



# Harpers Nursery school

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	127225
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Liz Margaret Caluori
<b>Setting Address</b>	Harpers Farm, Summerhill, Goudhurst, Cranbrook, Kent, TN17 1JU
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<b>Registered person</b>	Claire Jane Wickham
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Harpers Nursery School has been registered since August 1996 and is privately owned and managed.

It operates from a self contained unit of two rooms at the owner's home at Harpers Farm in Summerhill near Goudhurst. There is access to a fully enclosed outside play area. The group serves the local and surrounding area.

The nursery is usually open from 09:00 to 15:30 Monday to Thursday and 09:00 to 13:00 on Friday during term time. However, on occasion it may open Friday afternoons. Children attend on a sessional or extended day basis.

There are currently 60 children on role aged from two years to five years including those in receipt of nursery education grant funding. The group is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language.

A total of seven staff work with the children, including the manager. Of these, six hold yearly years childcare qualifications.

The group receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children learn about the importance of healthy eating through a range of activities. They have planted their own vegetables and proudly describe eating carrots that they have grown themselves. They are provided with snacks of fruit and biscuits throughout the day and are offered regular drinks of milk or water. Those staying all day bring in packed lunches from home. Meal and snack times are extremely sociable occasions.

Very effective hygiene procedures are in place throughout the setting. Staff ensure that tables are regularly wiped and that all areas used by children are thoroughly clean. Children are developing good personal hygiene practices. Older children visit the toilets independently and routinely wash their hands. Younger children are given support as needed and nappy changing procedures are appropriate.

Good arrangements are in place to ensure that children are effectively treated in case of an accident. Staff with first aid qualifications are present at all times and clear written records are maintained. Appropriate procedures are also in place regarding the administration of medication. However, whilst the required records are completed, some information is sent home with parents without a copy being retained on site.

Children enjoy regular opportunities for physical play. When weather permits they have use of a fully enclosed garden which has been specifically landscaped to provide a stimulating and imaginative play environment. In poor weather physical games take place in the group rooms.

Children's emotional well-being is given high priority by staff; as a result children are confident, happy and settled.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children play with a wide range of toys and resources that are well-maintained and appropriate for their ages and stages of development. These are attractively displayed and generally stored at all low levels so that children can access them safely and easily.

Staff are vigilant in their supervision. This allows children a very good level of independence. As a result, they confidently move around the setting and explore their environment.

There are a range of effective precautions in place to protect children. These include the use of socket covers and heater guards in the group rooms. There are also written risk assessments and safety checklists which are regularly completed by staff. In addition, fire safety precautions are appropriate. Fire exits are clearly identified and free from obstruction. Fire fighting equipment is in place and checked regularly. Evacuation drills are practised regularly and written records maintained.

The staff team have a good understanding of child protection issues. They are fully aware of their responsibility to report concerns and have the relevant contact details. As a result, children are effectively safeguarded.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in the nursery. They separate easily from parents and carers and enthusiastically greet the staff and their friends. Children play happily in the relaxed, friendly atmosphere. Their individual emotional and care needs are very well understood by all staff.

All children have access to the same range of activities. However, the Birth to three matters framework is effectively used to ensure that younger children receive an appropriate level of challenge. Children are stimulated, engaged and enthusiastic. They have very good levels of concentration.

A typical day comprises a good balance of free play and more structured activities. Routines are clear but flexible and these are well understood by the children. Activities set up for free play are very well resourced and appealing to children.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a thorough understanding of the Foundation Stage and competently assess and monitor children's progress through observations and written records. The clear and effective recording systems ensure that staff are able to identify the next step for each child.

Children are keen to take part in activities and ask a lot of interesting questions. They are developing extremely broad vocabularies and use very expressive language. Staff are very skilful at extending conversations and listen to children with genuine interest. Children are developing a love of books and are enthralled when listening to the well read stories. Children are learning to recognise written letters and to identify the initial sounds of words. They make good use of the resources provided to practise writing in their free play as well as supervised activities.

Children have access to an extremely good range of resources, including Montessori equipment, to support their mathematical development. They often choose to play sorting and matching

games as well as counting activities. They are beginning to develop an understanding of the basic concepts of addition and subtraction.

Creatively children are also developing well. They play extremely imaginative and complex role play games both in the home corner and using the small world toys. They also enthusiastically express themselves during very well managed singing activities. They have a large repertoire of songs and enjoy opportunities to sing with their friends. Some are also developing the confidence to choose to perform on their own, enjoying the praise and encouragement from staff and their peers.

There are many opportunities for children to enjoy arts and crafts. On occasion, the benefit of some of the planned activities is limited by too much adult direction. However, children have many other opportunities throughout the day to produce very individual and expressive pieces of art.

The children are particularly well supported to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world. They have access to a computer and are able to operate simple programmes. Children have extremely good levels of general knowledge. They excitedly discuss places that they have visited or heard of. Staff skilfully extend these spontaneous activities by providing resources such as reference books. Children are becoming very enthusiastic and independent learners as a result of this support and the freedom they have to experiment and make choices.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They learn about different people by taking part in activities to mark a variety of celebrations and special days. They play with a range of toys aimed at representing different people from throughout the community and wider world.

Children are extremely polite, well mannered and caring. Adults act as very good role models and are calm and consistent when dealing with the children. This helps children to relax and feel at ease when they play.

The nursery has appropriate arrangements in place to care for children with English as an additional language as well as those with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The staff team have a very positive attitude to meeting the needs of all children.

Partnership with parents is good. Children benefit from the very positive relationships that exist between staff and their parents. All parents are greeted warmly and are familiar with the procedures and routines of the setting. They are given a good range of written information and are regularly invited into the nursery. The parents of children in receipt of nursery education are informed about their child's progress against the Foundation Stage.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children thrive in the nursery as a result of the careful organisation to meet their care, learning and play needs. The nursery accommodation consists of two group rooms and the dividing door is left open for most of the day to allow children to move freely around the setting. Time is also well managed to provide children with a very good mix of relaxing as well as more stimulating activities.

There are seven members of staff working in the nursery, of whom six hold early years childcare qualifications. The leadership and management of the setting are good. The manager and staff team meet regularly to work to identify and address any strengths and weaknesses. The staff work well as a team and communicate very effectively. There are well thought out and appropriate procedures in place to recruit and check staff suitability.

The setting has a comprehensive range of written policies and procedures. There are minor weaknesses in the organisation of the register, the medication records and the complaints procedure. However, records are generally well maintained, well ordered and up-to-date.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

Following the last inspection a number of recommendations were made. These included reviewing and updating some of the written policies and procedures. The manager has revised all of the policies although the complaints procedure needs further updating to reflect more recent changes within Ofsted.

Recommendations were also made to introduce a system for staff appraisals as well as a procedure to be followed in case of an allegation against a member of staff. Both of these issues have successfully been addressed.

These improvements to the organisation of the setting result in a more effective service for children.

## **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection 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

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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):

- ensure that minor inconsistencies in the quality of some written records are addressed

#### 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):

- review the organisation of planned art and craft activities to ensure that adult supervision does not restrict children's creativity.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)