



HEYDAYS PRESCHOOL

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110332
Inspection date	28 February 2007
Inspector	Lisa Jane Cupples
Setting Address	FOUR MARKS PRIMARY SCHOOL, FIVE LANES END, FOUR MARKS, ALTON, HAMPSHIRE, GU34 5AS
Telephone number	01962 772595
E-mail	ali_chesney@hotmail.com
Registered person	Heydeys Pre-School
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Heydays Pre-school is managed by a committee and first opened in 1972. It operates from accommodation on the site of Four Marks Primary School in Alton, a residential area of Hampshire.

A maximum of 26 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The setting is open each weekday during school term time only from 09:00 to 12:00 and the sessions are extended to 15:00 on Mondays and Wednesdays. Children have access to an outdoor area for their sole use and also use the school field and playground.

There are currently 31 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 23 children receive funding for early education. It is the pre-schools policy to accept children from two

years and six months due to the facilities available. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school employs seven members of staff. Of these, three staff hold a level 3 early years qualifications and four members of staff hold a level 2 qualification and are currently working towards a level 3 qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children learn the importance of personal hygiene and are developing good self care skills through daily discussion and routines. They help themselves to tissues and throw them in the bin when they have finished, helping to prevent the possible spread of infection. Children wash their hands with little or no encouragement after using the toilets and following messy activities. They wash their hands before snack and lunch, talking about the need to wash away the germs, so they don't get poorly tummies.

The staff have a very clear understanding of the procedures to record all accidents that occur on the premises. Parents give written consent for staff to seek emergency medical treatment and to administer medication. They are required to sign the records to acknowledge the administration of medication, ensuring they are fully informed at all times. Children will receive appropriate treatment if an accident occurs because all members of staff hold a current first aid certificate. A fully stocked first aid kit is stored in the main play room and the supervisor checks the contents to ensure it is up-to-date and well-maintained, helping to keep the children healthy.

Children benefit from a nutritious diet because the staff team have a clear understanding of healthy eating. They provide an extensive range of fruit for snacks and discuss the needs of each child with the parents in detail and record the information on their registration forms. The setting has a flexible approach to providing snacks and staff offer guidance to the parents about a wide range of healthy choices to include in their children's packed lunches in line with the pre-schools healthy eating policy. Staff find out about each child's allergies, medical, cultural needs and parental preferences through discussion, ensuring that their practice reflects the needs of the children and their families.

Children have access to a fully secure outdoor play area which they use every day to reap the benefits of the fresh air. They also have the opportunity to use the school playing field and the playground. Children have ample opportunities to develop their large muscle skills during a wide range of physical activities. They ride wheeled toys with precision and show good spatial awareness as they avoid collisions with each other. Children are developing their hand to eye co-ordination effectively as they play ball games, throwing and catching with ease. Children confidently climb on the pre-school climbing frame, testing their own skills under carefully supervised conditions. They also enjoy nature walks through the grounds of the school and participate in many outdoor activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are warm and welcoming and children's independence is encouraged from the moment they arrive as they hang up their own coats and bags. The parents' notice board in the entrance foyer is packed full of information to help keep the parents well informed about the setting. Children's work is brightly displayed around the walls and they are keen to show their parents and other visitors what they have made and achieved. Children have access to a wide range of suitable equipment to help them make good progress towards the early learning goals. The extensive range of equipment and resources are clean and well-maintained. They are brightly coloured and are set up in different ways to attract the children's attention.

Children's safety is promoted effectively because staff are vigilant and ensure the premises are secure at all times. For example, once the children have arrived the front door of the building is locked, preventing children from slipping away unnoticed and the gate from the car park is padlocked, ensuring no unannounced visitors can gain access to the site. Keys are kept on a hook near the door out of the reach of children, making them easily accessible in an emergency. All visitors are required to sign in and out of the visitor's book, ensuring a complete record of all people who come into contact with the children is maintained accurately, helping to protect the children. Comprehensive child protection policies are in place and are displayed on the notice board for parents. Staff have an exceptionally clear understanding of the procedures to follow if concerns are identified. They would recognise the possible signs and symptoms of abuse, helping to safeguard the children in their care.

Children learn to keep themselves safe through daily routines, they know they must tuck their chairs under the tables and must not run inside the building in case they fall and hurt themselves or others. Staff often talk to the children about their safety. For example, reminding them to be careful about not trapping their fingers in the door to the home corner telephone box. Fire drills are practised regularly and during different days at various times to ensure all the children and staff are fully aware of the procedures. The fire drills are logged and evaluated to identify any potential problems and the routines are adapted as necessary to ensure evacuation is swift, helping to promote the children's safety effectively.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children arriving at the pre-school are eager to join in with the activities which they self-select from the extensive and stimulating range the setting offers. They benefit greatly from the organisation and layout of the setting. Children free flow between the activities, building their self-esteem and freedom of choice. Staff effectively support the children in their chosen activity. They are skilful in their interaction, constantly encouraging children to expand on their own knowledge and skills, for example, children dressing-up are supported whilst being encouraged to undertake as much of the dressing themselves as they are able, further encouraging their self-care skills. Children are extremely confident and laugh and giggle with each other and the staff throughout the day. They chat freely sharing their ideas and explaining their thoughts to others during free-play and practical activities. Staff talk through the available activities for the children at registration time, so the children know what they can do throughout the day.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children are making rapid progress towards the early learning goals in all areas. The whole staff team have an extremely clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and deliver the planned curriculum exceptionally well. Staff make the most of incidental learning opportunities throughout the day because of their experience and clear understanding of their aims for the children. The stimulating activities are linked to individual stepping stones. Staff fully understand the importance of high quality observations and assessments of the children. The information gathered is discussed in detail at staff meetings and the whole curriculum is planned around the needs of each child who attends. Staff are given time to observe their children and also to write up the observations and analyse their findings, ensuring the activities provided are pitched at the right level and provide sufficient challenges for all the children.

Staff are exceptionally skilful at extending the children's vocabulary and learning and enriching their experiences at every opportunity. They listen carefully when the children speak and respond with enthusiasm and interest. Staff in the setting are highly motivated and they all provide a consistent and exceptionally high standard of activities. The staff know the children exceptionally well and this enables them to make the most of incidental learning opportunities, they question the children effectively, challenging and stimulating them throughout the day, alongside the planned curriculum.

Children sit quietly and concentrate well during group activities, listening carefully at registration time. Children build strong relationships with each other and work exceptionally well together in large groups. Staff incorporate whole group games that help the children to relate to each other, simple concepts that enable the children to work together, such as passing a clap or a smile around the circle, making the children laugh as they play. Children are extremely confident and are eager to try new things, asking questions to find out more about what they are doing, asking about the ice that has been frozen with pine cones inside, watching the changes as it melts outside. Children have free access to writing materials throughout the day and help themselves if they need pens and pencils in other areas. For example, children get pens and paper from the writing area to take phone messages in the telephone box. Other children pretend to write prescriptions in the home corner hospital, using clipboards, as they mark make for different purposes. Staff ask them about what they have been writing, helping them to develop an understanding that text has meaning.

Children count confidently as they count each other at registration. They count up to and sometimes above 17 with ease. They recognise numerals during practical activities. Children use mathematical language throughout the day and maths is incorporated into practical activities such as cold baking, when they count and add the amount of the ingredients, measuring and weighing independently. Children learn about the world around them through planned topics, themes and activities. They are currently talking about the solar system, naming the planets and talking about the moon and the sun. Children are beginning to explore the concept of cause and effect, for example, watching what happens to water when it is frozen and then watching it thaw out, talking about different temperatures. They enjoy experimenting with the water guessing what items will sink or float, seeing if the sponge is heavier with or without water. Children have many opportunities to look at and explore living things. They watch

tadpoles grow into frogs and examine the life cycles of butterflies. Children benefit greatly from an extensive range of visitors from the local community, helping them to feel part of the community as they often see the people who visit in everyday life.

Children's control of tools and objects is extremely good, they practise pouring water from jugs to tall necked bottles, using spatial awareness and their knowledge of volume to predict whether the water from one container will fit inside another. Children's creative development is exceptionally good. They have ample opportunities to express their ideas and create their own work. Children have many opportunities to explore the materials and learn about the properties during art and craft activities. Staff allow them time to experiment and work things out for themselves. Children take part in imaginary adventures with enthusiasm, for example, putting on their astronaut suits and travelling to the moon. They suggest ideas as they act out the adventure, putting on rockets and strapping themselves in safely. Children use their imaginations extremely well during role-play as they co-operate and negotiate roles with each other. They pretend to be doctors, nurses and patients, dressing-up and writing prescriptions for each other. They sing a wide range of songs from memory and confidently match the actions to words.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff have a very clear understanding of equal opportunities and the comprehensive policy is reflected in the everyday practice of the setting. For example, all children have access to the resources. There are positive images and multi-cultural resources all around the setting, helping children to develop an understanding of the wider world. Children build strong relationships with each other and the staff, often asking if they are alright and talking openly about their own experiences. They are beginning to show consideration for others, ensuring other children have enough room and sharing and taking turns extremely well during board games, construction and physical play. Children learn about the world around them through practical activities and planned topics and themes which cover other countries, cultures and celebrations, such as Chinese New Year and Divali. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children are developing a strong sense of right and wrong. Staff give clear explanations so the children know what is acceptable and what is expected of them. Clear rules and boundaries are in place, although staff are not always consistent in their personal approach to behaviour management when dealing with the children. Staff are positive role models and continually praise and encourage the children through the session, reinforcing the good behaviour and recognising the children's efforts. The setting's special needs co-ordinator has attended training and has a very clear understanding of her role in the group. Children with learning difficulties are fully supported and the staff work closely with other agencies, ensuring all the children's needs are being met effectively.

Parents are made to feel very welcome in the setting as staff greet them and their children on arrival. Staff ensure they are available to talk to the parents, discussing anything that might have happened at home. Confidentiality is maintained verbally and with written records at all times, building trusting relationships between parents and the staff team. All parents and the

children attend several settling in sessions and a home visit prior to actually starting at the pre-school, building good relationships from the onset of the children's time in the pre-school. Parents fill out detailed registration forms, which are discussed in detail with the supervisor, who shares any relevant information with the whole staff team, helping the staff to get to know the children and plan activities aimed at their level and including the children's own interests.

Partnership with parents of children who receive funding for early education is good. Parents receive a detailed prospectus which covers the setting's aims and objectives and includes information about the curriculum. Parents are able to talk to the staff at any time about their children's progress and have access to their children's progress files on request. Parents also have consultations with staff to talk through the children's records in detail and can add comments to their records at this time, although there is currently no where for the parents to make written comments about their children's learning at home throughout the year, limiting their opportunities to be fully involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit greatly from the good quality support and supervision during their time at the pre-school because the setting employs a high number of staff to work with the children. Daily routines and sessions are organised efficiently and flow extremely well. The children behave well and settle down quickly on arrival because they know what will be happening next, helping the children to feel safe and secure in the group. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Staff have an exceptionally clear understanding of the registration and inspection process. Good procedures are implemented effectively supporting the children fully and providing a safe and secure play and learning environment for them. However, recruitment and vetting procedures do not currently include adequate information about applicant's medical history.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. The pre-school management committee employ a fully qualified and experienced supervisor to oversee the day to day running of the group. The committee do not currently play an active role in assessing the staff team's performance or monitor the effectiveness of the setting as a whole. The supervisor carries out staff appraisals and continually monitors the overall practice and draws up development plans of how they aim to move forward, using the children's interests as a basis for topics and themes, ensuring they are fully interested and engaged throughout the day. Evaluations are completed and activities are adapted as necessary to ensure the planned learning objectives are being met. The staff team work exceptionally well together and are committed to continually improving the quality of care and education for all children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the setting was asked to ensure that Ofsted is notified of any significant changes and to ensure that all staff understand and implement appropriate management behaviour strategies. They were also asked to ensure staff consistently deliver large group activities to provide stimulating and effective learning opportunities for children.

The supervisor has drawn up a written policy covering the procedures to follow to ensure Ofsted are informed of all significant changes. Detailed behaviour management policies are also in place and most staff implement them effectively, helping children to develop a strong sense of right and wrong. The staff have reorganised the large group activities and ensure more staff are available to support the children when the whole group comes together, ensuring effective learning outcomes are in place for all the children.

At the last nursery education inspection the setting was asked to ensure planning and assessment recording is informed by and evaluated against the stepping stones to define clearly what children already know and need to learn next. To provide opportunities to extend children's mathematical vocabulary with regard to size, shape, space and position, and their understanding of number comparison involving addition and subtraction. They were also asked to encourage children's independence when selecting resources or managing their own personal hygiene, food and drink. Staff now use the information collated from the children's individual progress records to inform the curriculum and planned stepping stones, ensuring all activities are aimed at the needs of the children. Children's mathematical develop is progressing extremely well. They use mathematical language at every opportunity and are beginning to add and subtract using small groups of objects. They have high levels of independence and self-select resources throughout the day. Children pour their own drinks and wash their hands with little or no encouragement at appropriate times throughout the day.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action 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):

- ensure all staff are consistent in their approach to behaviour management when dealing with the children

- improve the recruitment and vetting procedures with regard to health checks

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):

- provide more opportunities for parents to make written contributions about their children's learning at home
- ensure the management committee are involved in the staff appraisal system and actively monitor the progress of the setting (also applies to care)

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