



## The Heathers Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	257937
<b>Inspection date</b>	26 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Ann London
<b>Setting Address</b>	Bracken Avenue, Norwich, Norfolk, NR6 6LS
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<b>Registered person</b>	The Heathers Nursery
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Sessional 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](http://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 Heathers Nursery is a committee run facility which opened in October 1996. It operates in a purpose built unit and a classroom at Heather Avenue School in Hellesdon, Norwich, Norfolk. A maximum of 44 children may attend the group at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:00-11:30 and 12:20-14:50 during term times only. All children share access to an outdoor play area.

There are currently 64 children from 2 to 5 years on roll. Of these 47 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local catchment area. The group supports a number of children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs seven staff. Six of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is promoted effectively because the staff follow appropriate hygiene practices. They clean the floor daily and toilets at the end of each session to prevent the spread of infection. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through everyday routines. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating their snack. Children's health details and medical requirements are clearly recorded to maintain their good health. For example, asthma and eczema. Staff follow effective systems which enable children who are unwell to be cared for appropriately. For example, a sickness policy and posters give guidance to parents for head lice and communicable diseases. Sufficient staff have current first aid knowledge to ensure children's well-being in the event of an accident.

Children's healthy growth and development are promoted well because they eat fruit provided by their parents for snack time. Fruit is prepared by the staff at the table and children can choose to eat a whole apple or have smaller pieces. The setting enables children to learn about healthy living through a range of activities. For example, food tasting and stories such as the 'Hungry caterpillar'. Children with special dietary requirements have their needs met appropriately because the parents have provided the setting with detailed information. For example, allergy to milk products, staff meet these needs sensitively by providing those with wheat allergy an alternative to birthday cake. Children have an individual named drinking bottle, which can be filled by the children themselves from the taps in the corner of the room. However, children do not always use this process to help themselves to water. Staff do not offer children drinks other than at snack time to make sure they drink sufficient amounts to keep them healthy.

Children have some opportunities to experience physical activity. They use bean bags at circle time which includes balancing them on their heads and marching around the room. Children use bikes, balls, hoops, push and pull trolleys when accessing the outdoor area. In good weather children use the indoor and outdoor areas spontaneously, which extend the range of activities offered to promote their imagination and physical development. Children demonstrate good control, co-ordination, and spatial awareness. When marching to music they are aware of the tables and carefully carry the train track across the mat. They are developing competent manipulative skills. Children use scissors to cut paper, large wooden spoons to stir play dough mix and use textured rolling pins to make patterns. Children generally fulfil their own needs with regard to rest and relaxation. They can use the small cushions during story time and adult-sized armchairs as they wish during the sessions.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in warm and welcoming premises. There are many colourful displays on the walls in both the main building and the school classroom. These promote children's well-being, for example, the trains, planes and automobiles theme. Children use suitable toys and play equipment. They are interested in and want to play with what is available, for example,

the train set and stickle bricks. The setting provides furniture, equipment and toys which are developmentally appropriate. For example, child size tables and chairs. Many of the resources are accessible from low storage units and trays to encourage self-selection and independence. For example, craft materials and table toys.

Children are kept safe because staff are vigilant. For example, when cooking the play dough and moving tables. The group use risk assessments and daily check lists to minimise potential hazards. Staff have a sound understanding of their roles to ensure children's safety in an emergency. There are effective procedures regarding entry to the rooms to keep children and staff secure.

Children's welfare is suitably safeguarded by staff having an understanding of their responsibilities towards the children in their care. Relevant child protection documentation is available. Staff undertake regular training to ensure they have sufficient knowledge of the procedures to follow if they suspect a child is being abused or neglected.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children's development is promoted well because they are provided with a broad range of activities and play opportunities that advance their emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities. For example, the train set, play dough, Chinese take away role play, cutting and sticking, puzzles, books, computer and dressing up clothes. They enjoy making the play dough, smelling the infusion of strawberry and adding food colouring to the mixture. They make frames from the shiny material and take delight in filling them with a collage picture. Children are confident to select their own activities and make choices from the play materials provided for them. They extend their own ideas, for example, children ask others if they would like a pancake from the Chinese take away. Staff meet children's needs through sensitive and appropriate interactions that promote children's self-esteem. They talk and listen to the children and maintain good eye contact. They position themselves at the children's level to support them with their activities, such as the play dough and sit on the floor to help make tracks for the train.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have sound knowledge and understanding of the early learning goals to help funded children make good progress. The areas of learning are covered well and children are questioned effectively to help them learn. During the play dough cooking activity, staff question children about the ingredients. They ask, 'do we need any more water? How many mugs of water did we say we need?' Staff use time, resources and space well. They provide an inviting environment that is organised to help children to be independent.

Children are keen and motivated to learn. They are confident and concentrate well, for example, when doing puzzles. They sit quietly to listen to stories. Children are forming positive relationships playing alongside each other with the train track, sharing the trains and carriages. They are sensitive to the needs of others. For example, during the circle activity children say '

let Barbara in' and children happily move so that other children can sit with their friends. The children tackle problems, they work out how to use the turn table for the trains. They show pride in their achievements. For example, they say 'its beautiful' after creating a picture using felt pens. Children hold conversations, for example, during cooking activity they discussed the texture of the dough. They look at books spontaneously and with a parent helper. Children sing familiar nursery rhymes using actions. Children confidently recognise their name cards and link sounds to letters. They draw and paint to give meanings to marks, for example, a snowman. Children are encouraged to write their own names on their craft work and opportunities are available to write during their role play. Children show an interest in number and count the seventeen present today. They compare groups by counting three items in one group and four in another. Staff use mathematical language during activities. For example, 'is it bigger or smaller?'

Children are keen to investigate. At snack time they attempt to take the stalk out of an apple and ask for help, the staff member asks what the stalk is used for and they reply, 'to stick it to the tree'. Children show an awareness of change. They are excited to see the dough mixture change from sloppy to solid at different times of the cooking process. They build and construct with a wide range of objects. For example, stickle bricks and they used glue sticks to join materials. Computers are available in both rooms for the children to freely access. Children have many opportunities to explore colour and texture. They use their imagination well during role play and when using small world figures. They use their senses and show an interest in what they see, feel, hear and touch. For example, children say, 'someone is honking their horn', and they enjoy feeling the warm play dough. Children have opportunities to experience musical instruments, they play a game of guessing which instrument is being used.

Detailed planning is in place covering the play provision for the week. They clearly show what the children are intending to learn. Staff use quick and in depth observations to assess children's achievements which are transferred to their learning stories by their key workers. Staff use photographs well to support evidence of learning and examples of children's work are also kept. However, staff do not make full use of information gained from assessments when planning activities to help move children to the next stage in their learning.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children develop their self-esteem and confidence because the staff give them regular praise. For example, when completing puzzles and for good marching. Children's needs are met appropriately because helpful information regarding any specific needs is noted on their registration forms and initial child profiles. Children with additional needs are welcomed into the setting and given appropriate support to promote their welfare and development.

Children are helped to develop a positive attitude to others by using play equipment which reflects positive images of race and culture and by celebrating festivals. For example, making Chinese lanterns and using the role play area as a Chinese take-away. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They play together co-operatively. They share the play equipment, for example, the train set. They have planned opportunities to learn about themselves and the local community. They visit the local school and library. Visitors come into

the group to talk to the children about their work. For example, a parent who is a mechanic came into the group to talk to the children about his work and let the children handle the tools. A parent from Bangladesh came in, children and staff all dressed in saris and tried different tasting foods. These visits help the children to develop a wider understanding of the diverse society in which they live.

Children's well-being is promoted by the positive relationships which have developed between staff and their parents. There is a useful exchange of information daily. Children's records contain clear details of emergency contact numbers and those with permission to collect the children to keep them safe. An informative notice board in entrance hall gives details of provision, last inspection report, policies and procedures. Articles displayed around the room give good information about activities and childcare. They receive adequate information about the procedures for making complaints and the process for resolving them.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive helpful details about the setting when they first join and gain worthwhile information about the early learning goals from reading the group's prospectus. Further information is displayed which show what children hope to achieve through their play. Parents feel well-informed about their child's progress. They are invited into the group every half-term by their key worker to look at their child's learning story and to make contributions. Regular newsletters remind the parents of topics and themes. A grandmother regularly attends sessions to teach the children some basic French words during their play.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

The organisation of the setting ensures that children are well cared for and safeguarded. The staff are well qualified, experienced and suitable to meet children's needs. The group follows some written recruitment procedures to ensure that staff are suitably vetted. Satisfactory arrangements are in place to ensure that any person who has not been vetted is never left alone with children. Good team work encourages all staff and volunteers to work together to promote children's welfare and learning. For example, parent rota operates successfully with both mothers and fathers attending sessions. Staff appraisals are regularly undertaken to enable them to improve their skills, identify training and development needs. For example, birth to three matters and first aid. Children receive effective support to ensure they feel secure and confident. The arrangements for registration show when children, staff and visitors are on the premises to keep children safe. Key workers are used to complete children's assessments and aid communication with parents.

Documents and records which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision are generally kept. Policies and procedures are in the process of being reviewed to ensure they meet current guidance. There are some minor errors in the complaints, child protection and employment policies. Documentation is well-organised in ring binder files. Confidential information is stored in a locked filing cabinet. The group display their certificate of registration to give reassurance to parents.

The leadership and management is good. The staff team are aware of their roles and responsibilities. They use their lunch time break to discuss the activities provided. Regular staff meetings are held to plan. Committee meetings support the staff in their delivery of the curriculum. There is a system which enables the setting to assess its own strengths and weaknesses. Staff evaluate the provision of nursery education to ensure all children make good progress. Overall children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the group agreed to extend the operational plan. This is regularly reviewed and used appropriately to make good use of staff, space and other resources so that children are well cared for and supported during their time at the group.

The area for improvement at the last nursery education inspection was to develop their new assessment system. Staff are now using this process effectively to record children's observations and progress. However, continued development is required to ensure children's individual learning needs are met.

### **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 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):

- continue to review policies and procedures to make sure they meet current guidance
- improve children's access to fresh drinking water.

## **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):

- make further use of information gained from assessments when planning activities to help move children to the next stage in their 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)