

Horsmonden Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127261
Inspection date	27 February 2007
Inspector	Jackie Liffen
Setting Address	Francis Austen Memorial Hall, Back Lane, Horsmondon, Tonbridge, Kent, TN12 8NJ
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Registered person	Horsmonden Kindergarten
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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Horsmonden Kindergarten opened in 1980 and operates from two rooms in purpose built premises. It is situated near the centre of Horsmonden. A maximum of 30 children may attend the kindergarten at any one time. The group opens five days a week during school term time plus it offers an Easter and summer playscheme. Sessions are from 09:00 to 13:00, three days a week and 09:00 to 15:30 two days a week. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 30 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 20 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area and surrounding villages.

The kindergarten employs five members of staff to work with children. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications and two are working towards a qualification.

The setting currently receives support from an advisory teacher from Kent Early Years.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning to understand simple good health and hygiene practices as they wash their hands after visiting the toilets. They use low level basins and help themselves easily to disposable towels. Staff prevent the spread of germs by using anti-bacterial cleanser to wipe surfaces; they use separate cloths for different purposes. Children rest and sleep according to their needs on a comfortable sofa which has a clean cover put on it to protect them from infection. Children take part in regular physical activity both indoors and outdoors. For example, a child wheels herself around on a small constructed toy indoors. Children play in the fresh air outside throughout the year. Staff contribute to children's good health because they always have regard to cleanliness and have an effective nappy changing system. Children are well nourished by staff who give them a choice of fruit or breadsticks for a snack. They pour out their own milk or water when they sit down together but are not always free to help themselves to a drink at other times. Children bring their own packed lunches to eat in a separately prepared room; these are stored in a suitable temperature in the fridge.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, secure, child-friendly, comfortable, and clean environment which is suitable for the purpose. Staff regularly promote children's safety by using a risk assessment to check that dangers are minimised. For example, they check that there are no sharp objects on the floor, that cleaning products are out of reach and that there are no hot drinks in the classroom. However, sometimes the toilets are not maintained well enough to allow children to flush them themselves. Children are safe because they do not exit the building unaided, and a staff member is responsible for monitoring who is entering and leaving. Children always use child sized furniture and equipment including low level toilets and washbasins. They choose from a very wide variety of activities, all of which are easily accessed, because the classroom is well organised and segregated into different areas. Children play happily in the enclosed outdoor play space which is risk assessed on a daily basis. Children are learning to avoid accidental injury because staff use a number of strategies to promote their welfare and help them calmly and safely investigate and explore the setting. Children's well-being is safeguarded by staff who have a high degree of knowledge and understanding about child protection procedures. Children benefit because staff up date on their training regularly and effectively follow the well written policies.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children very quickly settle and become happy in the setting because they are familiar with their surroundings and understand expectations. They confidently enter the building with their parents who help them take off their coats. Older children then find their names written on a label to put on the window ledge ready for later. Children comfortably sit on the prepared area for circle time and listen attentively when the register is taken. They then make choices and search out easily accessed activities from the large range stored in the classroom, which is segregated into different areas of learning. Children are involved in a very broad range of planned activities and spontaneous events, which support their development and learning. For example, children are learning social skills when they play co-operatively and imaginatively

either on the floor with cars or in the sand tray. Staff often promote children's sense of responsibility; for example, when they ask children to help to clear up. They have a sensitive approach and sometimes leave children for long periods when they are involved in pursuing a subject that interests them. Children's security and development is improved because staff develop clear plans which demonstrate a sense of purpose and a commitment to continual improvement.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are monitored carefully by staff so that they move quickly and purposefully through the stepping stones. Staff keep careful records on children and these are used to inform future planning, which is detailed and effectively put into practice. Practitioners have a very good knowledge of children's stages of development and are constantly alert to cater for children's needs immediately. Children are progressing rapidly because staff's knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals is excellent. They produce comprehensive plans based on learning outcomes which are clearly displayed to parents. Children are taught well as staff provide interesting and stimulating tasks for them.

Children are interested, excited and motivated to learn as they confidently try out new activities, suggest ideas and interact with their peers and staff. For example, children become absorbed playing with toys such as dolls and cars, talking and bouncing ideas off each other. They also show enquiring minds when they seek information regarding computers and their place in the world. Children have a good awareness of their own needs and are forming very positive relationships with their peers and adults. Staff promote children's reading abilities by ensuring that clear labelling indicates different themes and familiar objects. Children express their thoughts and needs clearly and are competent communicators. For example, at circle time, children listen attentively and then give intelligent answers to questions. Children competently complete projects to assist with their knowledge and understanding of the world, for example, when planting beans. They are becoming skilled at using technological toys and demonstrate a good awareness of the uses of common kitchen equipment such as a microwave. Staff expose children to a variety of mathematical concepts which they assimilate naturally; they extend their learning individually and in groups. For example, children are given frequent opportunities to weigh and measure; they are often encouraged to count and are beginning to use basic subtraction and addition. Children spontaneously fetch musical instruments to create their own music and have limitless opportunity to paint, draw, colour or create from their own imaginations. Children promote their physical skills on a daily basis by manipulating construction toys indoors. They exercise and extend their abilities outside by running, jumping, skipping and playing on wheeled toys or on apparatus in the adjacent playground.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

All children are valued, respected and included by staff within the kindergarten. Children have many opportunities to play with a wide variety of appropriate toys and boys often play together undertaking domestic chores such as washing dolls in the baby bath on the floor of the home corner. Children assimilate an awareness of the diverse nature of society by looking at books, dressing up and becoming aware of the different posters on the wall, depicting children of different nationalities and skin tones. They benefit from activities and resources, such as puzzles and play people with disabilities, which help them value diversity. Overall spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are improving their knowledge and understanding of equal opportunities in a variety of ways. For example, the group celebrate different religious festivals and introduce a variety of foods from other countries. Children with specific needs

are well catered for by staff, for example, a ramp with a banister is provided outside to help the disabled enter the building. They have their needs met effectively because staff liaise closely with parents and find out the best way of improving on knowledge, in order to give the best care possible. Children are learning to respond to appropriate expectations for their behaviour because staff are teaching them how to respect others and to consider the consequences of their words and actions. For example, when a child throws some sand which goes into another's eyes, the leader immediately bends down to speak to that child; she then gives lots of positive attention to the victim. However, generally children are constantly stimulated and their self esteem promoted by staff so well, that misbehaviour is rare. Staff are knowledgeable, quietly spoken and are very good role models; children copy their example. Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Children benefit enormously from the very positive relationships that the group build up with parents. Their co-ordination of care is enhanced because parents are kept well informed about policies and procedures and have daily opportunities to speak with their child's key worker. Parents confirm that the group puts its policies into practice by building up trusting and supportive relationships between children, families, staff and volunteers.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. The group is run by a parent committee which contributes extremely well to children's progress towards the early learning goals by using a rigorous assessment to review, monitor and evaluate the success of activities. The management ensures that all staff have suitability checks so that children's security and welfare remain paramount. Staff have an excellent knowledge and understanding of child development and children are thriving in the setting. Their security and development continually improves because adults have a clear sense of purpose and staff undertake regular training. For example, staff have recently undertaken courses on safeguarding children, the foundation stage, information technology, and observation and planning.

Children's well being is enhanced because adults give high regard to the organisation of the setting so that both space and resources are used extremely well, enabling children to explore and investigate in safe, comfortable surroundings without fear of restriction. Effective policies and procedures are being put into practice to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment and achievement and staff regularly undertake formal systems to review, monitor and evaluate the success of the provision. Staff keep records up to date so that children's security is maintained and store these confidentially in a locked cabinet.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the group was asked to ensure that electrical leads do not pose a safety hazard to children and to ensure the lost child policy is appropriate to the provision. The electrical leads are now out of reach of the children and the lost child policy has been reviewed.

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):

- enable children to help themselves to a drink whenever they are thirsty
- enable children to pull the toilet chain themselves without difficulty.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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