

Happy Hours @ Checkley

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY342186
Inspection date	16 March 2007
Inspector	Jacqueline Mason
Setting Address	Checkley Community Centre, Uttoxeter Road, Checkley, Stoke-on-Trent, Staffordshire, ST10 4NB
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Registered person	Happy Hours
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?

Happy Hours @ Checkley opened in 2006 and is one of eight settings managed by Happy Hours. It operates from one large room in Checkley Community Centre in the village of Checkley, Staffordshire. There is access to an enclosed outdoor play area. The setting serves children from the local and surrounding areas. A maximum of 26 children may attend the setting at any one time. There are currently 17 children on roll from 19 months to nine years. Of these, three receive funding for nursery education.

The setting is open each weekday from 07.30 to 13.00 all year round. There are two staff who work with the children. Of these, both hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

There are good procedures for sick children to ensure that the best interests of all children are met but there is the potential for their health to be compromised because there is no qualified first aider on site. Staff do however take all necessary precautions to limit the risks of cross-infection. Exclusion periods are in place for children who are infectious and staff follow good hygiene procedures such as wiping tables with anti-bacterial sprays before they are used for meals. There are good arrangements in place to help children to learn about the importance of good personal hygiene. They are reminded to wash their hands after toileting and before eating and disposable paper towels are provided for hand drying.

Children's dietary needs are mostly met by parents and carers as they provide meals for their children. Lunch boxes are stored in the fridge to ensure that perishable foods are maintained at an appropriate temperature. Snacks are provided by the setting. Although parents and carers are not always advised of changes to the advertised daily snack, the snacks provided are varied and nutritious, helping children to develop healthy eating habits. Fresh drinking water and milk is available at snack time but is not readily available at other times. However, children are able to ask for a drink and it is given to them.

Children's physical skills are developing well. Staff pay good attention to ensuring that children have daily access to active physical play and children enjoy using wheeled and push-a-long toys. There is daily opportunity for children to access outdoor play and staff engage children in running games and other active play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The physical environment is inviting and welcoming to parents, carers and children. Daily risk assessments are carried out to ensure that the premises are safe and suitable for use. The community centre hall is set out before children arrive with a good variety of toys and equipment to help children feel comfortable and settled. Children's art work is displayed on portable display boards, helping children to develop a sense of belonging. It is not possible for children to have free access to stored toys due to the positioning of the storage facilities but children are encouraged to choose independently from the toys selected by adults each day. Toys, equipment and furniture are clean, safe and suitable for the age range of the children attending.

Security of the premises is good. Staff pay good attention to ensuring that the external door is kept locked through the use of a safety chain. A portable door bell is used to enable parents and carers to alert staff to their presence. Children are able to access outdoor play because staff have made good arrangements to section off part of the car park to ensure that children are able to play safely outdoors. Emergency evacuation procedures are effective to ensure that children are protected in the event of needing to leave the premises in an emergency. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to keep children safe.

Children are further protected because staff have a secure understanding of their roles and responsibilities in the protection of children. They have a good awareness of the signs and symptoms of abuse. They are confident to report concerns of abuse and are able to put necessary procedures into practice to safeguard children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff use the 'Birth to three' framework adequately to ensure good play and learning opportunities for children under the age of three years. However, there are no systems in place to evaluate or record their developmental attainment to ensure that good progress is being made. Children are developing a sense of belonging because staff are careful to ensure that all children are included at routine times. For example, at registration each child is addressed in turn and staff greet each child individually. Children take turns to choose songs at circle time and this helps them develop in confidence. Children mostly come readily into the setting. They are confident to play independently and inform staff when they want to take part in activities such as painting or water play.

Activities planned by staff are varied and interesting and build on children's natural curiosity as learners. Staff provide a stimulating environment in which children can explore and develop. A good range of role play activities are provided including a shop, home corner and garage. Children enjoy playing imaginatively based on their own experiences. Adults join in well with children's play and are interested in what they say and do.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and plan a varied and interesting range of adult-led activities that are directly linked to the stepping stones. Short-term planning is effective in identifying the role of children rather than the role of staff in activities. However, the evaluation of activities is not effective. It has recently been changed and staff no longer record the outcomes for individual children or plan the next steps in their learning in their activity evaluation. Instead, they record a general comment about the activity, for example, whether the children enjoyed it. This form of evaluation does not benefit children as it does not include an assessment about what they have learnt or what will be planned next to help them make good developmental progress.

Free-choice activities are planned to ensure that all areas of learning are addressed each day and children have a good variety of play experiences. Children have independent choice from the toys and equipment provided. They move confidently between activities and are developing good relationships with adults and each other, seeking out others to share play experiences and conversation. For example, during role play children worked well together to take on roles such as the shopkeeper and the customer and then drew a member of staff into their play by asking her if she would like to buy some toothpaste. There are good opportunities for children to play imaginatively and children enjoy washing the dolls in the water play. They make good links between their home and nursery lives and chat confidently to adults about how their mummies wash their babies. Children's vocabulary is developing well through the good verbal interactions that they have with adults and each other.

Children have good access to books. The reading area is comfy and children enjoy using it with adult support. They enjoy looking at illustrations and talking about what they see. They have opportunities to see print in the environment because staff label areas of the room, such as identifying the creative and writing areas. However, children do not have opportunities to see their written name and, with the exception of the writing table where children are able to make marks on paper, there is no provision for them to write. For example, there are no writing pads

in the role play shop on which children can write shopping lists and adults write on cards such as Mother's Day cards that are made by the children.

Children show an interest in numbers and counting and use numbers well in play situations, such as talking about how much an item costs when playing in the shop. Children count confidently up to five and some children can count to children. Accuracy in counting is developing and children are beginning to count items, saying a number name for each object. They recognise shape in the environment and talk with adults about size as they build using blocks of descending size. Good use is made of construction kits such as wooden bricks. Children construct interesting models with adult support.

Staff promote physical development well. Children have opportunities every day to be outdoors and they take part in running and jumping games and races. Sit-and-ride toys, tricycles and physical play equipment are provided to enable children to take part in active physical play. Children operate wheeled toys confidently and are able to stop, start and change direction with ease to avoid obstacles.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff have a sound understanding of equal opportunities issues to help children to learn about the world around them and the diversity of it. Children are learning about the cultures and beliefs of others through art and craft activities that promote festivals and celebrations and through activities to help children learn about other languages and foods. Resources to promote positive images of culture, disability and gender are satisfactory.

Staff have friendly and trusting relationships with parents and carers. Information about the setting and their children's day is shared with them and they are encouraged to share what they know about their child. Staff find out about children's individual needs through discussion with parents and carers. However, in practise these are not always met as children are not able to sleep and rest according to their individual needs, becoming upset and tearful because they are tired. Staff do comfort children who are upset but do not have an area set aside for sleep and rest needs. Systems to identify, assess and meet the needs of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are not robust although staff do have some procedures in place to seek advice and support.

Effective procedures to manage children's behaviour helps them to develop an understanding of right and wrong. They are learning to play harmoniously together and respect the needs of others, sharing popular resources, such as paint pots, without being prompted by adults. Staff spend time playing with children and helping them to consider other children. Through this children are building good relationships with adults and each other. Children respond well to the high expectations of staff with regard to the use of good manners. Strategies to manage unwanted behaviour are appropriate to the age and level of understanding of the children and emphasis is placed on promoting good behaviour. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnerships with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education are satisfactory. They are encouraged to share with staff what their children know and the activities that they enjoy. Staff share developmental records with parents and carers on request but there are currently no systems in place to encourage parents and carers to be actively involved in their children's early education.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a consistent staff. Minimum staffing ratios are maintained to ensure that children have sufficient adult support to be settled and secure. All necessary policies and procedures, necessary for the safe and efficient running of the setting are in place. However, the setting is part of a group of nurseries and out of school clubs and not all of the policies are relevant to this facility. Policies and procedures are made available to parents and carers and this helps them to make choices about their children's care. Daily registers of the attendance of staff and children is kept although daily registers of children are not always accurately maintained and this has the potential to compromise children's safety in the event of needing to evacuate the premises in an emergency. There are good arrangements to record the presence of visitors and children are well protected from persons who have not been cleared as suitable to work with children. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are satisfactory. Staff work well together and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. There is an effective recruitment and selection process to ensure that staff are suitable for their role. Regular supervision and appraisal of staff helps to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the setting and the professional development of staff is encouraged. Adequate systems are in place to monitor the strengths and weaknesses of the setting. This is mostly achieved through monitoring children's progress along the stepping stones and working with the nursery education advisor from the Local Authority.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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):

- ensure that a first aid qualified person is on site at all times
- put in place systems to record and monitor the development of children under the age of three years
- ensure that the individual needs of very young children are met with regard to sleep and rest
- improve the arrangements for reviewing policies and procedures to ensure that they are relevant to the setting
- ensure that the hours of children's attendance are accurately recorded.

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):

- improve the arrangements to promote the inclusion of children with disabilities or learning difficulties
- develop opportunities for children to see their written name and to be able to write for different purposes
- improve the systems for evaluating activities in order to help plan the next steps in children's learning
- develop the arrangements to involve parents in their children's learning.

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