



Shepherds Hill Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY335953
Inspection date	11 December 2006
Inspector	Kim Mundy
Setting Address	Shepherds Hill House, Northwood Road, Harefield, Uxbridge, Middlesex, UB9 6PT
Telephone number	01895 825732
E-mail	
Registered person	Shepherds Hill Nursery Ltd
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Shepherds Hill Nursery is a privately run nursery which opened in 2006. It operates from a purpose built timber classroom in Harefield in the London Borough of Hillingdon. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area and they benefit from walks in the surrounding woodlands. Children come from the surrounding area of Hillingdon, Hertfordshire and Harrow.

A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time and there are currently 13 children on roll. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year.

The nursery currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs six staff of these, three staff including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is being fully promoted and they are learning good hygiene practices such as washing their hands to prevent germs from spreading. Thorough systems are in place for recording accidents and administering medication. As the need arises, children receive good first aid treatment as all practitioners hold a current first aid certificate. Children are protected from unnecessary illness as they do not attend if they are sick. The nursery is kept clean in all areas and staff wear gloves when nappy changing to minimise possible cross infection.

Children are enjoying healthy breakfasts, snacks, lunch and tea. The nursery aims to provide all organic foods. The qualified cook prepares wholesome foods such as Jamaican soup with dumplings, which a child calls 'bumplings'. Children relax during sociable mealtimes as they sit and chat with practitioners about their activities in the morning. They can pour their own drinks independently at all times and practitioners provide support to help less able children to achieve this. Children enjoy picking blackberries and making jam which is popular on toast for breakfast.

This nursery places a very strong emphasis on children having lots of fun and making the best possible use of the outdoor rural environment. They experience fresh air and exercise on a daily basis and are developing good physical skills as they walk around the woodland area and play in the nursery garden. Children balance with increasing control on planks of wood and logs, they crawl, climb, slide and run.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children and parents are warmly welcomed by very kind and caring practitioners. They are cared for in a clean, bright and welcoming play room. Children's art work is attractively displayed and the activities and nature display tables capture the children's interest. There is a good range of furniture and equipment to meet the needs of the children attending. However, as the numbers of children on roll increases, further toys and resources will be required. Good use is made of the space available therefore, children have plenty of room in which to play, rest and eat comfortably.

Children are safe and secure on the premises. Practitioners carry out a very thorough daily written risk assessment to include all areas of the premises. This also helps staff to take note of, and address jobs which are required, for example, topping up the hand towel dispenser and sweeping the outdoor area. Children are learning what to do in the event of a fire as they practice fire drills although, the fire blanket in the kitchen, which is located in a separate building, is not installed appropriately. Other good procedures are in place to ensure children's safety such as password protection, which is required when someone other than the usual parent or carer is collecting the child.

Children are safeguarded from abuse or neglect because all staff have a good understanding of child protection. Thorough policies and procedures are in place and parents are fully informed

of the practitioners role as they sign the child protection statement when their child starts at the nursery.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are enjoying fabulous learning opportunities outdoors as they play in the garden and surrounding fields and woodland. Suitable clothing such as Wellington boots are essential at this nursery as children have lots of fun investigating and exploring many living things, for example, looking for bats at dusk with their torches and searching for grass hoppers. Children fill their bird feeders to put in the trees and use binoculars to observe the birds. They enjoy planting flowers and vegetables and love to dig in the mud pit, which is most popular with the children. For Halloween, children grow pumpkins and enjoy them roasted for lunch. They are exploring through using their senses, for example, as they smell the rosemary and curry plant in the garden, and cinnamon in the play dough. Children walk over to the badger set to observe the natural habitat. Practitioners take and extend children's learning opportunities as they arise, for example, observing a toad which appears on the footpath.

The children are learning in an environment which is rich in language. Practitioners use open-ended questioning effectively with children and provide interesting themes which incorporate lots of new language to extend their vocabulary. Children have many opportunities to make early marks as they write and post their letters to the nursery teddy bear. They write shopping lists in the home corner and a chalk board and paper are displayed on the walls for children to write on. Children observe letters and words in and outdoors and practitioners encourage children to use books. Children thoroughly enjoy story times because practitioners use puppets and props to make story times interactive. They extend the children's learning in and outdoors. For example, 'The Lighthouse Keepers Lunch' when children use the basket of play food hung between the trees to act out passing the Light House Keepers lunch to him.

Children are enjoying exciting early problem solving activities such as counting the stones on the abacus in the garden and estimating how many pine cones will fit in to different wooden containers. They explore volume and weight during cooking activities and floating and sinking during water play. Children enjoy building and constructing on a small and large scale in and outdoors with bricks, logs and sticks. They love painting and sticking a wide range of materials.

Children have very good opportunities to make progress in all areas of their development because staff have a thorough understanding of how children learn and they provide an effective, vibrant and well balanced curriculum.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are developing self-esteem and confidence as they happily express thoughts and ideas during activities and discussions. Children are learning about the world they live in and other's cultures and beliefs. They enjoy participating in festival celebrations such as Diwali and

Christmas. There is a suitable range of toys and resources to promote diversity, for example, musical instruments, dressing up clothes, dolls and books.

Children are highly involved in activities and therefore, their behaviour is very good. Practitioners use age appropriate strategies such as 'Thinking time', children are encouraged to discuss what was kind and not so kind. Children are praised and encouraged by practitioners for their achievements.

Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported by sensitive practitioners who ensure they are familiar with words the children use at home, for example, for their care needs. None of the children currently attending have special educational needs. There is a special needs coordinator who has attended relevant training and a suitable special needs policy in place.

Children benefit from the close relationships parents develop with their key worker and other practitioners. Parents receive good information about the nursery curriculum, policies and procedures. They receive daily feedback about their child's routine and achievements in the message book. The notice board is informative and newsletters are now being introduced.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are cared for by very caring and enthusiastic providers, manager and practitioners who feel valued as their opinions matter in the day to day operation of the nursery. The nursery is well organised and all of the necessary regulatory paperwork is in place. Effective communication systems are in place, for example, staff meetings and appraisals which identify individuals strengths, weaknesses and future training needs. Motivated practitioners provide a wonderful learning environment for children, although further toys and resources are required as the number of children rises. The key worker system is effective as practitioners coordinate the care and learning of the children in their key group.

There are many good policies and procedures in place to keep children safe although, the fire blanket in the kitchen is not installed appropriately. Children are very happy, their individual needs are being met effectively and they are developing confidence and self-esteem. Parents are very complementary about the service they receive 'Our child absolutely loves it.'

Practitioners have opportunities to develop their knowledge and understanding of child care through training opportunities run by the Local Authority. Thorough recruitment procedures are in place and as a result, children's welfare, care and learning is fully promoted. The setting meets the needs of the range of 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

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):

- install the fire blanket in the kitchen as directed by the manufacturer
- continue to build on toys and resources to promote all areas of development as more children attend the nursery.

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