from one to two years in another and pre-school children over two years having use of the

other three rooms. Children have access to extended gardens, which are secure and fully enclosed; toddlers have access to their own enclosed outdoor area.

A maximum of 34 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 53 children aged from seven months to four years on roll, of whom 16 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Children over two years have weekly French lessons and a 'Jo Jingles' dance and music session is also offered.

The Nursery opens each weekday from 07.30 until 18.00. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

Nine staff are employed to work directly with the children, three of whom are part time: seven of the staff have an appropriate early years qualification. The nursery receives support from the local authority and has been awarded the Kirklees Healthy Choice Gold Award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy physical activity outdoors each day in the extensive gardens. They play running and chasing games, running down the grassy slopes with delight. They ride bikes backwards and forwards and scoot along very fast, carefully avoiding obstacles. They play bat and ball, play skittles and hoops; they crawl through the tunnel and hide in the play house. They learn to control their bodies as they climb up onto the climbing frame and use the rope swing in the big tree. Children love exploring the nature garden under the trees; they enjoy digging and planting, transporting soil and leaves in the wheelbarrows. They climb onto the stones to look over the wall for the sheep and horses in the field beyond.

Children do not independently access the outdoors as part of their free play but as a planned part of each session. Opportunities are made available for younger children to enjoy physical play experiences indoors but this is not part of the continuous provision. For example, toddlers have few sturdy toys to push along to support their developing mobility and there are limited free opportunities to climb. Staff plan well-balanced and varied opportunities for exploration and extending physical skills within everyday routines.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean and well-maintained environment. Staff systematically implement clearly defined health and hygiene guidelines and ensure parents understand about the need for exclusion when children are infectious. Children learn good practices through their daily routines; they know why they wash their hands before snack time and that they must use their own cloth to wipe their face after lunch. They become increasingly independent in attending to their own personal needs. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication are well considered; individual health care plans are agreed with parents, so that children are fully protected. Children know why they need sun cream and must wear hats to play

out in the hot weather.

Children are well-nourished and enjoy a well-planned and varied menu of freshly cooked, healthy food. Menus are displayed for parents information. Snack and meal times are relaxed and sociable occasions; staff sit with children and encourage conversations about healthy foods. Children help prepare some snacks; they butter crackers, cut up fruit and enjoy making organic vegetable soup. They help to set the tables at lunch time. Children make choices, become independent in feeding themselves and older children use a knife and fork very capably to eat their lunch. Children are offered drinks frequently and older children are able to access drinks independently.

Key staff liaise closely with parents to establish a shared understanding about their child's care needs, this helps to support consistency as they move through the nursery. Younger children enjoy lots of cuddles and gentle conversation, making them feel special. Staff follow children's home routines; they recognise signs of tiredness, like a request for the dummy, and respond appropriately so that the need for sleep and rest is met well.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in secure and welcoming premises by staff who clearly understand their role in keeping children safe. Comprehensive health and safety procedures are implemented effectively. Staff check the premises daily and take appropriate steps to minimise risks so that children are protected from potential hazards. However, the slide was not secured following grass cutting to allow safe, independent use by children.

Children learn to keep themselves safe as staff involve them in daily discussions and teach them safe practice. For example, they know they must watch carefully for other children when riding the bikes fast. Staff teach children how to use equipment, like the climbing frame, safely and remind them that it is not safe to walk near the swings when someone is using it. Staff provide a good balance between freedom and safe limits so that children are appropriately challenged.

Children have access to sufficient, safe space to allow them to enjoy a wide variety of activities. They use a stimulating range of safe and suitable toys and play materials. Resources are of high quality and are well-maintained. They are readily accessible for children to reach independently and the play environment is very effectively organised to allow children to move around freely and safely to develop their own play ideas.

Staff give high priority to protecting children and all staff have recently accessed appropriate training to enhance their understanding of child protection issues. Child protection responsibilities and recording requirements are shared well with parents and children are sensitively supported to share their feelings and make their needs known. Staff's clear understanding of their responsibilities within child protection procedures helps to ensure that children are effectively protected and their welfare

fully safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children love coming to the nursery; they are very happy, settled and secure. They make friends and play together cooperatively, developing self-confidence. Their individual needs are supported very sensitively by staff who get to know them and their families very well. Staff spontaneously differentiate activities to include children and meet their different needs. They give priority to supporting development of social and communication skills, encouraging lots of conversations based on children's interests and home lives. Stories are shared often and children become very familiar with their favourites.

The environment is planned very effectively and organised to encourage children to access resources independently and plan their own play. Exploratory and creative play, such as sand, water, crafts and painting, is a planned part of their everyday environment, allowing children to experiment with different media and develop their own creative ideas. They cooperate to plan extended imaginary games in the role play room and outdoors. They love singing songs, making music and participating in action rhymes; they are confident to express themselves in the music and dance sessions. Staff encourage children to count and they become familiar with number concepts within their everyday routines and activities; for instance, they work out how many spoons and forks they need to set the table for lunch. Their fine motor skills develop as they roll and cut play dough and carefully use the scissors to cut the paper into different shapes.

Staff are becoming familiar with the Birth to three matters framework and are using it very effectively to extend and enhance the daily experiences of the younger children. They have introduced a wide variety of treasure baskets and natural resources for babies and toddlers to explore freely. Access to paint, sand, water and dough is planned as an activity, rather than part of continuous provision, although toddlers actively make their wishes known, by pointing and 'asking' for resources they want. Staff respond sensitively and skilfully to their body language and non-verbal communications. Children play very contentedly, learning to share and enjoy being with others. Staff know children's current interests very well, as they observe them carefully and talk frequently with parents: planning is child-led. Caring relationships, attentive support and warm interactions ensure younger children happily explore the stimulating nursery environment.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, so that children make very sound progress towards the early learning goals. Key staff have a very good awareness of the early learning goals and plan activities based on observations and assessments of children's progress. Other staff are involved in planning meetings and are encouraged to contribute their ideas but are less confident in their understanding of the foundation stage curriculum. Children enjoy a wide and well-planned variety of experiences within the daily environment; they are interested and motivated to learn.

Activity planning is well structured and successfully promotes opportunities in all areas of learning; the indoor environment is very well structured to encourage children to access resources independently. Children enjoy outdoor activities each day but staff have not maximised the opportunities for learning presented by the outdoor environment.

Children are enthusiastic and interested. They use initiative as they make choices, concentrate well on activities they enjoy and persevere to complete activities. They are becoming confident communicators and happily share their own ideas and experiences; they use language to describe, recall and explain their ideas. Children love stories, they listen attentively and contribute enthusiastically. Older children recognise and practice writing their name and enjoy linking sounds and letters. Children count and use numbers very ably in everyday activities; they count all the children at register time and work out how much cutlery they need for lunch. They use comparative language confidently in their construction play and know the names of many shapes; they work out how to solve problems in everyday play. They participate often in number rhymes and games, actively exploring more and less.

Children become very interested in the world around them. They learn about the seasons and growth and wait for the butterflies to emerge from their chrysalises. They pour water and sieve sand, exploring heavy, light, full and empty. Children develop an interest in the world around them as they explore the world of mini-beasts under the huge logs in the nature garden, recognising and naming different creatures; they 'dig for gold' at the top of the garden. They have free opportunity for spontaneous expression of their own creative ideas; they paint their hands and make hand prints, showing off their work proudly. They learn about the wider world and other cultures as they find out about how people celebrate festivals.

Staff routinely observe children in varied ways in their play experiences, identifying what they know and can do. They use their knowledge of children's individual interests well to extend their learning. Observation records are detailed and informative, including lovely photographs of children's experiences; they suggest next steps in learning, which are shared with all staff. However, the process does not readily identify gaps in children's experience, or familiarise all staff sufficiently with children's achievements in all areas of learning, to ensure they are able to adapt learning opportunities and challenge children fully in all areas of their play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by familiar and well known staff and carefully planned transitions between rooms help children move happily to the next stage, supported by secure and trusting relationships. Their individual needs and home circumstances are well known. They develop a strong sense of belonging to the nursery as they become familiar with routines, participate confidently at group times and enjoy helping with daily tasks. They develop a strong sense of self esteem as staff display their work in the 'art gallery' and enable them to keep their models safe for later play.

Children are encouraged to take responsibility for their own behaviour as they return

toys to the shelves when they finish playing and help to tidy up for snack and lunch. Staff gently and very consistently reinforce rules and boundaries. Good behaviour is sensitively encouraged and reminders are used skilfully to help children participate happily. Children play together very harmoniously as they develop extended imaginary games in the home corner and make cameras with the lego. They learn to think about their own needs and the needs of others as they share care of the 'babies' and take turns on the computer. Staff help them to resolve difficulties together, so they are confident they will have a turn.

Children learn about the world around them, as staff plan activities raising their awareness of living things and of the lives and festivals of people in other countries. Visitors to the nursery stimulate their interest in the wider community, although outings are rarely planned. They learn about people who help us, for instance, the police officer. Children become confident to make choices and decisions, as they plan their own play. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The nursery establishes a good partnership with parents and carers. Parents are fully involved in helping to settle their child and get to know the key staff well as they liaise closely on a daily basis to share information. Each child has their own 'daily diary' to enable sharing of their routines and experiences; parents are encouraged to contribute news and information to ensure consistency with home. Parents' relationships with staff are relaxed and comfortable, promoting children's sense of security.

Parents receive a welcome pack when their child starts nursery, which includes details of the Foundation stage curriculum and the Birth to three matters framework. The key worker shares policies and procedures with parents and ensures they know how to raise any concerns. Parents views are sought via questionnaires and they are kept informed about nursery issues through regular newsletters. They are readily able to access their child's development record and staff encourage parents to become actively involved in their child's learning. For example, they provide activity sheets to do at home, based on the current topic; this includes activities to share and songs to learn together. Parents evenings are planned to offer a more formal opportunity to learn about their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery environment is well organised to ensure children's welfare and safety. Daily routines are clearly planned and flexibly implemented and staff are deployed very effectively to support children's varying needs and interests.

Children's care and education are supported by satisfactory leadership and management. Staff work together as a very effective team; they review and evaluate their own practice. Children's experiences are enhanced by staff's access to appropriate training and development opportunities. Some systems to assess the impact of daily organisation and the quality of teaching on children's learning are in place, but are not used formally to monitor and evaluate progress. The manager

consistently provides opportunities within the planning process and daily routines to extend staff understanding of the early learning goals and support their ongoing development. Appraisal is used effectively to identify training needs.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are effectively implemented so that children's welfare is safeguarded. Required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well being is in place. Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated to reflect current practice and recent guidance. Robust procedures are established to ensure staff suitability. Staff have suitable skills and experience to work with children. Parents' wishes regarding their child's care clearly influence day to day practice and clear written agreements are recorded.

Overall the nursery promotes children's well-being and meets the individual needs of the range the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to establish clear systems to notify any changes, to maintain clear staff records, to establish a clear system for induction of new staff and to establish a clear operational plan. They were also asked to establish consistent hygiene routines and review policies, especially complaints, child protection and emergency evacuation.

With regard to nursery education, the nursery was asked to improve staff knowledge of the early learning goals and their understanding of the purpose of activities. For example, to provide more opportunities for children to solve simple maths problems, use maths language and recognise numbers; also to learn about how things happen and why things work. They were asked to increase children's opportunities to develop independence in self-care and to ensure systems are in place to support children with learning difficulties or disabilities.

The nursery has worked extremely hard and has made remarkable progress in addressing actions raised at the last inspection. Clear systems are now established in all areas of practice and all policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated. The operational plan is clearly understood by all staff and is implemented very effectively.

With regard to nursery education, key staff are very familiar with the early learning goals, although some staff are still developing skills. Planning to encourage children's opportunities for independence and self-care are now excellent. Planning now offers children good opportunities to solve simple maths problems and to use maths language in everyday activities; children have some opportunities to explore how things happen and why things work. Systems are in place to support children who have learning difficulties or disabilities.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- consider ways to enable all children to access the outdoors more independently as part of their free play and extend resources to encourage younger children's physical play experiences indoors
- monitor the safety of outdoor equipment.

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):

- extend planning to offer children opportunities in all areas of learning to include use of the outdoor environment
- enhance the ways observations of individual children are used, to identify gaps and focus planning for next steps across all areas of their learning, so that stimulus and challenge is increased within their everyday play experiences.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk