



The Meadows Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	511254
Inspection date	06 March 2007
Inspector	Fran Fielder / Chris Mackinnon
Setting Address	9 Brand Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN22 9PX
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Registered person	Ronald Cossey and Valerie Cossey
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 good. 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?

The Meadows Nursery School is one of a group of privately owned nurseries. It first opened in 1993 and operates from the ground floor of a detached house in a residential area of Eastbourne, East Sussex. A maximum of 36 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.30 to 17.30 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 75 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 50 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery makes provision for children with learning difficulties and disabilities. It also makes provision for children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs seven staff. Six members of staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Four staff members are on training programmes, three of whom are working towards a higher qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean, homely and relaxed environment that supports their physical and emotional well-being. Staff meticulously follow well thought out routines that prevent the spread of infection. Children learn how to wash their hands properly through good explanation and pictorial instructions. Staff help young children to wash their hands after nappy changes. This means they learn the importance of good personal hygiene from an early age. Children learn through topic work that cleaning teeth, brushing hair and washing hands are all factors that keep them healthy.

All staff hold a current first aid certificate as this training is part of the induction programme for new staff. This means any adult can assess the seriousness of accidents and symptoms and take appropriate action. Staff gather all relevant information regarding medical and dietary needs.

Children develop healthy eating habits. They enjoy snack time and receive nutritious foods such as brown bread, carrot and raisins. They learn where their food comes from through planting seeds in the garden and caring for the vegetables as they grow. Children can access drinks at all times and receive milk or water with their snack. Parents supply packed lunches including an ice pack to keep food fresh. Staff check lunch boxes each morning and label items that need storing in the refrigerator. This ensures all food is still fresh at lunchtime.

Children enjoy regular exercise that keeps them healthy. They play in the garden on large equipment that allows them to practise climbing and balancing. They manoeuvre wheeled toys well showing a good sense of space. Physical exercise also takes place indoors every day. Children play parachute games and dance to music. Staff make good use of books to support physical development by reading and encouraging children to follow the actions described in stories such as 'Walking through the jungle'.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a secure environment that is warm and welcoming. Beautiful displays of children's artwork and models, photographs and posters make the rooms stimulating and very appealing. Little handprints on the walls make the rooms especially appealing for adults. All rooms have a quiet reading area and space for tabletop activities. The larger playroom is ideal for indoor physical play with space for dancing, playing with hoops and bean bags and crawling through tunnels. A wide range of good quality toys and resources are easily accessible. Regular checks ensure there is nothing broken that could harm a child.

The security of the premises is good. The front door is locked and the inner door has an alarm that alerts staff if it is opened. This ensures nobody can leave or enter without staff's knowledge keeping children safe at all times. The annual risk assessments are good and cover all areas of the nursery. A daily check of all areas, including the garden, means staff can identify any potential hazard before children arrive. There is always a member of staff who supervises the arrival and departure of children ensuring their safety. Children learn and follow good safety procedures such as tucking chairs under the table to stop each other tripping.

Staff have a very good understanding of the signs and symptoms of abuse and can differentiate between abuse and possible medical conditions. They are acutely aware of their responsibility to protect children from harm and have a detailed knowledge of the procedures to follow if they have concerns. This promotes and safeguards children's welfare extremely well.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and confident. Staff are skilful at settling children quickly so they feel secure and comfortable. Staff greet children by name and this makes children feel valued. Warm relationships are evident as staff respond well to individual emotions. Some young children are already beginning to form friendships and enjoy playing together. Staff encourage this by inviting children to play with their friends and emphasising that everybody at nursery is a friend. Children enjoy a range of activities that support early development. They play matching games where they learn to share and take turns. They enjoy looking at books, completing jigsaws and playing with sand. Young children love to build towers and confidently predict that if they add another brick it will fall down. Shrieks of laughter abound as another brick is added and indeed the tower crumbles. Then the fun begins again.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage and plan activities that cover all areas of learning. Observations and assessments inform the planning for the following term. However, this does not take into account the speed at which some children progress. This means that, although the activities are enjoyable, they do not always offer sufficient challenge. Older children have workbooks to prepare them for school. Staff use these to assess individual progress but this is not a wholly reliable method.

Children are confident, independent and enjoy good relationships with staff and peers. They enjoy socialising and chat freely to staff and each other about their home life. They understand the routines within the nursery and love to take responsibility for jobs such as helping at snack time or being the book monitor. They readily help to clear away toys and understand how to behave in different situations.

Children communicate well and speak confidently using good vocabulary that is extended through playing games with flash cards. Good questioning techniques by some staff help children organise their thoughts and express their ideas. The print rich environment helps children understand that words and symbols carry meaning. Most children listen well during

group activities and all enjoy stories. They spend time looking at books and handle these carefully. Children link sounds with letters and practise writing as a preparation for 'big' school.

Children count confidently but staff sometimes miss opportunities to extend children's learning. Children spend time matching, sorting and threading to create their own patterns. They play with shapes and recognise common flat shapes such as squares, circles and triangles. Some staff interact well with the children to promote an understanding of 3D shapes. Children count in French using their fingers to represent numbers.

Children explore and investigate using their senses. They enjoy floating and sinking activities, looking at minibeasts and playing with sand. They watch with interest as the sand drizzles through plastic toys and makes wheels turn. Lovely models of musical instruments hang from the ceiling showing children have the opportunity to design and create using a variety of materials. At Harvest time, children collect food and take it to a local community centre for distribution. Children regularly use a range of tools such as magnifiers, stethoscopes and magnets allowing free exploration of their world.

Children enjoy expressing themselves in many ways. They dance, paint, draw and create collages. Singing and listening to music is a regular feature throughout the day and children clearly enjoy rhymes. Children are encouraged to use their imagination in the role-play area and use the resources to act out well-known scenarios such as visits to the doctor or shops.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff are good role models by showing respect for children and ensuring all are treated with equal concern. Many displays, books and resources reflect positive images of all people in society. Photographs show pictures of children from other countries in every day clothes. This means children easily see similarities as well as differences and so develop a positive attitude to diversity. Staff provide well for children who speak English as an additional language making good use of pictures as a way of communication. Staff also learn some words in children's home language. Staff adapt the environment and activities so all children can take part.

Children behave well and staff use positive strategies to manage behaviour. Children feel good about themselves as staff use praise and ensure activities are achievable. If poor behaviour persists then staff design interesting ways to support children in learning how to behave in a variety of situations. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive information regarding the provision but the prospectus does not give accurate details. Parents sign the registration form confirming that they agree to the contents of the policies and procedures. This includes agreement for the nursery to seek emergency treatment if needed. However, without separate written consent there is no guarantee that parents are fully aware of the permission they are giving. If parents need to look at any of the policies or procedures they can ask for these. A daily exchange of information and the use of communication books ensures continuity of care for the children. Staff encourage parents to make an appointment to see their child's key worker

to discuss progress. Displays of topics encourages parents to become involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Clear aims show a commitment to improvement. Staff show a sound understanding of their role and ensure all children have access to all activities. Staff communicate well and regular planning meetings ensure all areas of learning are catered for. Development plans are in place to improve the provision for areas such as physical development. However, the system to monitor and evaluate the teaching and the activities is not sufficiently effective in identifying areas for improvement.

Staff deployment is effective and ensures good supervision at all times. Recruitment and induction procedures ensure staff are suitable and knowledgeable regarding procedures within the setting. There are regular appraisals and staff have good opportunities for professional development. Although there are good contingency plans in place to cover for staff absences and so ensure good standards of care, this has an impact on the provision for nursery education.

All mandatory records are well maintained and confidential. Some policies and procedures lack detail and clarity. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, the radiators have been covered so that when they are hot children cannot burn themselves. Hot drinks are not carried around the nursery so there is no danger of these spilling and burning a child.

A poster displaying information regarding infectious diseases is easy for staff and parents to see. This means all adults are aware of the incubation period and the need to keep children away from nursery until they are well.

All children enjoy a range of healthy snacks. They also enjoy growing and eating the produce. This makes healthy snacks more appealing and ensures children develop good eating habits.

Posters inform parents of the current topics. Parents also receive information about activities they can enjoy at home. This encourages parents to become involved in their children's learning and supports their development.

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.

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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):

- obtain written consent from parents to seek medical treatment in the event of an emergency
- review the policies and procedures to ensure all information is accurate and up to date and make these more easily available to parents

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):

- use regular observations to make secure assessment of children's stage of learning and use this to inform the planning to ensure children are appropriately challenged
- introduce a rigorous system to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of the teaching and the activities

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