



Hartford Old School House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY333013
Inspection date	03 November 2006
Inspector	Margaret Baines
Setting Address	73 School Lane, Hartford, NORTHWICH, Cheshire, CW8 1PF
Telephone number	01606783050
E-mail	
Registered person	The Old School House Day Nursery
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hartford Old School House Day Nursery opened in April 2006. It operates from five main rooms known as the 'red room', 'blue room', 'green room', 'baby room' and 'sleep room', in a professionally converted single storey building in Hartford. Additionally there is a computer area, sensory room and a large outdoor play area. There are presently 37 children on roll with place offered for nursery education.

The nursery serves the surrounding area and is privately owned. It opens five days a week for 51 weeks per year excluding bank holidays. Sessions are from 08.00 until 18.00. The setting receives support from Cheshire Sure Start.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have a good understanding of the importance of hygiene. Staff teach children about the risks from germs, for example they encourage them to wash hands at appropriate times of the day. Children visit the bathrooms and wash their hands with staff support. Children are developing an awareness of how to care for their health needs. Children are learning to dress appropriately for various weather conditions. For example, the children are eager to put their hats and coats on the crisp autumn day before enjoying their time in the outdoor area.

Children are learning that when they feel tired, they may take a rest or have a sleep. Their health needs are met through the provider's good health and hygiene policies and procedures. For example, children are encouraged to take a rest after lunch on the cosy furniture provided for this purpose. Babies enjoy a sleep in suitable cots, with sleep times designed to meet their individual needs. Most staff hold a current first aid certificate, therefore feel confident to deal with a first aid situation.

Children are developing an awareness of healthy foods. They enjoy healthy snacks, which include fresh fruit, bread sticks, toast and vegetables. Older children can help themselves to a drink, whilst younger children are supported by staff to ensure they are not thirsty. The setting ensures children are provided with fresh local produce, which include fruit and vegetables each day in varied and interesting meals prepared by a qualified dedicated chef. For example, children enjoy their lunch of baked potatoes, grated cheese with baked beans. Children also love to taste foods from around the world within the food tasting topics, so widening their experiences of different foods. Their dietary needs are met because staff ensure information from parents is recorded in detail. However, there are a number of foods within the menu that contain a high content of sugar, which may encourage children to develop a sweet tooth.

Children thoroughly enjoy the frequent opportunities to be active indoors and out of doors, developing their physical skills. They participate in daily outdoor play, enjoy music and movement and learn to coordinate their bodies and move safely. Children are developing an understanding of how they feel after exercise and what happens to their bodies when they are active.

Very young children also have good opportunities to enjoy the outdoors as they take a walk in the outdoor area and enjoy the outdoor play equipment. They also enjoy a range of healthy foods and have their individual needs met through daily consultation with parents.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a very welcoming environment, which is planned to meet their needs by ensuring the play areas are maintained to a high standard. Children learn to keep themselves safe because the staff talk to them about safe procedures and reinforce safe practices, as they ask children to pick up toys, not to run and remind them to be careful. However, staff are not always vigilant in observing a potential risk, for example a child climbed onto a box and over

the settee. He could have hurt himself significantly, therefore, staff should assess and review to ensure children are safe when in the nursery. Also, the outdoor grassed area has a gap in the fence, from which children could exit into the tarmac area.

The setting has a comprehensive risk assessment in place which, apart from the two issues referred to, effectively minimises the risk to children and helps to keep them safe as they play freely. The nursery is very welcoming to parents and children, being enhanced by children's own work, which is attractively displayed, so encouraging children to feel proud of their achievements. Photographs of children at play also reflect very positively the ethos of the setting. Children delight in talking about their work and are eager to share this with others. For example, the preschool children are very excited about the houses they have painted and the computer screens they are designing.

Children enjoy areas for vigorous play and for relaxation. They move around freely without restriction as they access play materials and choose activities and resources from those stored within easy reach. Careful consideration is given by staff in setting safe limits for babies and young children because they form secure relationships, develop self-confidence and self-esteem. This in turn promotes good behaviour and self-control as children learn to share and take turns.

Children's welfare is protected because the management are clear in their role in child protection and understand their responsibility to contact the named person. Training in relation to child protection has been carried out as in-house training by the management team. The named person is aware of her role and the procedure she needs to follow, should a situation occur that requires a referral to the appropriate agency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff have provided a very calm, emotionally supportive and physically stimulating environment. This provides a positive foundation for the children's future learning and development. Children eagerly enter the nursery, they enter happily greeting staff and their friends. They go to play confidently enjoying the continuous play and planned activities in each area. Children arrive, have breakfast and enjoy the well laid-out, continuous provision in each area of the nursery.

Children are beginning to demonstrate good independent learning skills. They enjoy creative play such as painting, mark making, drawing and model making. Children are developing their social skills as they learn to share and take turns, encouraged by very supportive staff. They are learning how to make friends as they play. Children are developing their imaginative skills as they enjoy the various role play areas, where they make a cup of tea, play in the café and look after the dolls. Children actively respond in group time because sensitive questioning from staff helps them to contribute their ideas. Their curiosity and eagerness to play and learn are fostered through the well organised provision of choices of play and the enjoyable focused activities. For example, the children enjoyed making the face collages and were eager to complete them. Children also were delighted with the bonfire pictures, particularly the sparkly fireworks. The very young children have painted the background for the clock in hickory dickory dock display, a delightful piece of art work in the baby room.

Staff are developing a secure knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which assists them to observe, monitor and assess children's development. Children enjoy an imaginative and varied range of activities that helps them to make progress in all areas of development. Their individual learning needs are assessed regularly by their key workers. The young children benefit from the detailed planning to meet individual needs using the 'Birth to three matters' framework, which clearly identifies the next steps in their learning. This process ensures that all children transfer very easily from one area to the next within the setting.

Key staff are clear about what children can do and, therefore, plan for the next steps within the planned activities. All children have their care needs met well through the daily routines and the time given by staff to each child to support and encourage their well-being.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children's individual learning needs are ably provided for by good curriculum planning that specifies the coverage of the stepping stones. Consideration is given for ability levels and younger children joining the group throughout the year following their third birthday. Their desire to learn is stimulated by the good range of activities planned, for example, making models of houses and rockets.

Children enjoy their play in the outdoor area where they have a suitable but not extensive range of equipment to support their learning. The present equipment does not challenge the children sufficiently to promote progress in their physical development, in particular their large muscle development. The good displays of children's artwork enhances the preschool room. Children are very proud of their achievements and eager to show the inspector their artwork. Children particularly enjoy the construction area where they design and build houses using both natural bricks and plastic ones.

The variety of themes explored throughout the year gives children a developmentally appropriate programme to enhance their learning. The current theme explores homes and children are learning about different styles of homes. The present role play area supports the current theme as it is an estate agents. Children are beginning to learn about the different houses, their shapes and style, thus developing their imagination. Children eagerly select resources for their play ideas and freely move around the areas of the well planned, continuous provision to paint, model, play in the role play area or simply enjoy a book in the quiet area.

Children persist at their play for good periods of time and concentrate intently in the group times, that are well focused by staff to encourage their sharing and listening skills. Their progress is regularly assessed by staff identifying the key skills achieved. Information from parents at admission and from the previous group is used to establish children's starting points and plan for their next steps to learn. Children's specific achievement of stepping stones towards the early learning goals are recorded within their record of achievement books.

Children are making good progress in all areas of learning, supported by effective teaching that stimulates their curiosity and motivation to learn. They use number readily in their play and can count to five and some beyond as staff make good use of everyday opportunities and planned activities to extend children's mathematical skills. Their calculation skills are developing

as they decide how many children are sitting and how many skittles are in the row. They can readily identify a square, a circle, a triangle and a rectangle. Children have good opportunities to recognise numbers as they consider the day of the week and match numbers in activities. Children are developing good communication, language and literacy skills as they eagerly use their range of vocabulary to express their ideas in circle times and recall and anticipate in story time. For example, they eagerly predicted the end of 'The bear and the scary night'. Children use their thinking skills in their play, for example, they consider how to construct the computer screen. Children's early writing skills are developing as they make marks for a purpose in their play. Larger labels on the displays and those which identify the various areas of continuous provision would enhance the learning environment.

Children competently use tools as they make models from junk, sticking and gluing the boxes together, adding the various textures as they make rockets and houses. They have good opportunities to develop their imaginative and creative skills as they enjoy the role play area and the dressing up clothes. Children also enjoy music and are learning to sing songs from memory. They have frequent opportunities to play the musical instruments, developing their skills to recognise loud and soft sounds. Children are learning to work together; they wait for a turn to ride the bikes and help to tidy the toys away before snack time. Children are learning to show good care and concern for each other and are beginning to relate to each other's experiences and news. Their good self-esteem is encouraged by staff, who foster children's sense of belonging to this new setting and the exiting environment in which it is situated.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are enthusiastically welcomed into the setting. They are valued and respected because staff ensure each child has the opportunity to engage in all aspects of the curriculum, whether they attend daily or on a part-time basis. The inclusion of all children is actively planned and monitored and the differentiation aspect is covered in planning. Staff give much time and thought to ensuring children's individual needs can be met. For example, two children who have English as a second language are very well supported. Staff have ensured that good communication exists with parents, to assist the children by learning key words. Also, the children are encouraged to share their native language, which is Danish, with the other children, hence all benefit from this partnership. Also, children who have difficulty settling into the nursery are very well supported by the committed, dedicated staff team. Very good communication with parents ensures children are happy and content in this setting.

Children are learning to take responsibility for their behaviour because the staff follow positive and effective strategies for helping children learn to manage their behaviour. Children learn the boundaries and guidelines because staff are consistent and are very good role models, having high regard for each other and the children. Children learn right from wrong because staff are consistent in their approach and provide gentle reminders to reinforce boundaries. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents is good and contributes significantly to the children's well-being. Parents are provided with detailed information which informs them about the care provided, including Birth to three initiatives and the Foundation Stage. Parents' views are actively sought

and they are provided with regular newsletters to update them on aspects of the nursery. Those parents spoken to at the time of the inspection confirmed in discussion with the inspector they are very happy with the care provided for their children. Parents learn about their child's development through discussion and strong links with their key worker. They are actively involved in their child's learning by providing detailed information at the time of their child's registration. They also update the key worker on any significant changes and development and they contribute to the topic work. This ensures children's individual needs are met and a strong link is made with home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the effective organisation of the environment, which enables children to make choices from quality resources. Children's needs are met and safeguarded because all legally required documentation is in place and well maintained. All policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated. As a result, children's welfare is further protected.

The setting has provided a robust system for the vetting and clearance of all staff, in line with the change in legislation, to further meet the needs of children. The setting has a procedure for informing parents of any complaints made as required by the new guidance, and therefore parents would be informed of any complaints made against the setting.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good, with staff being led by a committed management team. The successful leadership ensures that staff work well together as a team and support each other in their roles. The leadership and management includes a very positive emphasis on training, which is promoted for all staff to increase their knowledge and skills, to improve their practice and, therefore, the care of the children.

The setting promotes the education and outcomes for children well, with a team of committed staff who continuously monitor their own performance by evaluating activities provided and monitoring children's progress. The staff monitor their own performance through the staff supervision system, through regular staff meetings and the evaluation of activities in order to improve the care and education provided for children.

Overall, the setting 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 in April 2006 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 complaint 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 the outdoor area is secure when children access the outdoor play area.
- review the risk assessment to ensure that children are safe from harm by removing obstacles that allow them to climb on furniture and put themselves at risk
- review the menu to ensure that sweet foods are limited to further promote children's good health.

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):

- further enhance the print rich environment by ensuring print on wall displays is large enough for young children to see
- ensure outdoor equipment provides sufficient challenge for older and more able children.

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