

Goosehill Private Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	301760
Inspection date	30 November 2007
Inspector	Ann Marie Lefevre
Setting Address	9 Goose Hill, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 1TL
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Registered person	Amanda Willis
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?

Goosehill Private Nursery has been operating since 1989 and registered in relation to the current owner in 1999. The setting provides places for a maximum of 44 children at a time who are aged from four months to under five years. There are currently 56 children on the roll. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities. The group is participating in the Foundation Stage of Learning. There are 13 funded children, of whom, eight are three years old and five are four years old. Childcare sessions are available Monday to Friday from 08.00 until 17.30 for 50 weeks in the year.

Childcare is provided in a designated building, which is located close to Morpeth town centre and local amenities. Children are accommodated in the toddler playroom and dining room on the ground floor. Children do not gain access to the ground floor kitchenette which is equipped to prepare food. The main playroom, messy playroom, movement/drama and sensory room, baby playroom and baby sleep room are on the first floor. There are toilet and nappy changing facilities on each floor. A fully enclosed, outdoor courtyard is available for supervised activities.

Overall responsibility for the nursery lies with the owner who is also the manager. There are 18 regular staff members, including a deputy. The majority of the staff team are qualified. Students and volunteers are welcomed into the group; they are appropriately cleared and supervised as necessary. The group has the support of the local authority early years advisors.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have many really positive opportunities to learn about the importance of health and hygiene in their daily routines and activities. They are encouraged to take age appropriate responsibility in relation to hygiene and wash their hands carefully before handling food and after messy play or going to the toilet. Liquid soap and clean towels are available in the washrooms which helps to prevent cross infection. They gain awareness of keeping their bodies clean and healthy in ongoing discussions with staff. Children also learn about general health and dental hygiene. They are encouraged to look after themselves by putting their own coats and hats on and getting lots of praise for their efforts. Staff give sensitive support to younger children. Children learn about keeping their play areas tidy because staff act as very good role models; children enthusiastically give assistance to put small play items away. In addition, they gain very good practical experience as they help wash the dolls or the large outdoor sit-upon wheelie toys.

Children's health requirements and needs are identified and well met through a range of detailed recording systems and effective policies. These are very well maintained and ensure that parents and staff members are kept informed about any health issues. Accidents are clearly recorded and staff ensure that any recurring accidents are well monitored and addressed. The medication recording system is effective and shows respect for confidentiality. Records are supplemented by written parental consents, for example, using sunscreen and obtaining emergency treatment. Staff members have completed appropriate first aid and some have also done food hygiene training. There are well stocked first aid kits in each playroom and in the main kitchen which are formally checked and replenished when necessary. Emergency first aid signs and lists of first aiders are displayed. In addition, effective provision is made for outings. Staff are keen to ensure that children benefit from being cared for in a really clean and healthy environment. There are daily cleaning procedures and charts to be completed by staff. Small toys are sterilised weekly and soft toys are washed in the baby and toddler rooms. A health visitor comes into the setting and is available to advise staff on health issues.

Younger children and babies are sensitively and well cared for during nappy changing, sleep and feeding routines. Staff wear disposable gloves for each nappy change and ensure that nappy changing mats are thoroughly cleaned after every use. Babies and toddlers enjoy naps in the designated sleeping room and are checked regularly by staff. There is a comfortable area with cushions in the playroom for two-year-olds and they are able to relax and take naps when feeling tired. Babies are well supported when having bottle feeds as they are gently held by staff. Toddlers benefit from joining other children and staff appropriately seated for meals which are seen as social events. Staff complete charts in relation to nappy changing, naps and feeds, as well as activities, and they give detailed verbal feedback to parents and carers at the end of each day.

Children benefit from the healthy eating policy in the setting which dictates at least five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. Children enjoy freshly prepared meals from the nursery kitchen.

There is a five week menu so that children have a wide variety. Children enjoy food, such as fresh fruit and raw vegetables at snack times. Lunchtime meals are attractively presented and clearly enjoyed as children demonstrate their healthy appetites. Mealtimes are very social event and give children and staff an opportunity to discuss activities and home events. Staff ensure that any special dietary needs are adhered to; they work closely with parents and obtain detailed information about the children to make sure that they have the necessary nutritional balance for positive growth. Children have regular drinks with their food, for example, milk or water. Additional drinks are available as required and children have their own labelled water bottle so they can take responsibility and help themselves. Children also learn about how food arrives on the table as they visit the shops with staff to buy ingredients, look at recipes, measure, mix and prepare as they make pumpkin soup, bread or sandwiches to eat.

Children develop their physical and emotional well-being as they participate in many stimulating activities and projects which exercise their bodies as well as develop their thinking skills. They are confident as they use the wide range of large and small play equipment in the setting. Children benefit from being outdoors in the fresh air as they use the well equipped, outdoor play area for planned activities or just running around and having fun. In addition, children do lots of exciting, energetic physical activities in the playroom as they enthusiastically join in movement, songs and rhymes to help them with their learning as well as exercising their bodies. Children benefit from going to places of interest in the community, for example, visiting a local park where they talk about the things they see and bring back items for craft activities. They go on walks to the local shops to buy bread with which to feed the ducks on the local river. The nursery has use of an allotment so children really benefit from digging, pushing wheelbarrows and tending plants, which is a wonderful educational experience as well as providing lots of fresh air and exercise. Children also develop emotionally as they build extremely positive relationships from socialising with other children and adults. Children are encouraged to dress appropriately for each season. They wear sun hats in hot weather and waterproof clothing during wet weather. Consequently, children may go out and enjoy fresh air and exercise throughout the year.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are very comfortable and welcoming and the playrooms are really well organised for children to use safely. Children access the designated childcare areas with effective, close, age-appropriate supervision and support from the staff. They are encouraged to be aware of safety, both inside and outside the setting, in daily routines and activities. Children learn about keeping safe in practical ways, for example, being careful when using equipment in the setting. They are closely supervised in the outdoor play areas where they can enjoy lots of energetic activities. Children also learn about road safety as staff prepare them for outings and they gain practical experience of keeping safe during their outings in the community. A policeman visited and talked about road safety when near cars and crossing the road safely; he also covered stranger danger.

Staff ensure the premises are safe and secure so that children are protected. Many safety measures have been taken. For example, there are secure entry systems to the building and staff are vigilant in ensuring visitors to the setting sign the visitors book before gaining access. However, there are two staircases leading to the first floor which are not guarded and, although the playroom doors have high handles, they are not fully secured to prevent children leaving without supervision if a door is not fully closed. In addition, parents have door entry codes so that they can access the building, which has implications for playroom security and stair safety.

Heaters are securely guarded, electric sockets are not accessible and electrical equipment is checked regularly.

Staff take effective measures to ensure that children do not gain access to hazardous areas or materials. Risk assessments are undertaken in the setting each session to make sure the premises and grounds are kept safe for the children. Fire exit signs, appropriate fire fighting equipment is in place, there is a fire blanket on the kitchen wall for ease of use and fire extinguishers are secured. Fire drills are undertaken monthly and generally occur on varying days to allow for different children and staff to participate; the drills are well recorded. Staff are vigilant and take steps to ensure that play resources, equipment and furniture are maintained in a safe and clean condition for the children attending; all items are checked frequently. Staff ensure that the toys and activities comply with safety standards and are appropriate for the age and stage of development of each child.

Children are well protected as there is carefully planned and maintained documentation in relation to child safety in the setting. Recording systems are used in conjunction with written parental consents to ensure consistency of care for each child. There is current public liability insurance in place. There is a child protection policy and procedure in place. Although staff have had no concerns to date in relation to child protection issues arising in the setting, they have a clear understanding of what to be aware of, who to contact and what to record.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

All children thrive and progress exceedingly well as they participate in a wealth of activities and projects that introduce new learning experiences as well as develop their existing skills. Babies, toddlers and two-year-olds are very well supported and enjoy activities in keeping with their ages and stage of development. They are fully supported in the setting, allowing them to settle and benefit from the staff's affectionate and calm approach to their care and learning. Staff have a sound awareness of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this is fully reflected in the actual care of all the children who attend. There is effective planning in place in relation to all age groups and this is adapted for children who have additional needs so that all can participate in activities.

Children explore and use their imaginations in a variety of enjoyable and educational ways as they are sensitively guided and encouraged by the staff members. They build extremely positive relationships with staff who respond skilfully to the age range of the children attending and their individual needs. Younger children are enthusiastic as they learn through the many play opportunities which are available throughout each day. They enjoy activities, such as creating lovely artwork which features highly in the nursery, for example, leaf, hand and tummy print pictures, squirrel pictures using felt or using salad spinners to create paint designs. They enthusiastically participate in completing puzzles, in games of pretend, or joining in lovely music, song and movement sessions or exciting story time. Babies experience wonderful sensory play, for example, as they see, feel and taste fruit jelly and other textures, scents, cornflower and water as they sit in large trays supported by staff. They benefit from the availability of a wide range of natural materials and playthings as they join in heuristic play and explore treasure baskets. The younger children thoroughly appreciate using exciting small world equipment. They also form very positive relationships with their peers as they develop their growing sense of independence.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff demonstrate an extremely clear understanding of the Foundation Stage of Learning. There is robust and effective planning in place which is used imaginatively in the setting. Staff use many superb teaching methods and tools, for example, in their imaginative organisation of the play areas to fully reflect the six areas of learning. They provide many exciting wall displays, which include a wonderful and varied selection of children's work. Play resources are used skilfully to provide many learning and life experiences, and learning experiences are always reinforced to provide practical experience in activities and routines. For example, the regular French lessons are further extended as French words are used by staff during mealtimes. There are planned and incidental education opportunities occurring throughout each day. Staff carefully monitor the children as they participate in activities, make notes of what the children are doing and assess each child's progress; this informs future planning and practice.

Staff prepare very well for each day and ensure that all necessary materials and equipment are in place, both for the planned activities and additional free play. Linking themes are used exceptionally well. Bears feature highly at present, in stories, craft activities, role play, outings and many other delightful ways. Children freely access many stimulating activities and projects which enhance their existing skills and help them to learn new ones. These are organised to allow for flexibility and spontaneity, which enables each child to choose what they want to do and introduce their own ideas. Children are very enthusiastic in their use of the play areas which allows them to develop in fun and exciting ways. They confidently use the play resources with staff and their peers. They enjoy engaging in discussions and working well in large and small groups or having space to focus on individual tasks.

Children build confidence in relating to their peers and adults as they are encouraged to take a very active role in the group; this is a great strength in the nursery. They express their ideas and thoughts and communicate well. They become familiar with the written and spoken word in many ways, and listen attentively to guidance from adults. Children practise mark making and develop their formative writing skills using a variety of tools and media. They enjoy story time and take a very active role in discussions. Children learn about numbers and simple mathematical concepts as they are incorporated in a variety of activities. They develop their number recognition and counting skills while learning about simple addition and subtraction using a range of resources. They learn to identify shapes and patterns as well as gain an awareness of concepts relating to dimension.

Children participate in many varied art and craft projects. They make their own play dough, but not just ordinary play dough, it is chocolate, coffee or orange coloured and scented. A variety of tools are used to shape, roll and cut to make exciting items, such as cakes which are decorated with candles. They enthusiastically use small world play resources and natural materials in large trays to create a dinosaur park or a bear habitat. They created a bear camp, using furniture and a large piece of cloth, dress up as bears and enjoy stories about bears using torches in their camp. Children enjoy following recipes, weighing, measuring and mixing, as they carefully make jam tarts, scones and cake with sensitive support from staff.

Creative developmental movement play features highly in the setting. There is a splendid sensory room which is used to provide a wealth of excellent activities, for example, rhyme, song, movement and innovative dance. Children combine dance and music activities with making sounds on large sheets of bubble wrap and discuss what they heard and felt. A yoga teacher visits the nursery on a regular basis and tells wonderful stories which are related to real yoga exercises which provide children with a magical experience.

Children benefit from the really positive community spirit in the setting as well as building an awareness of the wider world and different cultures. They develop their knowledge and understanding of the natural world as they learn about animals and growing things. There are exciting, practical experiences as they visit the nursery allotment to participate in digging, pushing wheelbarrows, planting and tending plants. They learn to respect and understand about animals and other living things. For example, they carefully monitor, as a duck which lives nearby, prepares her nest and then gives birth to ten ducklings.

Children have many opportunities to learn about modern technology and equipment. They confidently use the computer mouse to navigate the screens in learning programmes in planned and incidental activities and also gain an insight into how a printer is used. They regularly use a digital camera and have taken magnificent photographs of flora they have arranged; the pictures look splendid displayed on the wall in the playroom. Children participate in simple experiments, for example, as they use plumber's pipes to pour water down and find out about how water flows when the pipes are adjusted.

Staff are very skilled at using clear and simple language and effective guidance which enables the children to learn and progress. They have a clear understanding of how children gain independence. They help children consolidate what they have learnt and extend their awareness. Staff ensure that the setting is well organised with resources which allow the children to have effective learning experiences as well as lots of fun. There is a balanced range of activities and designated play areas reinforce children's understanding and knowledge. Children receive excellent, age appropriate levels of challenge without undue pressure being put upon them.

Staff are sensitive to the differing needs of each child. There is a close partnership between staff and parents to ensure that each child really benefits from their placement in this setting.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the staff's very positive attitude towards equal opportunities and respecting individual and differing needs. There are many opportunities for children to develop their awareness of local and wider communities. Children experience celebrations and festivals, such as learning about the nativity at Christmas as well as doing a variety of activities, such as making colourful dough decorations and cards. They cover the Easter event and other events. They also learn about less familiar religious and cultural celebrations, for example, they dressed up and participated in a dragon theme for St Georges day. They enjoyed designing and making a dragon, doing noodle printing, dancing to music, and seeing a traditional dance costume in relation to the Chinese New Year. They had a Chinese meal and tried chopsticks. Other celebrations have included Eid with traditional prayer mats and costumes and henna decorations; they have learned about the 30 days of Ramadan. They also made Rangoli patterns for Diwali. There is a wealth of resources in the setting which reflect differing backgrounds and abilities. Children also do activities in relation to different food, such as where fruit comes from. Stereotyping is clearly discouraged and all children have the opportunity to participate in age appropriate activities according to their stages of development.

Children learn about sharing and valuing others from the very good role models provided by the staff. Staff gently and sensitively support, praise and encourage all children in their daily routines and activities which helps them to develop their self-esteem, confidence and sense of belonging. The children are very polite and well behaved. They are very happy and relaxed in the group and they respond well to the clear guidance from the staff. Children who have

additional needs are well supported and are encouraged to participate fully. Children freely make choices in their play and daily routines and are confident as they select playthings and participate in activities. Staff are adept at encouraging children to share their opinions and take a very active role in the group. All children are clearly valued by the staff, who have a sound knowledge of the children to ensure there is consistency and continuity so that each child can thrive and progress effectively. The nursery is building links with the local first school; the reception teacher visits children who are preparing for the move to the school setting.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents participate in the exchange of information necessary for their child's care. All parents get a handbook of information about the care and education service provided. There are regular newsletters, they are asked their opinions and complete related questionnaires. Each term, target and observation sheets are sent home in relation to each child. They are kept very well informed about daily issues and are aware of planning for activities. Weekly activity sheets keep them informed about educational elements. Children's development files are available for parents to see how their children are progressing, although the sample examined lacked some structure. Parent evenings occur, but they may speak to staff at any time. Children get extra curricular activities, for example, they may take a choice of book home and are also able to complete some educational work with their relatives. Many lovely examples of the children's work are displayed in the setting and children take lots of their art and other craft projects home to show what they have achieved. Parents are extremely positive in their comments about how their children are progressing and are very happy with the care provided in the setting.

The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Leadership and management is good and ensures that smooth, consistent practice is in place for the benefit of all the children and their parents and carers. Staff are very professional, caring and dedicated in their approach to their work in the daily care and education of the children. This is reflected in all aspects in the setting; in the well organised childcare areas, in the many safety measures taken and in the range of high quality resources, activities and equipment provided, which help children learn and develop effectively. Clearly defined and sensitive daily routines enable children to settle well and feel secure.

Informative files, notice boards and many other excellent means are available to enlighten staff and parents. A wide range of policies and procedures, such as child protection, behaviour management and equal opportunities, are used to inform practice and protect the children. Staff continue to update and develop these for the benefit of children attending, their parents and for the staff team. There are clear procedures to record child, staff and visitor attendance.

Children clearly benefit from the care provided and from the staff's positive attitude towards their own training and personal development. Staff members have completed a range of relevant training relating to the health, welfare, safety and educational needs of the children. They have successfully completed the Healthy Pathways Award. They continue to look at further development to enhance their existing practice.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

There was one recommendation made at the last care inspection in relation to having strategies in place to encourage desirable behaviour. This has been met as staff are skilled in techniques for encouraging child positive behaviour for the benefit of all children attending.

There was one recommendation made at the last education inspection in relation to providing child initiated opportunities to make marks for a purpose. This recommendation has been met effectively as children now have many opportunities to do this, for example, they put their names on lists when taking turns to use equipment, which not only enables them to practise their mark making skills, but also develop greater confidence and independence.

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 the 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):

- develop the existing safety procedures by taking effective measures to ensure that children do not gain unsupervised access to the two staircases.

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):

- enhance the information which is shared with parents by ensuring that the examples of work and other information in the development files are clearly structured and dated to show a chronology of progress.

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