

Humpty Dumpty Pre-school

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110128
Inspection date	17 May 2007
Inspector	Carol Readman
Setting Address	Monxton Road, Andover, Hampshire, SP11 8HT
Telephone number	01264 382767
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Registered person	Humpty Dumpty Pre-school
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	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.

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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Humpty Dumpty Play-School opened in 1974. It is situated on a military site on the edge of the army base in Andover. There are three buildings with one themed for messy play, one for role-play, construction and indoor physical play and the third is divided into smaller rooms for sensory, maths and musical activities. There is a large outside play area divided into four areas with hard standing, a formal garden, a small enclosed free flow play area and a large play garden area. The play school is open Monday - Friday 09:00 - 12:00 and 13:30 - 16:00, term time only.

There are currently 68 children, aged from two years nine months to under five years, on roll. Of these, 47 children receive funding for early education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

There are nine members of staff and two student placements. All staff have appropriate early years qualifications and two are extending their qualifications. The group receive support from the local authority and have accreditation from the Pre-School Learning Alliance.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children at the setting benefit from a healthy life style. They learn good hygiene routines such as washing their hands before eating and after visiting the toilet. Children know they must wash their hands when they come in from playing outdoors for snack because they can not eat with dirty hands. Staff encourage children to use tissues to wipe noses and dispose of used tissues in the bin. Children learn not to spread germs by avoiding coughing and sneezing over others. This helps to protect children from catching infections from others.

Children enjoy a wide variety of healthy snacks. Staff encourage the children to try new foods, such as mini rice cakes and the children join in conversations about healthy foods. Children know that eating fish is good for them and will help them to keep healthy. Snack time is flexible and children are able to come to the snack table when they wish. They find their names before sitting down to enjoy making their own ham and cucumber rolls or helping themselves to a variety of pieces of fruit. Snack time is a social occasion and children chat happily to their friends and members of staff. Children enjoy helping themselves to milk or water at this time. Children can access drinking water at all times.

Children have excellent opportunities to further their physical development as they play on a wide range of equipment at the setting. They develop coordination skills as they balance on stepping stones, ride tricycles and climb on the climbing frame. There is a strong emphasis on playing out in the fresh air, even on rainy days, when children put on their boots and zip up their coats to play outside, making good use of tents. This helps to promote children developing a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a warm and welcoming environment. When the children and their parents arrive they hang up the children's coats in the cloak room and make their way to the messy room. Parents register their own children as the children run off to greet their friends and begin to play. The children benefit from an extensive range of bright and stimulating toys and resources that are organised into themed areas. For example, there are smaller rooms for maths, music and sensory play where children can work on focused activities with their key workers. Large tents in the garden area allow children to make full use of the outdoors, even on rainy days.

Ensuring that children can play in safety is a primary concern at the setting. Staff check toys and resources on a daily basis. There is a comprehensive risk assessment to ensure the buildings and resources are safe. However, the new outside areas have not been fully risk assessed. The main garden gate is not locked and some areas of the wooden edged paths are proud of the ground. Staff are vigilant in their supervision of the children as they play and move about the in all areas of this large setting in order to ensure their wellbeing .Staff teach the children safe practices such as not climbing on the handrails or running between the buildings.

There are good procedures for the safe collection of children. Staff ensure that children do not leave the provision until parents or authorised carers collect them. Staff record any changes to this so that all are clear on who is collecting each child. Staff have sound knowledge of child

protection issues. This safeguards children's welfare. Staff are aware of their role in child protection and the nominated person is aware of the routes of referral and local procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time in the pre-school. They settle quickly and soon become engrossed in their play. They greet each other warmly and chat happily to staff and their friends. They experience a broad and varied range of both planned and spontaneous activities which contribute to their development and learning. Children are very confident and extend their own play by offering visitors to the setting 'diner' and a pretend cup of tea. Children take great pride in their achievements showing their paintings to their friends and the staff. They are free to move about the setting, playing in the messy room and free play areas, both indoor and outdoor. They explore their environment fully as they help in the formal garden, or watch the tadpoles swimming in a tank.

Children tell staff and visitors about what they did yesterday and talk about their holidays. The staff are genuinely interested in what the children have to say and listen to them carefully asking them about what food they like and what they are painting. Relationships between staff and children are excellent. Children play happily in a warm and caring environment where adults skilfully support their development. Staff meet children's individual needs extremely well. For example, children ask if they can have the emergency services tabards out in the garden tomorrow to use in their play. The staff member makes a note of this on the daily plans and ensures they are put out the next day. This makes children feel valued and fosters high self-esteem.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Children at the setting have an excellent attitude to learning. They are happy, settled and purposefully engaged at all times. Children are very involved in their own learning. They offer ideas and respond to challenges with great enthusiasm. For example, they attempt to walk across the wobbly stepping stones, gratefully receiving a steadying hand from a caring adult.

A wide range of carefully planned, fun activities with a clear educational focus helps to ensure that children make rapid progress in all areas of learning, given their starting points and capabilities. Staff plan to provide a broad curriculum tailored to meet the individual needs of all the children. Weekly planning sessions focus on the needs of the children that have been observed and recorded by staff. Planned activities give children ample time to explore and apply what they know. The staff build on this to extend the children's learning. For example, during a painting and gluing session children copy their names that staff write for them. Staff praise their achievements and show them how to form the letters correctly. Staff skilfully weave the learning from different areas into the activities. In this way, a creative painting activity becomes an opportunity to promote language and communication skills by talking about the rainbow the child is painting. Snack time provides an excellent opportunity to discuss the merits of eating fish. Children are also able to practise their communication skills, chatting to other children and adults about the house they are painting or how they are experimenting with colours.

Staff ensure that they miss no opportunity to extend and develop children's learning. They have high expectations of all the children and present them with sufficient challenges to progress

their learning. Staff use their in-depth knowledge of child development and the Foundation Stage Curriculum to promote excellent outcomes for children. They consistently make best use of time and resources to support children's learning. Detailed evaluations of planned activities ensure they are suitable for the children. Evaluations are used to improve the activity for the future. For example, it was found that there was not enough space for a music and movement activity so it was decided to improve this by using a larger area in the future. Staff record observations of children to use in planning to promote further learning for each child at the setting.

Personal, social and emotional development is particularly well supported. Children learn to be caring and considerate. They show high levels of self esteem, fostered by constant praise and encouragement. Children play very well together and staff help them to work together cooperatively in activities such as playing the parachute game where all must work together.

There is a strong emphasis on communication and literacy skills. Staff sit with children as they play and engage children in conversations about what they are doing, their families and events that happened yesterday. As a result, children enjoy telling staff and visitors their news and discussing everything from recent trips to local landmarks to their favourite fairy princesses. Children are beginning to understand that written words carry meanings as they see their own names and those of their friends at registration and snack times. Staff support early reading skills by finding children simple books where they can link words to pictures and reading favourite stories to develop a love of books. Staff offer excellent support to help children write their names on their work. They write the name for the child to copy. As a result, many children can write their name, forming letters correctly.

Children develop excellent early mathematical skills because staff do not miss opportunities to use mathematics in play activities. Children learn to recognise numbers by playing 'Can you find the number...?' games with staff. They use mathematical language as they play in the water tray talking about being half full or empty. Children use counting and matching naturally. For example, they count out the number of coloured pegs they need to fill the holes in the peg board.

Children make and design using a wide variety of materials. They use paint, glue and glitter to complete butterfly pictures. They use twigs and cones, that they collect from the garden area for themselves, to create a 'minibeast' collage. There is a strong emphasis on learning about the natural world that is all around them and children are highly interested in plants, animals and insects in the garden. They know that tadpoles change into frogs as there is a tank in the messy room where they can watch this happening before they release the frogs into the pond in the formal garden. They develop a sense of time as they talk about their own lives to their friends. Many talk about what they did yesterday and are keen to tell visitors about their exciting holidays and adventures when they clung to mummy as they raced down a high water slide or went in a lift to the top of a tower where they were so high the clouds where 'out there' (pointing on a level with themselves) and not 'up there' (pointing to the sky). Children take great interest in their environment fostered by staff who skilfully encourage children to recount their stories and reflect on their feelings.

Children are skilful at using the computer and complete simple programs with ease. They have good ideas on the use of modern technology in our everyday lives using the toy phone booth to make telephone calls to their friends and cook pretend meals in the toy oven.

Children have well developed large and small muscle control as they have constant opportunities to develop skills as they learn to run, jump, slide and skip in outdoor play. Writing, drawing and playing with small construction toys, such as Lego, develops small muscle control, concentration and hand-eye coordination. Children enjoy sessions with musical instruments and movement to music to further develop their physical and creative skills. Children have highly developed imaginations. They pretend to be princesses and act out road traffic situations managing the traffic and working as members of the emergency services. In general, the level of children's achievements and progress towards early learning goals, given their capabilities and starting points at the setting, is excellent. Continual and rigorous monitoring procedures enable practitioners to maintain the high standards of teaching.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff know the children that they care for very well. They help them settle into the setting and continue to ensure that the children are happy and feel they really belong. As a result, children at the setting are relaxed, settled and at home. Children have positive attitudes to each other and play harmoniously together. The staff support children in helping to plan their play. Children enjoy free flow play where all can choose what they wish to play with. Staff ensure there are opportunities for all to take part and have a turn. For example, a child waited patiently for a turn using the goggles. When it came to his turn he had to go in for snack. The member of staff held the goggles and assured him he could have his turn when he returned. She explained to others that she was holding them for his turn as he had waited patiently. This helps children to understand the need to share fairly and allow all to take part. Children learn to care for and respect others, aided by the staff who are excellent role models. Staff treat all the children as equals and support them in all activities.

Children have opportunities to learn about all in society. They have a wide range of toys and posters on the walls that help children form positive images of all in a diverse society. The provision welcomes children with learning difficulties and disabilities. Staff become experienced in their care, following individual plans and working with outside agencies to support them.

Children are very well behaved and play well together. Staff acknowledge the children's appropriate behaviour and praise their kindness to others. This helps children feel valued and special. Children respond well to positive strategies and older children are beginning to learn to care for and help the younger children at the setting. For example, they pass them bricks to build towers and help them find cups to make visitors cups of tea in the home corner.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn to reflect on themselves and their relationships with others, such as family members. They learn to wonder at how plants and flowers grow from what they can see in their special nursery garden. They watch the tadpoles and reflect how they are changing and growing. Children interact well with both other children and the adults that care for them. They enjoy social snack times, talking about their friends and family. Children learn to respect others in a diverse society and learn about the wider world community.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents at the setting receive comprehensive information on the Foundation Stage when their children enter the pre-school for the first time. Parents feel that they are very well informed about their child's education. Staff develop a friendly, working relationship with parents who value the setting and are very happy with the care their children receive. Parents feel that staff are approachable and interested in their

children. Information regarding children's key worker is displayed on the notice board and parents freely exchange information about their child's achievements on a daily basis. Parents are invited to come in and talk to children about their work. In this way children learn about the world around them in ways that help them value all in society. Parents are encouraged to continue their children's education at home through joint projects such as growing runner bean plants. This gives parents opportunities to help children learn about how plants grow and help their children distinguish between real life and the fairytale world of magic beans and giants. Parents and staff work together to ensure that children receive continuity of care in a warm and friendly setting.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting is well organised to care for children. The manager and staff have a clear sense of purpose and look continuously to improving the provision and the already good quality care they provide for children. Children's care is enhanced by generally efficient and effective organisation. All the necessary regulatory documentation is in place and up to date.

There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures in place to ensure that children are protected and cared for by adults committed to the wellbeing of children and supporting their development. Good use of the environment and constant adult supervision contributes to the health, safety, enjoyment and achievement for all the children. They are free to play in a warm, caring environment where all participate fully. There are good policies and procedures in place that generally work well in practice to promote children's health and safety. However, not all areas have been fully risk assessed and potential hazards minimised. Staff are very keen to attend training to update and extend their knowledge as part of providing high quality care.

The quality of leadership and management is outstanding. All at the setting share a clear vision of providing the very highest quality of childcare and nursery education. The excellent relationships between the manager, staff and parents means that all work together to provide a warm, nurturing environment where children flourish. The manager is inspirational in raising the staff's awareness of teaching and effective teaching methods. This has a very positive influence on the staff. They teach with great enthusiasm in truly fun and effective ways. All work as a strong, committed team constantly providing highly enjoyable and stimulating experiences for children. Staff are given responsibility for areas such as co-ordinating planning and working as special needs co-ordinators. They have every opportunity to develop areas of expertise and put these to excellent use to promote the welfare and development of the children. Staff are highly motivated to ensure that every child is treated as an individual and there is equality of opportunity for all. The manager and her staff seek constantly to improve the exceptional high quality service they provide and are keen to implement new working practices successfully. All at the setting go to exceptional lengths to see that children receive the very highest standards of care and education at all times. The provision meets the need of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there were a number of recommendations made to improve the provision and childcare and education.

To improve safety in the garden area the setting was asked to minimise the hazard of spiky plants that could pose a threat to children. Staff have removed these plants. This improves safety in the garden area.

The setting was asked to ensure that books are displayed in an attractive manner in main room to increase and encourage children to freely access. There have been significant changes to the setting including the addition of a new building. Children are able to access a wide range of appropriate books in each room. Staff help children to enjoy books by encouraging their use and reading favourite stories to children. This improves children's early literacy skills and fosters interest in books and the written word.

The setting was asked to provide more opportunities to write for a purpose. Staff now provide children with paper and pencils in role play areas so they can take messages in the office and write shopping lists in the home corner. Children make good use of the white boards around the setting to write and draw. Staff sit with the children as they complete paintings and artwork in order to help children write their names on their work. Staff write the name for the children to copy pointing out how to form the letters correctly. This helps improve children's writing and handwriting skills.

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.

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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):

- conduct a full risk assessment to include positioning of equipment and safety in outdoor areas.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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