



Heathfield House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY333987
Inspection date	06 November 2006
Inspector	Julie Firth
Setting Address	Delenty Drive, Birchwood, Warrington, WA3 6AP
Telephone number	01925 815505
E-mail	
Registered person	Lisa Anne Kirkwood
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 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?

Heathfield House Day Nursery was registered in 1999 and was re-registered in 2006. The nursery is privately owned and is located in Birchwood, Warrington. Children have access to four playrooms and associated facilities on the ground and first floor of the building. There is a fully enclosed area for outdoor play.

There are currently 24 children on roll. This includes eight children in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery opens five days a week from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round. The nursery supports children with disabilities, learning difficulties and children who speak English as an additional language.

There is a qualified manager and four staff who work with the children. Two of the staff hold early years qualifications and two are undertaking National Vocational Qualification Level 3. The Early Years Advisory Service in Warrington supports the nursery.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are learning sensible health and hygiene practices. Staff gently remind them to wash their hands after using the toilet and before touching food. They are protected from infection by staff's attention to certain hygiene practices, such as comprehensive cleaning rotas, which keeps the nursery clean throughout the day. An effective sick policy is in place, which excludes children who are ill from the setting, preventing the risk of cross infection. When accidents occur, children receive good care as several staff hold first aid certificates.

Children learn about healthy living through a range of snacks and meals which are well balanced and healthy. The owner has spent time planning the menus and ensuring children receive hot and cold nutritious foods throughout the day. Procedures are in place to record children's health and dietary needs, their likes and dislikes with regard to food and drinks, ensuring that their needs are fully met. Staff follow babies' routines with regard to meal and sleep times, providing an environment which is secure and consistent with home. Pre-school children are well hydrated and have regular access to drinks. However, this is not consistent throughout the nursery in respect of younger children. Snack times are relaxed occasions where children sit together around the tables to enjoy their food and each other's company.

Toddlers' health is promoted by the regular opportunities that they have to engage in physical play, whilst playing indoors and outdoors. Young children are able run around in the fresh air, ride on bikes and slide down the slide, helping them to gain control of their bodies. Older children can practise their balancing skills on planks in the garden. Fine motor skills are nurtured as children thread beads, manipulate play dough and handle small tools.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and learn in a stimulating environment. Colourful wall displays of children's art work and friezes in the main room and the hallway create a learning environment and give children a sense of belonging. Children can play safely in their rooms and participate in quiet and messy activities. There are a wealth of indoor and outdoor toys and equipment available for children of all ages that are high quality and conform to British Standards. However, they are not always accessible to the children which restricts their choice and independence.

All reasonable steps have been taken to ensure that children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Good procedures are in place for the safe collection of children which include detailed risk assessments, records of visitors and accurate recording of arrivals and departures. Children learn about fire safety and regularly practise fire evacuation procedures, helping them

to understand what to do in the event of a fire or an emergency evacuation. They are aware of their boundaries when playing in the garden and when out on trips.

Children's welfare is well protected as adults have a good understanding of child protection issues and understand their role to fully safeguard the child. They demonstrate a good knowledge of signs and symptoms of abuse and would know who to contact for advice or to make a referral.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and secure. Children happily enter the nursery and join in with an activity. Staff encourage children to say goodbye to their parents, which contributes to developing trusting three-way relationships. The staff are good role models as they show respect for the children and establish positive relationships with them, helping them to feel happy and secure. They are aware of meeting their individual needs, such as settling in new children and developing confidence and self-esteem as they encourage them to play with their peers. An established key-worker system ensures that children are cared for by familiar staff and by people who know them well. Resources in the baby room are laid out to encourage young children to develop their gross motor skills. The children enjoy playing in the soft play area where they are able to move in a range of ways, such as rolling and jumping. Babies learn to make connections when they press buttons and look at their reflections in the mirror and are thrilled by the outcome of these toys. Older children enjoy leaf printing, making their own photo frames and making puppets from paper bags. Toddlers have the opportunity to express themselves when playing in the kitchen pouring out cups of tea and weighing and scooping pasta shells from the activity tray. They are given opportunities to bake cakes, gingerbread men and plant their own bulbs. Musical instruments are introduced to young children to increase their motivation to create sounds. They enjoy singing songs together and during circle times when they talk about their experiences whilst others listen.

Children play well together in the outside garden and count as they jump in the numbered squares in hopscotch. Younger children become engrossed as they chalk on the walls and the outdoor fence. All children in the nursery are taken out into the community for walks collecting conkers, and on planned interesting trips. Photographs show children climbing on large equipment in an adventure park and singing on the stage, gaining confidence whilst having fun. Children's language and communication is promoted throughout the nursery and staff question children when they read a story. However, the book area in the pre-school room does need to be more inviting to enable children to read for pleasure. Staff are constantly asking them about colour and shape during activities, enhancing their learning. Children are learning right from wrong as they are gently reminded by staff to share and take turns.

Most of the staff have recently completed the 'Birth to three matters' framework training. They use the framework and link it to the Foundation Stage. Observations and assessment link to the long and short term planning. Children each have an individual file and their progress is monitored and assessments used against the components of this curriculum. This helps to provide quality care and education for the children attending the nursery.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff are enthusiastic and keen, and children relate well to the staff and are well-behaved and motivated. They benefit from being taught by staff who have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. This is reflected in a range of opportunities available to children. Teaching styles are varied and pre-school children learn together mainly in a large group. However, this can restrict staff from challenging the more able children. The children are settled, happy and friendly and respond to staff's use of open ended questions, which help to develop their learning. Planning is in place and children are involved in structured activities. However, there is an insufficient balance of adult and child-led activities in the pre-school area which restricts children's free play and choice. Areas of continuous provision are not all available which results in children not always being able to consolidate concepts that they have learnt. Children have been learning about Africa and plans show how they celebrate and learn about different festivals throughout the year. Regular assessments are undertaken to monitor children's progress and from this information staff are able to identify the next steps in children's learning. However, these assessments are not linked to the stepping stones, which makes it difficult to track children's progress.

Children have sound opportunities to develop language skills. They happily join in with songs and rhymes, helping them to develop an awareness of rhyming words. The successful practice of the children having a self-registration scheme further promotes their reading skills. Play situations provide children with the opportunity to link sounds to letters as they match objects with the letter of their name. Children are beginning to form friendships and develop good communication skills as they chat confidently to each other and staff during play. Staff share stories with children in the group helping them to learn that print carries meaning. Children take their clip boards outside in the garden encouraging them to talk and write about what they see and make sense of the world around them. They are able to sit for sustained periods of time during story time and circle time.

Children talk confidently about significant things that have happened to them. They are secure in the routines of the group and take responsibility as they are involved in the daily procedures, such as tidying away resources and sitting quietly for snacks. Many children can count objects to five and beyond six. Children spontaneously use mathematical language and speak about how high their vegetable spaghetti has grown. They willingly attempt to count and complete puzzles that promote counting and number recognition.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is increasing through planned activities. Children show an awareness of seasonal changes and explore differences in the environment as they go for walks in the local area and extend the activity, drawing houses, using sticky paper and glue. They learn about how and why things grow by planting and growing seeds. They enjoy picking blackberries and measuring the rain outside in the garden. They ask questions of how ice changes when it is melting. However, children are not given enough opportunities to enhance their exploratory skills as they do not have access to programmable toys at all times and the computer is not in use. Children have sufficient opportunities to develop their creative skills and enjoy making their marks in the tray of shaving foam. They create their own boxes and play shop, placing their own written price tags on their boxes. They do get planned time to play in the sand and water, and dress up. However, these experiences are not accessible at all times and the home corner does need to be extended to promote children's imaginary skills.

Children are able to express themselves using natural resources, such as tasting jelly, sugar, salt and mustard, and display their results. This develops their sensory skills. Their physical skills are promoted when having fun outside as they push and ride wheeled toys, learning to negotiate them around each other, developing an awareness of space.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff demonstrate a sound awareness of equal opportunities. Children have access to a sufficient amount of toys and equipment promoting children's awareness of diversity. They learn about the festivals of other cultures, including the Chinese and African celebrations.

The children behave well and display a very positive approach to learning. Staff have a secure knowledge of how to promote positive behaviour and deal with challenging behaviour. They use consistent strategies, such as rewarding and praising children for good behaviour. This helps the children to understand responsible behaviour and work harmoniously with one another. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory, having a positive effect on children's sense of belonging. Positive comments indicate children are happy during their nursery day, enjoying the fun activities. Information is shared through daily informal discussions and a daily diary sent home describing their child's activities. However, parents of the children receiving nursery funding do not get sufficient information reporting their children's progress to help them participate in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a team of staff who are suitably qualified. They are enthusiastic and conscientious. Staff attend training courses to improve their childcare practices. Children are grouped according to their age and stage of development. However, the toddler and the pre-school room do need to be organised to allow children more access to space, toys and equipment. Sufficient staff are employed to work with the children, but the operational plan does need to be reviewed to enable staff to challenge the more able children and further enhance their learning and development.

Records, and policies and procedures work well in practice to underpin the care of the children. However, they do need to be updated and new information given to parents about the setting. The complaints procedure is in place, but does need to be updated in line with recent legislation. Correct written procedures are not in place in the event of an allegation of abuse made against staff.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The owner and the manager are good role models for the staff and they are committed to supporting staff in their professional development. They have a good relationship with the children and the manager works in the pre-school room, enabling her to monitor the day-to-day running of the pre-school. The management are aware

of issues that need to be addressed and areas for further development to improve the quality of care that the setting offers to children.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

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.

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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 children have access to drinks at all times
- review the operational plan to ensure that space and equipment is accessible to children at all times, update policies and procedures and give to parents, amend the complaints procedure in line with the new legislation and add written procedures in the event of an allegation of abuse made against staff.

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):

- enhance children's imaginary development and increase children's opportunities to programmable toys and Information Communication Technology
- ensure parents receive recent information on the setting, also applies to care, provide procedures to ensure that parents receive reports on their child's progress

- ensure that assessments are clearly linked to the stepping stones.

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