

The Oaks Nursery School Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127700
Inspection date	15 March 2007
Inspector	Vanessa Wood
Setting Address	Riding Lane, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, Kent, TN11 9HY
Telephone number	01732 834401
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Registered person	The Oaks Nursery School Nursery
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?

The Oaks Nursery School opened in 1994. It operates from a mobile unit in the grounds of Hildenborough Primary School, near Tonbridge, Kent. The nursery serves the local area.

A maximum of 20 children aged between two and five years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 38 children on roll. This includes 27 children in receipt of funded nursery education. Children who have learning difficulties/ or disabilities or have English as an addition language are welcome to attend the setting.

The nursery is open each weekday from 08.30 to 15:30 during term time only. All children have access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

Seven part time members of staff work with the children. Six of the staff, including the manager hold an appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing an understanding of good hygiene routines as they wash their hands before snacks and after using the toilet. Staff maintain good standards of cleanliness in the nursery to prevent the spread of infection, although children are not provided with plates at snack time. There are good systems in place to record accidents and any medicine that might be given. Most staff hold a current first aid certificate and can deal with any medical emergencies. Opportunities for children to explore healthy options during snack time are promoted by staff. They enjoy a variety of different fruits such as slices of orange and banana and are provided with milk and water to drink. Children can help themselves to a drink at any time during the sessions both indoors and outdoors. Parents provide a packed lunch box for children's midday meals. Children benefit from cooking sessions, most weeks when they learn about new foods. Children benefit from interesting play and learning opportunities in the good outdoor environment. They enjoy vigorous physical play on a daily basis. For example, they enjoy using the large slide, many sit and ride toys and the climbing frame. They also have opportunities to play with the sand, to draw on the black boards and sit inside the large play house to do quieter activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children arrive happily and settle well. They are cared for in a warm, welcoming environment with attractive displays of their work, showing that staff value children's contributions. The environment is well organised which allows children to move around and play safely. They have easy access to a varied range of resources appropriate for their age. Staff regularly check the resources to ensure they are safe for children to use. A daily risk assessment is completed for the indoor and outdoor areas to ensure any hazards have been made safe and that the building and garden are secure. Children and staff have a good understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of a fire because these are regularly practised. Staff are effectively deployed to ensure the safety of the children at all times. Children are beginning to learn to take some responsibility for their own safety because staff remind them to be careful so that they do not hurt themselves or others. For example, children must sit down to eat their snack and they know that there is a 'one way' system in place for riding bikes in the garden. Staff have an appropriate understanding of child protection and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care. This enables them to safeguard the children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and participate confidently in free play activities. They are able to move between activities and make choices from those on offer. They also have opportunities to select activities for themselves from low level storage units. There are designated areas to promote the six areas of learning, for example, a home corner and book corner. Activities are adapted to meet the needs of younger children, although staff do not actively implement the Birth to three matters framework. A key worker system is in place and this ensures that staff get to know the children well. Staff talk and listen to children during free play and group sessions. This ensures children's language is extended and encourages children to think and express their thoughts and feelings.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the curriculum for the Foundation Stage. They plan weekly activities to offer children varied play opportunities ensuring children learn from a broad and varied range of activities that cover the six areas of learning. Although organisation of the session does not enable children to benefit from long periods of free play to ensure there is enough time for them to fully explore and investigate things that interest them. Staff are using a new assessment process to monitor children progress, but this is not fully implemented to show the next steps in children's learning.

Children work co-operatively with staff and other children as they take turns at the computer and share the outdoor play equipment. They show confidence and independence as they self select their play activities and can see and talk about the daily routine which is displayed on the wall. Children have opportunities to learn about other cultures in a positive way through topic work. Children communicate confidently with staff and others during group activities, such as talking about the things they have brought in from home to illustrate the topic of the week. They are given opportunities to use emergent writing skills both indoors as they attempt to write their name on their work and outdoors using the blackboards and chalks. They are learning the sounds of letters and how words are formed. A stimulating range of equipment develops children's mathematical thinking, such as challenging puzzles, games and varied construction sets. Children explore numbers with the number lines in the outdoor play space and weight and measure as they play in the sand pit and take part in regular cooking activities.

Children are given very good opportunities to explore the natural world through a variety of activities and projects in the outdoor area. They delight in using magnifying glasses to find and collect insects in the garden and discuss their names and where they live. They are able to plant bulbs and vegetables such as potatoes, strawberries and pumpkins and nurture these and watch how they grow and then eat them. Children enjoy the practical life activities as they concentrate on picking up small objects with tweezers and tracing patterns in sand trays. Children's creative and imaginative development is encouraged through activities such as cooking, which is done on a regular basis. They discover colour, shape and texture using a variety of materials indoors and they enjoy painting outdoors when children have the opportunity to use bigger, more expressive movements as they paint.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children learn about people in the community and about other cultures and beliefs through topic work. Children enjoy a range of resources reflecting positive images such as posters and pictures, toys and books which reflect a positive image of the wider community. Staff have all information about children so that they can promote the children's individual needs. Staff work closely with parents and other agencies to ensure arrangements are in place to support children with special needs. Staff have a positive approach to managing behaviour and promote good behaviour through the use of praise and encouragement, reasoning and explanation. Children are beginning to show care and concern for others because staff are good role models and treat children with respect. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff provide parents with good information about the nursery which includes a prospectus and good policy statements and procedures. Parents are given lots of information about what children are doing at the nursery and how children's learning can

be extended at home. Parents evenings are in place to inform parents about the curriculum and the progress their child is making along the stepping stones.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are provided with a welcoming child-friendly environment where play space is used imaginatively. For example, there are many wall displays of children's work and designated areas where children can play and relax comfortably and a well designed outdoor area. Staff are deployed well and are sensitive to the children's needs. Staff work well together and form a strong team to ensure that children enjoy a positive experience at the nursery. Most staff are qualified and eager to update their knowledge and skills through regular training. All the required policies and procedures are in place to ensure good practice

Leadership and management is good. Children benefit from a strong team and a management committee who are keen to support the nursery. The supervisor and staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and the importance of keeping assessments of children's progress. Regular team meetings are held to plan activities that will interest the children and build on their knowledge. Staff are committed and enthusiastic and effectively promote children's learning.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection there were three recommendations. To develop a system to ensure children can independently access drinking water at all times. To have a policy for uncollected children and a child protection procedure should an allegation be made against a member of staff. Lastly, to have written permission from parents to seek emergency medical advice or treatment. All recommendations are now in place to safeguard children's welfare.

At the previous education inspection there were three points for consideration. To provide children with the opportunity to use a computer. To provide children with opportunities to learn how print is formed and for children to learn number work during practical outdoor activities. All three points for consideration have been met. Children enjoy using the computer. They learn about the formation of words because staff now teach children the sounds of letters and how to construct letters using various methods such as copying and tracing. Staff have introduced a number line to the outdoor area to increase children's awareness of number.

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 can be seen 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):

- ensure good hygiene practice is in place by providing plates for children's snack time

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):

- consolidate assessments of children's learning and ensure the assessments fully inform future plans
- consider changing the daily routine to provide children with more time for free play so they can fully explore and investigate activities that interest them

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