



## Half Pint Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY331747
<b>Inspection date</b>	02 November 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Patricia Mary Champion
<b>Setting Address</b>	Purleigh CP School, Pump Lane, Purleigh, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 6PJ
<b>Telephone number</b>	07749 426237
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Half Pint Nursery
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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?

Half Pint Nursery is owned and run by a partnership. It was established in 1991 and was registered under new owners in 2006. The nursery operates from a demountable classroom within the grounds of Purleigh County Primary School. This is situated within the centre of a rural community. All children share access to a secure, enclosed, outdoor play area. A maximum of 18 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens five days a week during school term times. Sessions times are from 09:05 until 13:00 and children may be collected at 11:45 if they do not stay for lunch. A Wednesday afternoon session runs from 13:30 until 15:00 when there is sufficient demand.

There are currently 25 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 14 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery serves the

local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs eight staff, of whom five of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority, the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA), the head and teaching staff of Purleigh County Primary School and the Dengie Cluster Group.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is good.

Children take part in physical activity and exercise each day, which contributes to their good health and develops their coordination and skills. They have great fun running energetically and ride bicycles and a variety of sit and ride toys with increasing skill. They adjust their pedalling techniques to ride up and down slopes and correct their speed to avoid obstacles. Effective use is made throughout the year of the school playgrounds and the smaller outdoor play area adjacent to the nursery classroom. Indoors children enjoy bouncing on the small trampoline. Children recognise the effect changing temperatures have on their bodies. They know that they need a drink when they are hot and learn when the weather is colder to dress themselves in warm coats to go outside to play. Children have good self-care skills as they attempt to button up their coats or pour drinks. Children can rest according to their needs. An area in the classroom has been designated for quiet play and a comfortable sofa is provided where children can relax.

Children stay healthy because there is a sound health and hygiene policy that covers the procedures in the event of a child being unwell. Information about the exclusion periods for infectious illnesses is available. Appropriate records are maintained regarding accidents or when medication is given and there is always a member of staff with a current first aid certificate on the premises.

Children learn about good hygiene through the daily routine. From discussion with staff they understand that washing their hands is the most effective method of stopping germs from getting into their bodies and causing infection. Children are escorted into the main school building when they need to use the toilet facilities and to wash their hands prior to eating lunch. Although this arrangement is not ideal, particularly for the youngest children attending, most children relish the opportunity of visiting the school. The nursery is investigating the possibility of installing an appropriate sink unit so that children have greater access to running water throughout the session.

Children are well nourished. Healthy and well-balanced snacks are provided mid-morning. Children enjoy a variety of different fruit each day and are encouraged to taste new foods. They discuss likes and dislikes and are aware of food that is good for you. A popular lunch club operates each day when children sit in social groups and are encouraged to manage food and drink containers in preparation for starting school. Information is gathered about allergies and special dietary requirements prior to children starting the nursery.

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

The provision is good.

Children play in a very safe and comfortable play and learning environment. Each day the staff make daily checks on the premises and make sure that any potential risks they identify are promptly dealt with. The staff are vigilant about the security of the children. All visitors have to sign in on arrival and the door to the classroom is kept locked throughout the session. Staff carry walkie-talkie devices when they accompany children to the toilets so that they can make contact with the classroom if additional help is needed. Considerable effort is put into decorating the classroom with posters, photographs and examples of the children's artwork to make it welcoming to children and their parents. This year the staff have improved the premises by renovating the kitchen area and have thoughtfully rearranged equipment and furniture to create a designated office area where they can talk to parents.

Children learn how to keep themselves safe. They learn about road safety as they carefully observe the road markings on the playground. They have practised fire drills with the staff and know what to do if they need to evacuate the premises in an emergency. Children further learn about the need for safety in the home as they take part in activities linked to topics and themes and are visited by fire safety officers.

Children access a very good range of play equipment and resources, which are stored at low-level increasing their opportunities to be independent and make choices. They learn to use tools such as scissors carefully and in safety. All equipment is checked frequently for damage and cleanliness.

Children are effectively safeguarded because staff are fully aware of their child protection responsibilities. They keep up to date with current procedures through training and by reading the recommended literature. Staff know the steps to take if they have concerns about a child's welfare.

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

The provision is good.

Children remain interested and involved in their play because they are provided with a wide range of stimulating activities and learning opportunities. Sessions are well-paced and staff provide a balance of adult-led, child-initiated or spontaneous activities. For example, children create pictures and collages linked to the theme of spiders. Then all the children and staff have fun hunting for insects and mini beasts as they play outdoors and show great fascination when observing spider webs glistening in the sunshine.

Children are made to feel welcome as the staff get to know them well. The key worker system helps to secure relationships and children develop a strong sense of trust and belonging. When children are upset they are offered cuddles and reassurance with one-to-one support as they are read a story. The nursery now takes children aged from two years into the setting. Younger children are developing good communication skills as they contribute to group discussions and competently take part as they are integrated within groups of older children. Staff effectively

use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan activities and support the youngest children's learning.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are progressing well because staff have a secure understanding of how children learn. Staff attend training linked to planning for the Foundation Stage and as a result children have access to a broad range of purposeful and practical learning experiences that cover all areas of the curriculum. Teaching methods are varied and activities are adapted to offer relevant support and challenge to help children achieve as much as they can. Children are motivated to learn, able to resist distractions and persevere with activities of their own choosing. At times during the morning session children can choose freely between indoor and outdoor play. The staff have just started including provision for outdoor play within their planning. However, at present this only details activities linked to the children's physical development and does not yet cover all the outdoor projects the children take part in relating to other areas of the curriculum.

Children's independence skills are developing well. They understand the morning routine and hang their coats on pegs. Children enjoy assisting staff with simple tasks such as clearing away their plate and cup after snack. Interaction is good and Children communicate confidently with the staff. They chat animatedly about what happens at Halloween, describe their pictures or talk through what they are doing as they take part in activities. Children write their names on their artwork and are learning to form letters correctly. They are provided with incidental writing opportunities within role play and during structured activities. Children record their views on charts, for example, making marks to show if they like or dislike plums or other fruits.

Children gain confidence as they use numbers during tasks such as counting the legs on a spider. They develop mathematical skills and an understanding of weight and volume they weigh play dough or use bottles and funnels in the sand pit. Children are learning about mathematical and positional language as they jump inside, in front or behind hoops and can match colours and recognise shapes in the environment.

Children are curious and acquire new knowledge and skills as they take part in the many activities linked to the topics and themes. They observe changes as they mix and spread icing onto biscuits and wait for it to set. Children use magnifiers to investigate insects. There are very good opportunities for children to learn about technology as they play with telephones and use the computer. Children use their imagination as they take part in music and movement or activity games. They walk through the jungle and expressively respond to music. Children sing enthusiastically and are building up a wide repertoire of songs. They use musical instruments with gusto.

Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals given their starting points and capabilities. Staff observe children as they take part in activities and chart their progress and achievements. They evaluate activities and gather information to plan for the children's next steps of development.

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

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals and are happy and secure in the setting. Most enter with confidence and feel a sense of belonging as they find their name cards on arrival. Staff gather plenty of information about each child before they join the nursery to enable them to meet any individual needs. The staff are knowledgeable about any additional needs that a child may have and work closely with parents and professionals to ensure that they thrive and participate fully in the activities. There is a fully qualified special educational needs coordinator and a clear policy regarding the care for children with special needs.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children enjoy activities linked to traditions such as Halloween and take part in community events such as the harvest festival. Festivals from around the world such as Rosh Hashanah are celebrated. Children look at books that show positive images so that they can explore similarities and differences between themselves and others. Children are well behaved and understand the boundaries and the need for simple rules. They stop immediately and listen when staff need to gain their attention. There is a clearly written behaviour management policy for staff to follow. Children show care and respect for each other and strong friendships are formed. They share, take turns and play harmoniously. Confidence and self-esteem is promoted through plenty of praise and encouragement and children are encouraged to bring in items such as holiday photographs to share with their friends.

Children learn about the local community when they go on outings around the village to visit the church, park and the library van. There are very strong links with Purleigh County Primary School. Children join the reception class for sessions in the term prior to starting school and each week the nursery uses the school hall for a music and movement session. As a result there is a very smooth transition for children when they start school.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. A wealth of information is available for parents to view on the notice board and in the parent's box in the entrance. Newsletters are sent out that give parents information about forthcoming topics the children will be working on and they donate items of interest linked to these themes. Regular opportunities are provided for parents to talk to their child's key worker. Developmental records are shared regarding progress, targets and achievements linked to the Foundation Stage. However, staff have not yet devised a method of contributing ideas about play and learning activities to encourage parents to continue their child's learning at home. All parents make very complementary comments about the staff team and the high standard of care and education they provide. The nursery is now aware of the need to update the complaints policy and devise a complaints log to meet the requirements of the revised National Standards.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a very enthusiastic and motivated staff team. Very effective staffing ratios are deployed and all staff are vetted through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB). Staff are very keen to attend training and regularly attend short courses so that they keep up to

date with current childcare issues and trends. Very good use of space and resources is made to enable staff to effectively support and challenge children as they play.

All the essential documentation required for the safe and efficient management of the provision is appropriately maintained. There are clear policies and procedures to promote the welfare, care and learning of the children. The staff have not yet seen the revisions to the National Standards of October 2005 and therefore, not all information held on the operational plan is fully up to date.

Leadership and management of the nursery is good. The owners of the nursery are strongly supported by the staff team. They are all very aware of their own roles and responsibilities and as a result there is a very strong team spirit. Regular staff meetings are held and the provision for nursery education is assessed through staff appraisal and evaluation of the activities. The owners are committed to improving the quality of care and education they provide and have a clear action plan regarding areas they wish to improve.

Overall children's needs are met.

#### **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 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):

- develop further the policies and procedures within the operational plan so that they reflect current practice and the revisions to the National Standards.

### **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 children's learning by consistently planning activities for the outdoor area, which contribute to all areas of learning
- enhance further the partnership with parents by sharing learning and play activities that can be continued at home.

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)