



Mother Goose Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127392
Inspection date	27 September 2005
Inspector	Tracy Larnach
Setting Address	16-18 Bellevue Road, Ramsgate, Kent, CT11 8LB
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Registered person	Petra Agnew
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mother Goose Nursery School opened in 1994. It operates from a terraced property in Ramsgate. Children have access to four areas for work and play. The nursery serves the local area. A maximum of 36 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 throughout the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 45 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 31 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with special educational needs and supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 11 staff, of these 7 of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There is 1 staff member working towards a qualification.

The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment where they are learning the importance of good hygiene and personal care. They wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Children help themselves to tissues which are readily available. They know this helps to prevent the spread of germs. Children move around the classroom with confidence. They use the stairs to the art room safely and show good spatial awareness. They are becoming competent when using small equipment; for example, using a range of small tools when playing with the play dough. They enjoy outside play; however, there is no planning for large muscle development. As a result, the more able children are not challenged appropriately. Children enjoy free access to the decking outside during some of the lunch time sessions. However, a system to allow regular free flow to outside is not fully established. Staff do not talk to the children about the way activity affects their bodies so they do not learn why they need a drink or a rest.

Children may bring in their own lunch or have the lunch prepared on site. A two week cycle menu is displayed for the parents. The staff are currently looking at ways to improve the nutritional content of the food served. This will ensure children's dietary requirements are met. Children are encouraged to eat fruit regularly and are learning that fruit is good for them. However, regardless of the type of snack offered, snack time concludes with a biscuit. By reminding children that their biscuit is coming as soon as they have eaten their fruit or sandwich; staff are encouraging them to look forward to it. This does not support them in developing a positive attitude to healthy food. Children are offered regular drinks throughout the day and may help themselves to water. As a result, they remain hydrated. Staff gather all the relevant information regarding diet and medical history. However, this does not always contain sufficient detail to enable staff to act quickly in an emergency; for example, details of allergies. Therefore, there is a potential risk of staff not immediately recognising a reaction.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to move around the classroom safely, freely and independently. Staff generally deploy themselves well. However, there are no formal responsibilities for tasks or areas should an incident occur. The manager undertakes regular risk assessments and documents them in the diary with any action taken. This ensures children are safe from hazards. However, a clear system is not in place for the staff in her absence. Children are learning about keeping themselves safe. Staff remind them to walk down the slope to the playground and to hold onto the banister when walking up the stairs. However, opportunities to practise evacuation procedures are infrequent. Procedures for safe arrival and departure are in place and only staff and parents are permitted access to the nursery. A visitors books is kept for all visitors. As a result of these measures, children are safe from individuals who have no business in the nursery.

Children select activities from a range of toys and equipment which meet safety standards. Staff check them regularly to ensure they remain in good repair. Staff have the required documentation in place, but do not always ensure accuracy in order to safeguard the children's welfare. For example, the registration system is not working effectively. The times of arrival and departure are on the parents register which is not kept up to date. Accidents are not all signed by parents. As a result there is a potential risk to children. There is an adequate number of staff trained in first aid to respond quickly in an emergency. Staff have sufficient knowledge of child protection procedures to enable them to recognise when a child is in danger. This means they can act in the child's best interest. However, the nursery's child protection policy does not reflect this.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff are kind, caring and supportive which enables the children to settle quickly. Children enter the nursery confidently. They soon get busy, selecting from the toys and activities on offer. A settling in procedure allows children to gradually settle into the routine; for example, a new child was supported on her first full day. A staff member played with her quietly explaining what the other children were doing. By the end of the day she was joining in happily. Staff prepare the environment so that children may self-select and are able to clean up after themselves. This promotes their independence. Staff caring for the younger children have begun to use the Birth to three matters framework. However, it is not yet fully implemented. Staff are scheduled for further training to assist them in planning appropriately for the under threes. The younger children integrate well with the pre-school age children. However observations are not used to plan activities to ensure individual needs are being met.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Although the children are happy, settled and enjoy coming to the nursery; the planning of activities is not adequately meeting their needs. Planning is not always accomplished and staff decide what to do on a daily basis. Children are occupied in the setting rather than challenged. For example, the range of activities, toys and equipment keeps them busy; however, they

do not show excitement or enthusiasm regarding the activities on offer. There is no differentiation in the activities. Observations are not used to ensure the children are making satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Records do not adequately show whether children make enough progress in relation to their starting points. Therefore, staff do not effectively build on what the children already know. Staff interact with the children regularly. However, they do not monitor where children are going and what they are doing. As a result, there are missed opportunities to complete meaningful observations, extend children's learning and ensure their needs effectively are met.

Children speak confidently to peers and adults. They develop a love of books and an interest in reading. They read stories both with an adult and independently, they revisit favourite stories repeatedly. There are some materials for mark making but many missed opportunities to encourage children's literacy development. For example, the children's names are in a pocket for self-registration; however, they are hardly referred to. Staff do not increase children's awareness of the different purpose for writing; for example, by referring to print in the environment. Children count and recognise numbers that are important to them. They like to find their age on the number line outside. However, activities relating to number are not always meaningful or appropriate, resulting in children feeling frustrated and unsuccessful. For example, the 3-year-olds were asked to write the number eight after talking about the time. Children are learning about everyday technology when they enjoy using telephones in role play. However, the computer is not readily available for the children's use. As a result, children are not able to develop their skills and confidence in using the computer and mouse. Some materials depict diversity however these are limited. The children celebrate festivals but there is no planning or photographs to show how this is presented. Children recently created a nature table. However, it was not visited by any of the children, so failed to stimulate their curiosity. Children use their imagination; for example, they enjoy making meals in the role play area and creating with the play dough. They enjoy singing sessions and are animated when singing favourite songs. Children were seen exploring sound and music however, this was done independently with no staff interaction. Children are learning to use tools such as play dough, cutters and scissors. They enjoy activities such as making their own sandwiches for snack. These activities are developing their small muscles. They do not have daily opportunities to play with sand and water. Staff said that they enjoy playing in wet porridge and lentils to further develop their senses.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff greet children and their parents or carers warmly, as a result positive relationships are being formed. Children behave very well and staff use praise to promote good behaviour. Children learn the importance of social skills such as sharing and taking turns. For example, with the use of the song sack. Children's self-esteem is promoted when they are chosen to select a song. However, staff do not have a system in place to ensure all children have a turn and rely on memory. As a result, some children are missed out and feel unimportant. Children talk happily about their home life and things important to them. As a result, they are learning that

they all have differences. However, there are limited resources that reflect diversity in our society. Staff are proactive in providing care for all children. The special education needs coordinator works with the parents and outside agencies to assist in developing individual education plans so that the children's needs are met. Children confidently decide what to do. They are developing their independence as they help themselves to drinks, move around the nursery and visit the toilet. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership between parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents feel informed about the nursery and are happy with the information provided. They feel welcomed by the staff. Parents are given written information about the nursery and opportunities to discuss policies and procedures. This helps staff and parents work together. Parents feel informed about the Foundation Stage curriculum and what their children are learning. They are invited to view their children's records, however the records suggest that this is not done regularly. There is no evidence that the parents contribute to their child's assessment.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from staff who are very caring. All staff work well together and are developing as a team. However, not all systems are in place for an effective provision; for example, a written staff deployment plan. Staff are using the self evaluation form to monitor how they are providing appropriate outcomes for children to improve the care provided. There are suitable contingency plans in place to cover for absences. This ensures children have appropriate supervision to keep them safe. However, not all systems are passed on to the staff covering; for example, the morning risk assessment. The manager is proactive about staff training and there is an effective induction program. In addition, she undertakes group and individual staff meetings. These are used to discuss issues and review staff's knowledge and understanding of the National Standards. Not all policies and procedures work in practise to keep children healthy and safeguard their welfare. The provision does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the setting is inadequate. There is a range of toys and activities for the children to select from but the learning intentions are not clear. There has not been enough progress made to rectify previous key issues in the education programme. Planning and assessment procedures are not consistently documented. Observations made are not used to inform planning, which shows no differentiation to effectively meet all children's needs. There is no system in place for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the educational programme in order to ensure that children to make as much progress as they can.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection there were six recommendations made for the care of the children and five key issues for the education programme. The recommendations were to, develop and implement a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating

the effectiveness of the group's policies, procedures and current practice throughout the setting. The group is now using the self-evaluation form for review, monitoring and evaluating their practice. The manager has written notes for improvement for each of the outcomes for children. She completed it in April, June and September. She intends to continue using it to evaluate and improve the care offered in the setting. However, it will remain a recommendation of this inspection due to some of the current procedures not working effectively. They were asked to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework, and implement a system of assessment to inform the planning of activities to support children's learning. The staff who work with the under threes are using the Birth to three matters framework. However, they have not yet received the training that will help them plan appropriately for this age group. To improve the outcomes for the children under three and the activities and experiences offered this area needs further development. Therefore, this will remain a recommendation of this inspection.

The setting was asked to develop staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. All staff are now secure in their knowledge and understanding of child protection. Staff are able to act in the children's best interest if they are concerned about their welfare. They were also asked to ensure that all areas of the nursery are maintained to a high standard of cleanliness and good hygiene procedures for both adults and children are consistently applied. This has been met; a cleaning system is in place. Good hygiene procedures are followed by all staff and they encourage children in good hygiene practices to keep them healthy. They were asked to ensure that children are never left alone with persons that had not completed the all the appropriate checks. Procedures are in place so this is met. Finally, they were asked to make sure that the organisation and structure of the routine ensures all children receive a balanced range of opportunities to support their learning. After the last inspection, the routine was reviewed. This has improved and the children have opportunity for self-selection, choice and independence.

The action plan was reviewed that addressed each of the five key issues from the last inspection. They had been addressed with a target, action, responsibilities, resources, timescale, monitoring and evidence. However, little progress has been made to address the key issues and improve the education programme for the children.

Complaints since the last inspection

In February 05, a concern was raised related to Standard 13 - Child Protection. The provider was asked to carry out an internal investigation and to submit a copy of their Child Protection policy and advise what training staff undertake and how their knowledge and understanding of Child Protection issues are developed. The provider responded with a detailed report, together with copies of the further information requested. The information supplied demonstrated that the provider was adhering to the Standard under investigation and that they remain qualified for registration.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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 snack times and meal times promote healthy eating and attitudes to food
- ensure that all children receive opportunities for challenging activities in their physical programme.
- ensure fire evacuation takes place regularly so that all children are familiar with the procedure
- continue to develop the use of the Birth to three matters framework
- develop and implement a system for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the group's policies, procedures and current practice throughout the setting.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop rigorous systems to monitor, review and evaluate the nursery practise to support staff in the care and education they provide-monitoring where children are going and what they are doing
- develop rigorous systems for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the educational programme
- develop the leadership and management of the setting in order to support staff with the care and education they provide
- improve the use of assessment in order to identify children's next steps in learning and develop the planning to include what the children are expected to learn and how staff will differentiate to develop individual children's progress.

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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