

# Meynell Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

---

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY340290
<b>Inspection date</b>	03 April 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Gill Ogden
<b>Setting Address</b>	16 Morton Road, Laughton, Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, DN21 3PS
<b>Telephone number</b>	07833337728
<b>E-mail</b>	
<b>Registered person</b>	Meynell Kindergarten
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](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?

Meynell Kindergarten was registered in 2006 to provide full day care after previously being registered for several years to provide sessional care in different premises. It is run by a volunteer management committee and operates from purpose adapted, single storey premises in Loughton, Lincolnshire. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. The kindergarten is open from 08:00 to 18:00 each weekday throughout the year.

It is registered to care for a maximum of 38 children under eight at any one time. There are currently 69 children on roll, of whom 34 receive funding for nursery education. The kindergarten supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or speak English as an additional language.

Fifteen staff work with the children. Of these, nine hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards one. The kindergarten is a member of the Pre-school Learning Alliance.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

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

The provision is good.

Children are kept healthy well in the kindergarten because there are good systems in place to ensure this. Clear procedures are followed by staff, for example, when changing nappies and preparing tables for meals, so that opportunities for cross-infection are minimised. Notices displayed in the kitchen remind staff to use, for example, the correct chopping boards for the preparation of different foodstuffs. Parents are made well aware of the situations which prevent children from attending in order to protect all the children's good health. Staff are currently being vigilant because there is an outbreak of chicken pox locally. Children learn the importance of keeping themselves healthy through developing good personal hygiene habits such as washing their hands after using the toilet and before meals. All staff hold current first aid certificates so in the event of a child having an accident they are always assured that there is someone to deal with it appropriately. Children's emotional health needs are catered for well, for example, appropriate cuddles and reassurance and attention.

Children benefit enormously from the frequent access they have to the outdoors. The gradual development of the outside play space provides children with more and more opportunities to get plenty of fresh air and exercise. This then helps them to enjoy better quality rests and sleep. Babies have a peaceful sleep room with clean and comfortable cots and older children can rest and nap on floor cushions. Staff are alert to individual children's needs for exercise and rest and respond swiftly to this. There is a range of toys and equipment to support the development of children's whole body strength and skills. They are becoming increasingly skilled in pushing, riding and manoeuvring wheeled toys around the 'road' and the grassy hillock. They climb up the hillock and crawl through the tunnel under it.

Children are provided with healthy snacks during both the morning and afternoon sessions. These include fresh and dried fruit, crackers, breadsticks, cheese straws and vegetable pieces. They have a choice of milk, water or squash to drink. Fresh water is available throughout the day for children to access freely and staff are especially vigilant at drawing children's attention to this when they have been running around a lot in warmer weather. A balanced lunch and tea menu is available if parents wish their children to have a meal provided but most children bring a packed meal which is stored appropriately. Much effort is put into ensuring any special dietary needs children may have are provided for well. Snack and meal times are very sociable occasions.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in safe, secure and suitable premises because health and safety issues are paramount in the kindergarten. Access from the outside is controlled through a door in the baby room which has no external handle and a coded entry system on the main entrance that is only operated by staff. Parents sign children in and out and a staff rota ensures there is always someone on 'door duty'. The building is in good condition because it was renovated and adapted before the kindergarten moved. Walls are brightly decorated with children's work, posters and attractive notices. The outdoor play space is well-secured and appropriately surfaced. All the necessary safety equipment is in place such as gates and socket covers and harnesses and monitors for babies. Thorough risk assessments are carried out and daily adjustments are made to incorporate the needs of individual children if necessary. All the toys and play resources

the children use are in good condition and suitable for their purpose. Children learn to keep themselves safe by taking part in, for example, regular evacuation drills, topics on road safety and outside play resources that provide ongoing opportunities to reinforce it, and by staff prompting them appropriately about moving around the building safely. Even the youngest children begin to learn to keep themselves safe through everyday situations such as a staff member adjusting a toddler's shoe and at the same time saying that she might fall over if her shoe is not on properly.

Children are further safeguarded because staff have a solid understanding of their child protection responsibilities. The manager has recently completed training and so all the latest local procedures are in place.

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

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and settled in the kindergarten. There is a lively, buzzing atmosphere of children enjoying themselves. A good variety of activities are planned for children throughout the setting and these are supported by a wide range of very useful toys and play equipment. Children quickly become absorbed in their chosen activities as soon as they arrive and babies respond happily to the staff caring for them. Children enjoy the regular access they have to the outdoors but their opportunity to do this totally independently is hampered because they cannot access their coats easily for themselves. Most other resources they need to help them play easily and happily are easy for them to get to. Activities for babies and younger children are planned in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework which ensures they regularly play with resources that stimulate their senses such as paint, 'gloop', jelly, baked beans and sand. Weekly planning for these younger children is beginning to usefully identify the particular needs of individuals. Children's learning is linked to a theme which operates across the whole provision and activities are planned to meet the varying abilities and ages of the children in line with the theme. At the moment children are involved with Spring and Easter activities such as decorating baskets, threading wool through holes in egg shaped paper, going for walks and taking pictures of the countryside in bloom. Staff are flexible in their approach to children's learning, for example, activities are quickly relocated outdoors so that children can make the most of good weather. Siblings can easily meet up with each other informally throughout the day because of the open plan layout of the building and routines actively support this to happen regularly as well. There are very warm relationships between staff and children. The quality of conversations throughout the kindergarten between staff and children are a clear example of staff's genuine interest in their work and their keenness to learn from the children so that they can support them well.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. All staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. They are all involved in contributing their ideas to planning and the manager distils these into the medium and short term plans. Written plans are checked on a daily basis so that all staff are kept aware of the purpose of the activities. Staff are confident in using a variety of teaching methods and are especially skilled at questioning. There is a balance of adult-led and child-initiated learning and staff are flexible in delivery of the planned curriculum. There are some very useful home-made teaching resources such as the number line and the weather chart but these are not placed at a level where children can easily use them. Children's progress is assessed against the stepping stones towards the early learning goals and staff observe children on an ongoing basis to build up an accurate

picture of their abilities. However, these assessments are not yet used to fully influence planning to ensure their next steps are achieved as effectively as possible.

Children make good progress in all the areas of learning. Children are developing good concentration skills and sit well and listen to stories and persevere with activities such as threading. They are developing their independence well and make decisions about what they want to do such as selecting from a range of recycled materials that they need to make a model of their choice. Most are able to explain clearly to adults and each other what they intend to make and how they will do it. Children often choose to use the designated mark making area and choose appropriate resources to attempt to write. They recognise their names on their place mats. Older children can count up to ten easily and some are quick to point out that although they are the number 'five' when being counted they are actually 'three' because that is their age. They thoroughly enjoy playing number games where they match colours and equate spots on dice with numbers. Weekly cookery activities support their understanding of weight and capacity. Children explore and investigate outdoors, finding 'dinosaur eggs' and searching for insects. They are comfortable with technology and are becoming skilled in using a digital camera and computer mouse. They enjoy painting freely and also do observational paintings such as that of a daffodil. They regularly involve themselves in role play and small world activities, using their imagination. Children help themselves to musical instruments and enthusiastically clap and sing in rhythm.

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

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. All children are made welcome in the kindergarten and their backgrounds are valued. Staff gather information from parents when children first start and continue to update this through ongoing chats and their own observations to ensure that children's individual needs are met. Plenty of resources are available for children to use as part of their everyday play which promote positive images of all members of society and the wider world. Children's own and differing cultures are celebrated and reinforced through activities linked to events such as Easter, Hanukah and the Japanese Kite festival and national events such as Children in Need. Strong links with the community help children to feel part of it. For example, staff from the local garden centre visit regularly to help the children develop their outdoor area and plant bulbs and vegetables. Children's high self-esteem is a priority with the kindergarten and this is reinforced with a written policy. Every opportunity is taken to help children feel good about themselves, not in the least when celebrating their birthdays with a pretend cake, candles to blow out, singing and 'measuring' them to see if they really are their new age! Children with learning difficulties are included very well and staff work closely with parents and all the agencies involved so that their needs are met. Children behave well on the whole as a result of staff acting as good role models and being consistent in their approaches to managing any undesirable behaviour. If any children have difficulty in behaving well staff observe them to see if any situations trigger outbursts so that they can support the children to handle these better. The consistent use of praise encourages children to do their best and behave as well as they can.

Parents speak positively about the kindergarten, the staff and the progress their children are making. They appreciate the written information they receive which includes a parent pack when they first start, newsletters and half-termly activity plans. Babies go home each day with a diary that lets parents know about what they have been doing, the bottles and food they have eaten, sleeps they may have had and anything else pertinent to their care and welfare. Useful notices are displayed and parents opinions are requested and considered by sending

out questionnaires. However, there are no clear details available to parents should they wish at any time to contact the regulator. The partnership with parents and carers regarding nursery education is good. Parents receive regular written reports on their children's progress and can see their records at any time. The recent introduction of a parent's evening for the parents of those children who are about to start receiving nursery education helps remind them about the Foundation Stage curriculum and how children learn. Although parents are made aware of activities that the children will be doing in the kindergarten they are not given any further information about how they can support their learning at home.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The organisation of the kindergarten contributes greatly to children's welfare. The strong links between the staff and committee ensure that any issues are dealt with promptly. The group has a solid understanding of its responsibilities and has rigorous procedures in place for the recruitment, appointment and vetting of staff. The majority of staff are qualified and those who are not are encouraged to take up qualification training. All staff attend training events regularly. The team work in the kindergarten is excellent. Deployment of staff is well thought out and staff are swiftly redeployed if necessary to ensure children's well-being is maintained at all times. All staff are gradually becoming more familiar with baby care, which is a recent provision in the kindergarten, because the arrangements are in place for them to spend time in the baby room with the supervisor to learn more about caring for this age group of children in a group situation. Induction and appraisal systems are in place and the manager makes the most of individual staff's strengths in the best interests of everyone. Regular meetings give everyone opportunities to share practice and plan for the future. All the necessary records are maintained well and policies and procedures are reviewed regularly. This provides a strong framework for the care of children. Overall, children's needs are met.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The kindergarten has good working relationships with local authority advisers and consults with them regularly. The manager provides clear leadership and works closely with staff informally to monitor and evaluate the provision on an ongoing basis. They recognise when things are not working so well, such as the layout of the room, and are confident to try out other ways to improve experiences for the children. The manager is aware that there is always room for improvement and knows that formalising the present systems will provide a more useful structure to support future developments.

### **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.

## 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):

- increase opportunities for children to become more independent especially regarding putting own coats on and interacting with wall displays(also applies to nursery education)
- ensure the details of the regulator are updated in the event a parent wishes to make contact

#### 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 more effective use of assessment to plan the next steps for individual children
- further develop parents involvement in their children's learning by helping them to support children at home

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)