

Mongewell Park Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 133512 |
| Inspection date | 28 September 2007 |
| Inspector | Margaret Davie |
| Setting Address | Elizabeth House, Reading Road, Cholsey, Wallingford, Oxfordshire, OX10 9HA |
| Telephone number | 01491 824040/837764 |
| E-mail | |
| Registered person | Bright Horizons Family Solutions Ltd. |
| 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 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?

Mongewell Park Nursery School is one of a number of nurseries run by Bright Horizons Family Solutions. It opened in 1997 and operates from seven rooms in a former nurses home with a newly built linked extension. There is also a large hall and other small rooms. It is situated on the outskirts of Wallingford in Oxfordshire. A maximum of 160 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 except Bank Holidays and the period between Christmas and New Year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 167 children aged from four months to under five on roll. Of these, 48 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area.

The nursery currently employs 27 members of staff. Of these, 19 hold appropriate early years qualifications and five are working towards a qualification.

The school receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are beginning to understand the importance of good hygiene routines. Staff help them to remember to wash their hands before and after eating, and after messy play. Older children automatically wash their hands after using the toilet, a routine they are obviously familiar with and carry out with confidence. Younger children are encouraged to scrub their hands 'until the bubbles form', to encourage them to wash their hands thoroughly. Children in nappies are protected from the spread of germs as staff always wear aprons and gloves while changing them, and disinfect changing mats after use. However, no records are kept about how often water used to sterilise baby implements is changed and some staff wear outdoor shoes in the baby room, both of which pose a risk to the good health of the babies.

Children are well cared for in the event of a minor accident or illness as all required documentation and procedures are in place to protect them. In total, ten staff have a first aid qualification, and first aid boxes which are kept in every room for ease of access are checked regularly by the health and safety officer to ensure they remain up to date. Detailed information is gathered from parents when they first register their children about their health and dietary needs and there are good systems in place to ensure all staff are aware of children's individual requirements.

Children clearly enjoy the nutritious food. Healthy snacks which comprise of plenty of fresh fruit means even young children happily eat pineapple and melon as well as sandwiches made with whole wheat bread. A daily warm lunch includes dishes such as meat balls and pasta or fish fingers, mashed potatoes and peas. Meals are happy, social occasions where staff encourage children's independence by allowing them choices. Older children enjoy helping to set tables, serve food and clear away dishes, however their enthusiasm occasionally results in cutlery which has fallen on the floor still being used for eating, thereby potentially spreading germs.

Children explore and develop their physical control in both indoor and outdoor activities. They use the indoor hall to explore musical movement, developing spatial awareness and learning to move their body in time to music. They push trikes and buggies and improve their ball skills, catching and throwing balls of various sizes, however they have limited opportunities to develop their skills in the outdoor area, particularly in relation to developing their large muscle control. Children develop coordination using a range of resources, such as modelling equipment, paint brushes, pencils and scissors, all of which they use with increasing dexterity.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure environment. They play in spacious, well organised rooms that allow them to move around comfortably and with growing independence. Children and parents are always greeted very warmly and made to feel welcome. This warm and enthusiastic welcome means all children, even the youngest, are happy and settled and separate from their parents and carers with little fuss. For example, a child who arrives late is warmly greeted by a member of staff and quickly involved in play with his friends, which means he soon settles and becomes absorbed in what he is doing.

Children's development is promoted in all areas by a wide range of good quality equipment and resources which are well maintained. Children move around in their rooms with confidence, selecting toys and resources for play. Comfortable reading corners encourage children to snuggle up after lunch to relax and read stories. Children also enjoy sand play, painting, crafts, modelling or playing in the well appointed home corners. Babies enjoy using the activity wall where they can make noises in response to pushing, pulling and turning and start to recognise themselves and other babies by watching themselves in the large mirror. The outdoor area is currently undergoing renovation in order to provide children with more opportunities for regular outdoor play. Outdoor play sessions currently offer children limited opportunities to develop their physical skills as the equipment is too limited in variety.

Children benefit from thorough risk assessments. Staff identify hazards and take positive steps to minimise them, for example the big Yew tree in the garden is fenced off at the moment to prevent children from picking up the berries it is shedding. There are good safety precautions, such as a security pad at the front door to ensure there is no unauthorised entry to the nursery. This ensures that children play in safety. Children learn about keeping themselves safe, because staff remind them to be careful, for example, about waving their cutlery around when they are eating, as they could hurt someone with it. Good staff deployment ensures that children are well supervised at all times.

Babies enjoy crawling through the tunnel, play in the ball tray and use a good range of seating equipment to support their growing independence. They sleep comfortably and safely in a named cot and are checked very regularly by staff to ensure their safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the nursery. They grow in confidence and play happily with their friends and the staff. Children move around freely within their rooms, choosing activities according to their own interests and preferences. This is well supported by the staff who plan activities with regard to children's interests. For example, play and learning in the older toddler's room is currently based on the theme of babies, because many of them have new babies in their family. There is a good balance of free and supported activities, which gives children good opportunities to organise their own play. For example, children playing in the post office decide to send letters to their friends and prepare them for posting. Staff intervene skilfully to encourage them to think about what they need to put on the envelope before they can post it. This develops their thinking as well as early writing skills when they remember an envelope needs an address on it. Children explore sand play, care for dolls in the home corner, model and complete puzzles. They enjoy dressing up in uniforms and playing with small world play sets, both of which encourage their imaginative play.

Children enjoy very good relationships with staff and other children. Staff obviously enjoy playing with children and are interested in what they have to say. They listen to children's news from home and take an interest in their activities away from the nursery. For example a member of staff shares in a child's excitement about going to buy new shoes. Children develop a good level of independence and initiative because they can freely access toys and resources.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children make good progress because they are supported by staff that use their good knowledge of the Foundation Stage to provide a varied

and interesting curriculum to promote their development in all areas of learning. Children are realistically challenged. For example, number work is clearly geared to the needs of each individual child, some practising their counting skills and some working on simple calculations.

Children are helped to reach their learning potential because staff conduct regular observations to identify what they know and what their next steps in learning are. These observations are clearly based on the Foundation Stage curriculum. Records are up dated regularly, well maintained and freely available to parents so that they can keep themselves informed about how well their child is doing. Children's learning is enhanced by activities which are planned in response to their interests. For example, children's interest in the autumn season has been used to good effect to develop their learning in all areas. They develop their knowledge and understanding of the world by cooking soup, working with peelers and small knives to prepare the root vegetables. They discuss how they think a helicopter seed might fall to the ground when dropped from a height and then experiment to see if this is what actually happens. They develop their creative and physical skills by making three dimensional model potatoes, developing hand control by cutting out the shapes, sticking them together and then painting them.

Children are developing good personal, social and emotional skills. They move around the nursery with confidence, relying on adults for support and guidance when necessary. Children interact with others in group time telling their news from home or following a focus for discussion. They help each other in activities, sharing resources and play cooperatively with each other. Children are developing a good level of independence; choosing resources and activities and taking care of some of their personal needs. At lunch time older children serve themselves to both food and drinks.

Children follow simple instructions when moving to music in the hall and learn early reading skills by looking for their names on their mats and mugs. Their opportunities to learn to recognise simple words are however limited because few of the resources in their room are labelled. Children have good opportunities to practise writing as they label envelopes to send to their friends or draw and colour with materials provided on the well resourced writing table. Good use of stories and rhymes help children to develop good listening skills. For example, they listen very carefully as a member of staff tells them a story before lunch, skilfully using her voice to capture their interest. Children sit in absolute silence as she tells them about slowly climbing up an old staircase and then shout with glee as she finds a tiny mouse at the top.

Children develop their understanding of technology using phones in the home corner and playing games on the computer which encourage their matching skills. They walk in the extensive grounds to discover the world around them however, although they get regular opportunities to play in the fresh air, they have limited opportunities to develop their play and learning in outdoor activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are well known and staff treat them as individuals and with equal concern. Detailed information is gathered from parents when children first start which promotes their well being. Children feel valued because staff praise and encourage them regularly and display their work beautifully. For example, an autumn scene displaying children's vegetable models and a camp site displaying sleeping bags which children have made. Staff ensure they get to know each child as an individual and share this information with each other in order to fully support children's care. For example, some of the babies are fed, but some are encouraged to try to

feed themselves because 'mummy says you are doing a good job of this at home'. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is good. They respond positively to the consistent boundaries which are set for them and are eager to please. They enjoy helping to get their rooms ready for lunch by tidying away resources and respond very positively to praise and encouragement. Reminders about why some behaviour is not appropriate helps them to understand right from wrong.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Relationships are excellent and impact very positively on children's well being. Staff and parents work together in a very positive manner to ensure children are happy and settled. Children receive high quality continuity of care because staff take full account of parental preferences and give parents a wide range of information to help them understand and support their child's learning and play. A detailed diary is completed for each child on a daily basis and parents have free access to their records on progress. This good sharing of information allows parents to keep themselves fully informed about how well their child is doing at any time. Staff always make time to talk to parents about any issues concerning their child. This continual two way flow of information is enhanced by regular formal meetings and written reports to discuss progress and share ideas for future development. An independent survey is conducted on behalf of the nursery every year to ascertain how well parents feel the needs of their children are being met.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are well cared for in the nursery because it is well organised to meet their needs and they are supported by staff who are well qualified to care for them. Children play and learn in rooms that are broadly based on their ages, however accommodation is always made according to their individual needs and the preferences of their parents. Each child is assigned to a key worker which ensures that their overall progress is regularly monitored and there is a clear point of contact for parents. This ensures that children are happy, confident and settled. Generally good use is made of space to allow children to play safely and move around freely, however there are limited opportunities for children to play and learn using the outside area both in terms of the way it is used and the range of resources. The manager has identified this area for improvement once the outside building works are completed.

All required documentation is in place for the care of the children and ratios are always observed. Attendance records are kept in accordance with requirements and robust systems are in place to ensure children are carefully counted when moving around the setting. Accident and medication records are kept and countersigned by parents which ensures children's continuity of care. Policies and procedures are well presented and shared with parents. The nursery receives good support from its Head Office to ensure that policies and procedures are in line with requirements.

Leadership and management of nursery education is good. The manager has a clear vision and aim for the setting, focusing on the achievement of each child. There are robust recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure that children are protected and cared for by staff who are committed to their care. The nursery draws on its own bank staff when required, which ensures all adults working with the children have been vetted and trained to meet the setting's standards. Staff keep detailed records about the children for whom they are caring in order to promote their development in all areas of learning and are committed to improving outcomes for children

by careful evaluation and further training. The setting meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the time of the last inspection the nursery was asked to ensure that the premises are maintained at an adequate and comfortable temperature and to improve the information given to parents detailing the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint. The nursery was also asked to improve staff training in regard to managing children's behaviour.

Children play and learn in a comfortably controlled temperature as controls in individual rooms were moved following the last inspection to provide a more accurate temperature reading and to be more easily accessible by staff. The nursery informs parents clearly about what they should do in the event they wish to make a complaint. This ensures any concerns can be dealt with promptly to ensure the welfare of children.

Children benefit from a consistent and positive approach to the management of their behaviour. Following the last inspection staff went on relevant behaviour management training and systems are now in place to identify any further relevant training needs.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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):

- take positive steps to prevent the spread of infection
- provide more opportunities for children to use the outdoor area for play and learning (also applies to nursery education)
- improve the variety of outdoor equipment (also applies to nursery education)

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 labelling to enhance children's access to early reading

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