

Highview Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	309338
Inspection date	26 April 2007
Inspector	Victoria Gail Halliwell

Setting Address	144 Tower Hill Road, Upholland, Skelmersdale, Lancashire, WN8 0DT
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Registered person	Jean Ann Hurst
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care
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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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Highview Nursery is one of two nurseries run by an individual provider. It opened in 1992 and operates from two main play rooms with adjacent areas for messy play. The nursery is situated in Up Holland a semi-rural area of West Lancashire a short distance from Highview baby unit. A maximum of 36 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 until 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 42 children aged from two to five years on roll. Of these, 22 children receive funding for early education.

The nursery employs six members of staff, who all hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Some good practices are in place to maintain the children's good health, although these are not always consistently implemented. For example, children routinely wash their hands before meals; this practice is monitored and children are learning that they must use soap and dry their hands on individual paper towels. However, when children use a potty or visit the toilet at other times, they are not routinely encouraged to wash their hands. Appropriate products are generally used to help prevent the spread of infection and ensure children's tables and nappy changing areas are clean. Although, staff occasionally use less suitable alternatives, such as baby wipes. Records relating to the children's health are satisfactorily maintained, although further improvements could be made to medication records. Clear exclusion policies are well implemented to ensure children who become unwell, do not pose a hazard to other children.

Children are developing healthy eating habits, menus have recently been reviewed and careful consideration has been given to the nutritional value of meals. As a result, children enjoy health options, such as freshly made vegetable soup with sandwiches, followed by a yogurt and a selection of fruit. Details of children's meals and snacks are displayed daily for parents' information. Water is continually available, so that children can help themselves or request assistance with the water dispenser when they become thirsty during the day.

Children have daily opportunities to play outside in the fresh air and sunlight, which contributes to a healthy lifestyle. The outdoor area is suitably equipped to meet the developmental needs of all children, for example, providing small and large climbing apparatus. Older children climb with confidence and demonstrate increasing skill as they manoeuvre prams, tricycles and cars around the obstacles in their path. Children have very good opportunities to practise and refine their fine motor skills, by using small tools and equipment, for example, using scissors to cut paper and dough, threading beads, and operating the controls to steer remote controlled vehicles.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a strong sense of belonging, they enter the nursery confidently and move around freely, making purposeful choices about how they spend their time. The addition of a large conservatory extension has significantly increased the amount of available play space. As a result, children enjoy a spacious environment where they can spread out their activities and resources. For example, a group of children are able to lie down and wheel their newly constructed models along the floor without hindering the play activities of the other children. Such free space also enables the children to construct roadways and operate remote controlled toys. Smaller areas of the nursery are also well utilised, to ensure a broad range of resources are continually accessible. For example, the reception area facilitates a range of creative activities.

Attention to children's safety is good, established systems are well implemented, so that children can move around the setting and play safely. Staff provide high levels of supervision and work very effectively to ensure all children are supervised as they move freely between the three play areas. Prior to outdoor play the area is checked and again staff deployment is good to ensure children are well supervised. Good systems are in place to ensure that children can be evacuated quickly and safely in the event of a fire or emergency situation. Fire drills are practised

monthly, consequently, staff and children are familiar with the procedure to follow if they need to evacuate. Children are learning to keep themselves safe, as staff routinely explain the possible consequences of hazardous actions, for example, leaning back on a chair. Planned activities help children to identify dangerous items and promote discussion about staying safe, for example, the role play kettle is used to promote discussions about the dangers of the kettle at home.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. Good induction procedures ensure all staff are familiar with the setting's child protection procedure and understand their duty to record and report any concerns they may have. Designated persons are clear about their role and know how to report any possible child protection concerns to protect a child from possible harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy secure relationships with a consistent staff team, as a result they are happy and enjoy their time at the nursery. Children of all ages move around confidently and express themselves freely. For example, one three-year-old boy dresses up in a fairy outfit and puts a handbag over his shoulder, before enthusiastically joining in with a member of staff, to sing number rhymes. Good relationships are evident between the mixed age group. Older children are keen to assist and support the two-year-olds within the group, whilst many two-year-olds keenly observe and attempt to mirror the actions of the older children. For example, older children demonstrate to younger children how to click on the mouse when they sit next to them at the computer. Staff are aware of individual children's needs and provide additional support to help new children settle within the group. For example, providing favourite activities and one to one attention for children when they arrive and ensuring they are able to access individual comforters throughout the day.

Play materials and resources are accessible and very well presented, good staff support ensures that children of all ages benefit from the broad range of continuous provision. The experienced staff team routinely adapt activities and provide additional support, so that younger or less able children are able to achieve and want to persevere with tasks. For example, threading beads or operating electronic toys. Staff plan an interesting and varied range of activities, which with staff support encourage all children to make progress. However written plans focus on the Foundation Stage curriculum and do not take account of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Although, individual records for children under three years, are clearly linked to the framework and include observations of children's achievements, alongside photographs and examples of the children's work.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children benefit from a broad range of well planned activities and experiences, which help them make good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff provide a stimulating and accessible learning environment which supports the six areas of children's learning. As a result, children have routine opportunities to practise and refine new skills, for example, using a range of mark making materials or operating the computer. Children operate with increasing independence, clearing away unwanted items from the water tray so they have more room and selecting additional resources to extend their play.

Children are interested in the written word and understand that print carries meaning. Children routinely select their self-registration name cards and use them as a guide, so that they can

label their own pictures. More able children confidently form recognisable letters and write their own name. Children enjoy books and stories, they explore the contents of the story sacks with delight, using the resources whilst they retell the story of the 'Hungry Caterpillar'. Children have many routine opportunities to count and consolidate their understanding of number, staff regularly question children, asking how many they have. For example, when threading beads or counting the number of windows on the house they have drawn. Number rhymes are sung spontaneously and good use is made of visual props, so that children can learn to calculate how many will be left if they take one away or add one more.

Children are learning about the natural world through a range of practical activities, such as growing their own beans, a natural progression from the story of 'Jack and the Beanstalk'. Children are knowledgeable about the lifecycle of the frog, they paint representational pictures from photographs and monitor the tadpoles, waiting for the legs to develop. One child who is eager to assist with feeding the tadpoles, studies the pictures in a reference book before returning to make comparisons with the tadpoles in the bowl. Children express themselves freely, they have many opportunities to be creative and enjoy a wide range of sensory experiences, such as shaving foam mixed with paint or soap flakes and water. The role play area is well utilised, to provide a range of imaginary play experiences, such as an opticians, vets or Chinese restaurant.

Staff have a sound knowledge of children's development and ensure planned learning for individual children is included on the medium term plans. Planned activities are routinely evaluated and details of each child's progress or area for development are noted. Records of children's individual achievements are maintained in each of the six areas of learning. Although these records are not directly linked to the stepping stones, or the early learning goals until this information is collated, when children leave the setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is appropriately fostered. Children have developed secure relationships with staff and their peers. Pre-school children are supportive of one another and play co-operatively, taking turns and sharing resources. For example, they understand a maximum of two children may play in the water and wait patiently for their turn. Pre-school children are also very understanding of the needs of younger children within the group, who are still developing their awareness of socially acceptable behaviour. Good levels of supervision and the implementation of positive behaviour management strategies, such as distraction ensure both age groups play harmoniously side by side.

Children benefit from daily access to resources which reflect positive images of culture, gender and disability. Posters are prominently displayed at low level, play materials, such as jigsaw puzzles which detail a wide range of celebrations and festivals, dressing up clothes and play figures help increase children's awareness of a diversity. Children have many planned opportunities to explore the culture and beliefs of others, through interesting and practical activities. For example, banners and lanterns are used to decorate the room at Chinese New Year, children look at fortune cookies and Chinese writing, the role play area is converted into a Chinese restaurant and the children make a large dragon and parade to Chinese music.

Parents are very well informed about the operation of the setting. All parents receive a detailed prospectus; this includes details of all policies and procedures, which parents sign to show their agreement. Details of the daily routines and the range of experiences the children enjoy are

also included. Information, such as details of meals and snacks are displayed daily. The notice board is routinely reviewed and used to inform parents of revisions to policies and details of recent staff training and qualifications. The nursery value what parents have to say and encourage feedback from parents both formally and informally. Parents are aware of the setting's open door policy and many speak daily to staff as they drop off and collect their children. Parents are also invited to express their views and opinions about planned changes, for example, revisions to menus.

Partnership with parents of children in receipt of nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are encouraged to support their child's learning at home. Staff routinely send home details of planned themes and suggested activities for parents to complete with their child. Staff are interested in what the children learn at home, for example, one child takes in the 'book' she has made at home with her parents, this is displayed alongside the books the children have made in the nursery. However, parents are not informed about the Foundation Stage Curriculum and are not sufficiently informed of their child's progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

A clear management structure is in place, the three members of the management team are very clear about their respective roles and responsibilities and work closely to ensure they are well informed about all aspects of the provision. Clear systems are in place to ensure all staff are appropriately vetted and, therefore, suitable to work with young children. Induction procedures are particularly good. A comprehensive guide is used to ensure all aspects of the nursery's operation are covered, this is routinely revisited to ensure staff have a sound knowledge of the setting's policies and procedures. New staff are well supported by the nursery owner and experienced members of the staff team.

The quality of the leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. A member of the management team has lead responsibility for planning and monitoring the delivery of the nursery education. The nursery owner routinely reviews plans and makes general observations of their implementation during her time in the nursery. Both the nursery owner and manager meet with an advisory teacher to review their progress and identify areas for development.

Children's welfare, care and learning is effectively promoted. Children benefit from a stable and experienced staff team, who work very well together to meet the individual and group needs of the children for most of the day. During free play and planned activities, children are very well supported by staff who are responsive to individual needs and deploy themselves well to meet the needs of the group. However, the arrangements for lunchtime are not well organised. All children are seated at the same time, as a result some children become restless whilst waiting for the large group to be served. The practice of putting on the television when the children have finished their yoghurt but are waiting for fruit, is also problematic, as many children are unable to see the television screen and attempt to reposition their chairs.

Attention to documentation is mostly very good. Clear systems are in place to ensure all policies and procedures are routinely reviewed and updated to reflect new guidance. Policies and procedures are well known by staff and shared with all parents. Good arrangements are in place to inform both staff and parents of revisions to policies.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Following recommendations made at the last inspection, documentation has been reviewed and improved to ensure the safe and effective management of the provision. The range of continuously available play materials and activities has been increased, as a result children of all ages are able to make meaningful choices about how they spend their time. Menus have been reviewed and many changes made to promote healthy eating. In respect of promoting good hygiene practices, some issues remain following this inspection and a further recommendation has been made.

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 any 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):

- ensure routine hygiene practices are routinely implemented and request a second parental signature following the administration of medication
- develop the system for planning for children's play and learning to take greater account of the development of the children under three years, for example, by using the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- review the organisation of mealtimes and large group activities.

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 system for recording children's progress towards the early learning goals
- provide parents with information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and ensure they are sufficiently informed of their child's progress towards the early learning goals.

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