



Humpty Dumpty Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	221779
Inspection date	15 March 2007
Inspector	Heidi Falconer
Setting Address	Water Lane, Oakington, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB4 5AL
Telephone number	07986 171826
E-mail	
Registered person	Humpty Dumpty 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?

Humpty Dumpty Pre-school is run by a voluntary committee. It opened in 1972 and operates from a single storey building situated in the grounds of Oakington Primary School, Cambridgeshire. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 20 children may attend at any one time. The playgroup is open each weekday from 09:00 till 12:00 with a lunch club until 13:00, and on Wednesday's they operate an afternoon session from 12:30 till 15:00.

There are 24 children from two to under five years old on roll. Of these 22 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the local catchment area. The setting currently supports children who speak English as an additional language. The setting employs five permanent staff. Of these, three hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children in the pre-school learn about how to keep themselves healthy through discussions, themed activities and daily routines. For example, they enjoy visits from the dentist to help them to learn how to care for their teeth. In addition, the children have recently visited the 'Health Promotion Bus'. This gave them the opportunity to take part in activities and discussions about how they can keep themselves healthy through exercise and a balanced diet. Children understand the importance of good personal hygiene. They wash their hands, without being reminded, after using the toilet and before eating their snack. Staff promote children's health by recognising and reducing possible risks. For example, they take steps to prevent the spread of infection by keeping the premises clean and ensuring that food is handled and stored appropriately. Good arrangements are in place to care for children who are ill or who have an accident at the setting. Staff are trained in administering first aid and they have appropriate medication and accident records in place.

Children are helped to enjoy food and understand why some foods are healthy and others are not. Mealtimes are relaxed, social occasions where children and staff sit together around the table and enjoy their food and each other's company. The setting operates a snack bar, which allows the children to be independent in selecting their snacks and pouring their drinks. Children are actively involved in some aspects of the preparation of their snacks, as they spread bread and make their own sandwiches. Snacks are provided according to the dietary requirements of the children attending.

Children enjoy energetic games and using equipment, such as hoops, scooters and riding tricycles in the outdoor area. They use the climbing and balancing equipment in the garden with increasing skill. Children show a good awareness of space as they manoeuvre bikes around cones in the garden, calling out 'I'm going really fast because I'm a Power Ranger'. Children are beginning to understand the effects that exercise has on their bodies. After running around outside they say 'I'm taking my coat off as I was getting hot'.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean, well-maintained environment, which has been effectively organised so that it looks welcoming to children and their parents. Children's art work and photographs are displayed, and the room is divided up into different play areas. For example, children are able to access areas for writing, drawing, role-play, painting, looking at books and building with construction toys. Resources are well-maintained and checked by staff on a regular basis to ensure that they remain safe for the children to use.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe from harm through planned activities. For example, during a recent road safety project, the staff set up a zebra crossing in the garden and talked to the children about how they could tell when it was safe to cross the road. This learning was further developed by children making their own lollypop signs and going on a trip to cross the

local road crossing. Fire evacuation procedures are clearly displayed and discussed with the children. However, these are not practised on a regular basis and therefore children do not have a full understanding of how they could keep themselves safe in the event of a fire. Children's risk of accidental injury is reduced as staff take precautions to minimise potential risks. For example, a stair gate has been fitted to the kitchen door, which prevents the children accessing dangerous items, such as cleaning products and sharp knives.

Children are safeguarded because staff have attended child protection training and know the local procedures they must follow should a concern arise about a child. In addition, the staff have a sound understanding of the procedures which they would follow if an allegation was made against a member of staff. These procedures and emergency contact numbers are clearly displayed in the setting so that they are easily accessible to staff at all times. The setting have recently updated their policy to reflect the recent changes in legislation.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a calm environment, which enables them to be happy and confident. Children develop warm and caring relationships with the staff and evidently enjoy the support they receive from staff in their play. For example, whilst playing with a mixture of cornflour and water, known as gloop, the staff ask children to squeeze the mixture in their hands and then release it. The children show great delight as they watch the mixture run through their fingers and they tell staff that it feels 'runny and gooey'.

Children have regular opportunities to experiment with crayons, pencils and paint, and explore sand, bark chippings and dough. The attractive presentation of these resources means the children gain much more from their play. For example, in the bark chippings, the children used different sized diggers to fill up tipper trucks. As they do this they talked about shape, size and quantity with staff.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage. This has enabled them to put into practice a well-planned programme of interesting activities, which cover all areas of learning, both in and out of doors. They also provide good support for children who speak English as an additional language. For example, objects labelled around the room are written in English and Chinese so that they reflect the home languages of the children who attend. Planning is in place and shows clear learning objectives and how activities help to promote different areas of learning. Staff make observations of children's progress and record these in assessment portfolios, which also include dated samples of children's work. Staff are aware that recently, due to staff changes, these files have not been updated as frequently as they would like. There are opportunities for parents to look at and make comments about the setting's assessments of their child's progress.

Children's mathematical skills are developing well. Throughout each session staff develop children's ability to understand mathematical concepts. For example, when making up the gloop, the children were asked to compare the weight of the cornflour and the jug of water.

Completing the daily calendar provides opportunities for children to count, add and subtract. Children use mathematical language during their play. For example, as they use playdough they discuss the size of their trains saying 'I've made a small one' and 'I'm making a massive one'.

Children are actively involved in many activities which help them to gain a greater understanding of themselves and the world in which they live. For example, children have recently made a map of their village and used written labels to show where they each live. The children then visited places of interest in the village, such as the church, garden centre and stables. Photographs were taken of the children at these places and these have been added to the display. Children then used their design skills to use a variety of junk modelling materials to make models of the houses and flats where they live. Children use the computer with increasing confidence and most can operate simple programmes successfully.

Children respond with excitement when listening to stories. They are able to concentrate generally well during the whole group stories as the staff use resources to make these sessions fun and enjoyable. For example, they effectively use puppets to re-tell favourite stories, such as 'Farmer Duck'. Children are given plenty of opportunities to develop early writing skills. They eagerly write letters in sand trays and use pencils to write their names on their paintings. As children write letters with the support of staff they are beginning to link letters to sounds. Children are learning that print carries meaning. They recognise their names as they collect their name cards at the beginning of the day and there is plenty of labelling around the room.

Children use their imagination during role play. For example, they set up chairs to represent a car so that they can 'drive to the party'. Other children enjoy making birthday cakes from playdough and they put them in the play oven, telling other children 'don't take them out they are for the party'. Children have developed good relationships with each other. They are able to negotiate with each other as they decide who will be who as they take on the role of characters from 'Scooby Doo'. Children are becoming increasingly independent in their self-care. For example, they change their slippers to their shoes as they go outside and attempt to do up buttons and zips in their coats by themselves. However, children are not always actively encouraged to access additional resources for themselves.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are highly valued as individuals and those from different backgrounds are welcomed into the setting. The pre-school seeks information from parents about children's medical and dietary needs, so that appropriate care is provided from the start. As a result, children settle well as they are cared for according to their individual needs. Children learn about the diversity within our society through themed activities and resources. For example, the nursery celebrates a variety of different festivals throughout the year and provides toys and puzzles that represent different cultures and disabilities. Effective procedures are in place to ensure that children who speak English as an additional language or who have learning difficulties or disabilities are well supported. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is good. They form good relationships with adults and one another and they play well together. Children demonstrate their understanding of the need to share and

take turns with popular resources. For example, when using the playdough, children ask each other politely if they can use the playdough press. They then explain calmly 'I need a go first and then you can have a go, I just need to make my shapes first'.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from the good relationships between their parents and staff. All parents know their child's keyworker and share information with them about their children's needs and progress. Parents receive general information about the pre-school and information on the early learning goals through the settings prospectus. Parents are also invited to attend curriculum evening once a year, which gives them opportunities to talk with staff about how they provide nursery education within their daily routines. Curriculum newsletters and activity sheets are sent home to parents to inform them of each terms topic and give them ideas on how they can support the topic at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Staff have developed a well-organised environment which appeals to children. It provides a wide variety of exciting learning opportunities which are set out for the children each day. Interactive displays, such as the 'The Train Ride' capture children's imagination and encourage them to learn in a fun way. Children are happy and content because they have developed caring relationships with the staff and each other.

All required documentation is in place. It is clear, detailed and implemented by the staff, which helps to underpin good practice and ensures children's safety and well-being. Comprehensive and effective recruitment and induction procedures are in place, overseen by committee. These ensure children are cared for by suitable staff who are appropriately vetted and suitably qualified for their post.

The leadership and management of nursery education is good. Regular staff and management meetings ensure that everyone works together as a team and understands the vision of the setting. The management team ensure that staff and helpers are deployed effectively, and that they have a good understanding of the learning intentions of each activity. For example, at the start of each session the person in charge talks to the parent helpers about how they can support the children in activities, such as gloop. As a result, during this time of changes in key staff, children continue to be well cared for. The management team are currently developing their systems to monitor the quality of the nursery education and evaluate its impact. The management team have developed a strong relationship with the teachers on the school site, which helps children have a smooth transition as they move from the pre-school to the school. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Care

At the last inspection, the pre-school was asked to review documentation and record keeping to ensure that they accurately reflect the National Standards, conduct a risk assessment on the premises identifying actions to be taken to minimize identified risks, extend the range of

resources and visual images available that reflect diversity and help children know more about other cultures and lifestyles, and to develop and implement an action plan that sets out how staff will obtain the required qualifications.

The staff have reviewed and updated their documentation to ensure that it effectively supports children's care and welfare. The staff have conducted a risk assessment of the premises and resources and all potential hazards have been made inaccessible to the children. This improves children's safety. The setting have developed the range of resources which reflect diversity. In addition, they now celebrate different festivals, so that children develop an awareness of others cultures and lifestyles. The implementation of the setting's training action plan is well underway and the setting now meets the minimum training requirements for staff.

Nursery education

At the last inspection, the setting was asked to continue to develop staff knowledge and understanding of Foundation Stage planning, incorporating their use of children's assessments. Suitable planning is now in place and staff plan activities based on what they know about the children. This enables them to differentiate some activities so that they provide more challenges for older and more able children. The setting was also asked to develop their partnership with parents and develop a system to monitor and evaluate the nursery education and its impact. Parents are now provided with more opportunities to contribute to their children's learning and share what they know about their child's progress. Systems to monitor the quality of the nursery education and its impact are evolving.

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.

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):

- improve children's safety by ensuring that fire drills are carried out periodically.

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 children with more opportunities to choose additional resources and initiate their own activities, so that they can learn to make decisions, extend their own learning and pursue their own interests
- continue to develop a formal system for monitoring and evaluating the quality of the provision for nursery education.

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