



Kinder Castle

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY255819 |
| Inspection date | 29 January 2007 |
| Inspector | Jill Lee |
| Setting Address | 75 New North Road, Huddersfield, HD1 5ND |
| Telephone number | 01484 546666 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Mrs Rachel Louise Wright and Mr Nigel John Wright |
| 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 satisfactory. 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?

Kinder Castle day nursery was registered in 2003. It operates in a listed detached house within walking distance of the centre of Huddersfield.

Children are cared for in five rooms over three floors of the building. They are grouped according to age. Children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area, part of which has a safety surface.

A maximum of 50 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens each weekday from 07.30 until 18.00 throughout the year. Full day or sessional care is offered. There are currently 64 children on roll, of whom 19 receive funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children for whom English is an additional language.

There are 13 staff employed to work directly with the children. All of these staff hold an appropriate early years qualification. The nursery also employs a qualified cook. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children enjoy playing outdoors each day. They use the outdoor space well as they run round and round in circles, enjoying the freedom of movement, and play chasing games. They put together the balancing beam and ask staff to help them to practise their balancing skills. They pedal the bikes back and forth and happily share the cars. They are able to make large structures with crates and tyres. Staff plan physical activity sessions indoors when the weather is poor and children spontaneously organise dancing sessions. Babies and toddlers love clambering on the soft play resources in their play room and scrambling into the ball pool. Toddlers have sturdy toys to push along to support their developing mobility. A good variety of outdoor play experiences is planned to develop their physical skills, although children do not routinely have access to large climbing equipment. Babies and toddlers have fewer opportunities to enjoy outdoor experiences.

The nursery environment is bright and welcoming. Parents are clearly informed that sick children cannot be cared for, and information about infectious diseases is shared so that children are protected from infection. Children have their own bedding at sleep time. Arrangements for first aid and administering medication mostly meet requirements, although recording procedures do not always show sufficient detail. Children understand why they need to wash their hands before they have their snack or enjoy a baking activity. They learn to brush their teeth after lunch. Staff understand the importance of good health and hygiene practices and raise children's awareness within everyday routines. Children are developing good levels of independence in their own personal care, as they put on their own coats and learn to manage the toilet independently. Staff liaise closely with parents to ensure rest and sleep routines reflect each child's individual needs.

Parents are fully consulted about their child's health and dietary needs. Children are well nourished and enjoy a varied menu of freshly cooked, healthy food. Menus are clearly displayed for parents. Children are encouraged to try a variety of different foods, including lots of fruit and vegetables. They express their likes and dislikes as they serve their own lunch. They make choices about what they want to eat and are encouraged to try 'just a little' of everything. Mealtimes are relaxed and sociable as staff and children sit together, sharing conversation. Children become independent in feeding themselves. Older children can access drinks independently from the water jug.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff encourage children to develop appropriate levels of independence within a safe environment. Children begin to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe, as staff discuss

limits and boundaries with them within everyday activities. Staff routinely explain and reinforce safe practice, for instance, holding onto the handrail as they go down the stairs to play outside. Children are reminded that it is not safe to climb on tables or throw toys. Planned activities, including outings, begin to promote children's awareness of wider safety issues, such as road safety.

Children use the play environment purposefully, as staff enable them to access all areas of the environment with safety. A reasonable range of resources is presented at child height in all rooms, so that children can select them freely. Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised as staff conduct appropriate risk assessments. This increases children's safe participation in everyday activities. The nursery has a clearly defined security policy and consistent use of the visitors' register increases children's safety. Parents are able to observe their own child's room via a web-camera. There is clear planning for safe evacuation in an emergency. High staff to child ratios and good use of risk assessments help to ensure children are kept safe on outings.

Staff help children to feel confident to make their needs known and they establish supportive relationships with parents. Some of the staff have recently attended child protection training to update awareness of their responsibilities within child protection procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Access to training is being planned for all staff so that children's welfare is fully safeguarded. Appropriate procedures for recording any concerns are in place. Existing injury records are kept, although sufficient detail is not always recorded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle well and are happy in the nursery. The play environment is child focused and planned to promote experiences in all areas of their development. Children in all rooms are able to access resources independently, enabling them to develop confidence as they plan their own play. Children can freely select exploratory and sensory play experiences in the everyday environment. They swirl their fingers in the 'gloop', making patterns. They enjoy blowing bubbles and watching them pop. They explore treasure baskets and heuristic play resources. They are supported by staff who know them well and interact warmly with them. Staff show interest in what children are doing and sensitively support their play. Children use their imagination well in role play and small world activities, as they take a picnic to the beach, dress up as lions and make a waterfall in the sand. They change the home corner into a hospital, when they put a 'pot' on a 'broken leg'.

Babies and toddlers play contentedly and enjoy being with others. They enjoy lots of cuddles, which helps them feel secure. Toddlers increase in confidence as they explore activities in the wider nursery environment. Staff know the children well as they talk frequently with parents, enabling them to be responsive to individual needs. They use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan varied daily play experiences but do not clearly link their observations of children's play to planning, so that it reflects, enhances and extends children's individual interests.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a reasonable knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum, so that children make sound progress towards the early learning goals. The continuous provision in the daily environment is planned to offer children experiences in all areas of learning each day. Children are motivated to learn and confidently explore new experiences. They concentrate well on activities they enjoy and use initiative to develop their own play ideas. However, planning is not sufficiently clearly linked to the stepping stones and does not include sufficient detail about the focus of teaching and what children are intended to learn. This means that there is not always sufficient stimulus or challenge within the planned environment. Planning does not consistently include the outdoor environment.

Children use language well to share their own ideas and experiences and staff introduce new language into activities. Children love reading books and listen with pleasure to stories. They decide they will read 'all the books' in the book box and concentrate for a long time, sharing stories. They learn to recognise and write their own name but staff do not sufficiently introduce opportunities to write for real purposes, for example in role play, or to promote their interest in letter sounds. Children count and become familiar with number concepts within their everyday routines. They count the peg holes to help them work out what the number is and how many pegs they need. They make patterns, talking about similarities and differences. They make record charts to measure different ways of travel to nursery and what floats and sinks. They use language of size and shape with comprehension as they build in the construction area. Staff interactions help to extend their understanding but they do not always maximise opportunities for problem solving in everyday play.

Children are interested in the natural world, growth and change. They talk about sea creatures and explore floating and sinking in the water. They stir a dough mix to make gingerbread men and consider the changing texture as they add ingredients. Staff introduce some activities to explore natural resources, science and nature, but do not plan for or adequately resource opportunities to stimulate children's free exploration within the daily environment. Children enjoy designing and making models with dough. Their imagination and creativity is nurtured as they mix paints, make 'glittery' pictures and add different coloured objects to the foam. They make 'big and dirty' mountains in the sand for their play story.

Staff interact positively with children, using open questions to encourage their learning. They model skills and reinforce expected behaviour, so that children learn to work cooperatively. Staff are developing systems to observe individual progress but do not effectively link observations of children's progress to planning of the next steps in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enjoy warm and trusting relationships with staff. Each child's individuality is nurtured, helping to promote their confidence and self-esteem. They develop a real sense of belonging to the nursery. They make lots of choices and decisions as they plan their own play. For example, they can choose whether to play outside or indoors. Consideration is given to planning of the transitions between rooms, so that children get to know staff well. This enhances children's feelings of security in the nursery. They are familiar with and often contribute actively to daily

routines. They sometimes help to prepare fruit for snack time and are encouraged to sweep up spilt sand.

Children's good behaviour is sensitively encouraged and rewarded. Staff are developing helpful strategies to promote positive behaviour, for example, the use of star charts. When children are especially helpful or kind, they help to fill the 'goodness jar' which, when full, allows them to choose a new toy for the nursery. They learn to be kind and polite to each other as staff gently reinforce rules and boundaries. Staff clearly explain why certain behaviour is unacceptable and remind children why certain rules are in place, such as not pushing and that it is not acceptable to draw on the wall, so that they begin to take some responsibility for their own behaviour. Children learn to be helpful and look after their environment, as they help to tidy away the toys. They understand why it is important to share toys and to take turns.

Children engage in some activities which help to promote their awareness of the wider world. They use resources which promote positive images of other cultures and disabilities. Signs in the nursery reflect other languages. A parent came into nursery to help children make Mehndi patterns for Eid. Staff recognise the importance of planned opportunities to raise children's awareness of their local environment. Children regularly visit the library, go to local shops and enjoy outings to the park. Staff create a participative environment in which children learn to express their own needs and preferences and actively contribute to their own experiences. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Parents enjoy warm and friendly relationships with staff, so that children feel secure and content. Policies and procedures are displayed and staff share information about the 'Birth to three matters' framework with parents when children start at the nursery. Staff communicate daily and ensure parents are well informed about their child's activities and experiences, using a daily care sheet. Parents know how to raise any concerns and a comments box is always available in the hallway to encourage parents to share their views. Questionnaires are routinely used to consult parents about their views. The Ofsted poster is clearly displayed. The complaints policy has been updated to reflect current guidance and a system for recording of complaints is in place. Regular newsletters keep parents informed about nursery issues and current topics.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents receive some information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and staff are working with the advisory teacher to enhance both staff and parents' awareness of learning opportunities in different activity areas. There is currently only limited information about children's progress in the development files, but staff are considering ways to enable parents to contribute more actively to their child's record of achievement. They involve parents in topics, for example, by asking for contributions towards resourcing the role play areas, such as the hairdressers or doctors. Staff routinely share information about children's progress and formal parents' evenings are regularly planned.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery environment is organised to promote children's welfare and safety. Daily routines are planned to support children's varying needs and interests. Space and resources are mostly organised effectively, although there is need to review how children are grouped at the beginning

and end of the day and which rooms are used for different ages. Staff are deployed effectively to ensure appropriate levels of care and supervision. However, arrangements for staff deployment do not sufficiently ensure that priority is always given to promoting maximum consistency and continuity in children's care when planning staff rotas and breaks.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff work together well and self-evaluation processes help them to identify areas which need improvement. They meet together regularly to share issues and develop practice. Training needs are appropriately identified, for example, the need to access Foundation Stage training and enhance staff interactions with children. Observations of children help staff to identify children's interests but do not sufficiently support planning for their progress. There are no clear systems in place to monitor the quality of teaching and its impact on children's learning.

Comprehensive policies and procedures are effectively implemented so that children's welfare is safeguarded. Recruitment and vetting procedures are robust, ensuring that staff are suitable to work with children. Procedures are in place to ensure that no person who is not vetted may have sole charge of children. Well planned induction procedures, together with ongoing staff monitoring and appraisal, ensure staff are able to support children's individual needs. All required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place. The registration certificate is clearly displayed. Parents' wishes regarding their child's care influence day-to-day practice and clear written agreements are recorded.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the nursery was asked to improve hygiene procedures and ensure children have access to drinking water, improve staff vigilance with regard to daily safety of children and improve documentation regarding medication, child protection and visitors' records. They were also asked to enhance staff deployment and improve the range of resources available for children, to promote positive images of diversity.

The nursery has established clear hygiene procedures, which are implemented effectively by all staff. Children now have independent access to drinking water at all times. These measures contribute to ensuring that children's good health is promoted. The nursery has clearly established health and safety procedures in place and appropriate risk assessments are conducted so that the daily environment for children is kept safe. Documentation relating to medication and child protection is mostly maintained appropriately by staff, so that children's welfare is protected. The visitors' register is used effectively to ensure all persons accessing the nursery are appropriately monitored, ensuring children's safety.

Staff are deployed effectively to ensure children are kept safe, but the consistency of staff deployment throughout the day still does not always ensure continuity for children. The nursery has a good range of resources which promote positive images of other cultures and disabilities and staff plan appropriate activities to raise children's awareness of diversity. This is helping children to become more aware of the needs of others and the wider world.

With regard to provision of nursery education, the nursery was asked to improve staff knowledge of the early learning goals to enable them to effectively plan for, and assess, individual children's learning and progress. They were asked to extend the opportunities for children to solve simple problems of weight and measurement through everyday practical activities, sort objects into categories, count and recognise numbers in a variety of situations. The nursery was also asked to extend the challenges and opportunities for children to explore a variety of ways of movement.

Staff were developing a good understanding of the early learning goals and effective planning but recent staff changes have created the need for a review of staff training needs. This impacts on staff interactions with children to promote opportunities for them to solve problems in everyday practical activities, although staff do introduce mathematical activities into children's everyday experiences. Children now have daily opportunities for outdoor physical activity and indoor sessions are planned if poor weather prevents use of the outdoor area. However, the outdoor environment and physical activity is not clearly included in the planning process. Staff have clearly identified development issues within the nursery and are working closely with the advisory teacher to improve practice. This is helping children to make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted received a complaint in June 2006 relating to Standard 13: Child protection. The complaint related to the way in which young children were put to sleep. An Ofsted childcare inspector made an unannounced visit in August 2006 to investigate the complaint. As a result, two actions were raised in relation to Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers. In addition, an action was raised in relation to Standard 14: Documentation, as the provider had failed to notify Ofsted of a change of the person-in-charge of the nursery. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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

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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):

- progress plans to enhance and update staff awareness of child protection issues and procedures
- use observations of younger children's play so that planning reflects, enhances and extends their interests and increase their opportunity to enjoy outdoor experiences
- enhance consistency and continuity in children's care when planning staff rotas and breaks.

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):

- link planning more clearly to the stepping stones to ensure the daily environment, including outdoors, is offering sufficient stimulus and challenge for all children, in all areas of their learning
- improve systems to observe and record children's progress, to inform planning for next steps in their learning
- develop clear systems to monitor the quality of teaching and the impact on children's learning.

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