

Gemini Pre-School Private Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	314635
Inspection date	18 July 2007
Inspector	Diane Lynn Turner

Setting Address	Rise Old School, Rise, East Yorkshire, HU11 5BJ
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Registered person	Dawn Jeanette Curry
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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?

Gemini Pre-School Private Nursery opened in 1993. It is a privately owned provision and operates from the old school house in Rise, a small village in the Holderness district of the East Riding of Yorkshire. It serves the local village and a wide surrounding rural area. Children are cared for in one room, which is divided into different areas, and there is an enclosed area for outdoor play.

The nursery is registered to care for 22 children at any one time and there are currently 35 children on roll, 20 of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding. The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 44 weeks of the year. It is closed during all half terms and for two weeks in the summer, two weeks at Christmas and one week at Easter.

There are four staff who regularly work with the children. Of these, three have a level 3 qualification in childcare and one is working towards level 2. The nursery has achieved an Investors in People award and receives support from the local authority development workers.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted within the nursery. Staff follow effective practices in their daily routines, such as cleaning tables with anti-bacterial products before and after food is served and ensuring the toilets are cleaned before and during the session. Children change into their indoor shoes on arrival and paper towels and soap dispensers are provided for hand washing to prevent the risk of cross infection. The majority of toys and resources are maintained to a good standard of cleanliness; however, some role play resources are a little grubby. There is a clear policy for the care of children who are ill and they are well cared for in the event of an accident. All staff are qualified in first aid, information is displayed to remind them of procedures, such as artificial resuscitation, and accidents are all recorded and shared with parents.

Staff ensure children learn about good personal health and hygiene. For example, they ensure they wash their hands after toileting and before lunch and they help them to learn about keeping themselves safe in the sun. As a result, the children understand that they need to wash their hands to stop germs that may make them ill and confidently describe how they must slip on their sunglasses, slap on a hat and slop on some sun cream before they go out to play in the sun. Staff do not, however, ensure children wash their hands before eating their snack.

Children have good opportunities to enjoy fresh air and develop their physical skills. They have access to the well-resourced outdoor area each day, weather permitting, where they are able to use equipment, such as wheeled toys, a climbing frame, balance equipment and a seesaw. The children clearly enjoy using the area and are keen to put on their coats and wellingtons ready to go out. The three- and four-year-olds demonstrate good co-ordination. For example, they balance along the stepping stones, confidently use wheeled toys and successfully negotiate a pathway as they run and chase each other.

Parents are asked to provide a packed lunch or items of food that can be reheated and a snack of a drink and a biscuit is provided by the nursery midmorning and afternoon. Parents are asked to include an ice pack in their child's lunch bag to ensure perishables are stored safely. Children are provided with a drink with their snack and drinking water is available at all times. Children sit together to eat their meals and staff sit with them. This provides valuable opportunities for them to develop good social skills and manners.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe, secure and welcoming environment. Information is displayed for parents in the entrance and children have their own storage shelf in this area for their personal belongings. The playroom has lots of colourful displays, which predominantly feature the children's own work. This shows their efforts are valued and appreciated and provides them with a bright and stimulating environment in which to learn. The premises are kept secure at all times. Parents and visitors are only admitted by staff and a clear record of their visit is kept.

Children's risk of accidental injury is minimised effectively. Staff carry out regular risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. For example, they check the outdoor area before children go out and ensure appropriate signs are put in place to indicate when floors are wet.

Parents are reminded via newsletters to be vigilant in following safety procedures, such as ensuring they close the gate.

Staff effectively raise children's awareness of keeping themselves safe. For example, they regularly practise the emergency evacuation procedure with them so they know what to do in the event of a fire and it is evident the children understand the importance and urgency of this. They also learn about road safety as they go for walks in the local area and staff gently remind them why they must use furniture correctly and not run inside. The older children clearly understand that they must use the toys and resources safely. For example, they spontaneously remind the very young ones that they must not throw items, such as bricks.

Children have access to a wide range of toys and resources both indoors and outside, which are all appropriate to their age and stage of development. The role play area in particular is well resourced and is very popular with the younger ones because they are able to access items, such as play food and dolls easily.

Children are well protected from possible abuse. Staff have a clear understanding of the nursery's policies and procedures in regard to protecting and safeguarding children. They demonstrate a good understanding of the possible indicators of abuse and are fully aware that they must report any concerns to the designated member of staff. There are clear procedures for the safe collection of children and parents are made fully aware of these via the prospectus.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle well at the nursery and are keen to see what is on offer each day. There are good settling-in procedures which help children to feel comfortable in their surroundings. Pre-placement visits are arranged, when children's individual care needs are discussed, and parents are welcome to phone the nursery in the early days if they are at all worried about how their child is settling. Staff develop close relationships with the children. They welcome them on arrival and show a genuine interest in what they have to say.

Children are cared for in one main playroom, which makes it a family environment. The two- to three-year-olds benefit from following the lead of the older children and learn from their example. They enjoy listening to stories with them and joining in with the phonic activities, particularly as these are set to music. They enjoy playing outside, when they watch and copy what the older ones do. For example, they put their arms out to help them balance as they attempted to walk around the large tyres and along the stepping stones. They have free access to the toys and resources and they particularly enjoy using the role play area. They are able to join in with the focused activities of the older children, which staff adapt to meet their needs. Staff do not, however, plan specific activities for them, for example, using the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good and children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and this is evident in the planning of activities. For example, they clearly show how all the six areas of learning are covered. Focused activities have a clear intended learning outcome and children are supported well in achieving this. Detailed assessment records are in place to chart

children's progress towards the early learning goals and parents receive a transitional report detailing their child's achievements when they move on to school.

Staff pay very good attention to promoting children's development in communication, language and literacy and this is a strength of the nursery. For example, lots of opportunities are provided for them to see print in their environment. Resources are clearly labelled and children are encouraged to help write the captions for the various displays. Staff have good relationships with the children and demonstrate a calm and consistent approach to behaviour management. Good use is made of open-ended questions to promote children's thinking and they are encouraged to recap on the session's activities and what they have learnt. Staff do not, however, make best use of the learning opportunities presented during everyday routines. For example, children are not encouraged to use counting for a purpose or simple calculation at snack time.

Both the three- and four-year-olds are very confident. They arrive happy and keen to learn and are at ease with visitors to the nursery. They show a keen sense of belonging. For example, they understand about wearing their uniform and they bring items in to share with their friends at snack if it is their birthday. They take pride in their achievements. This is particularly evident as they point out the contribution they have made to the displays. They concentrate well during focused activities, finishing their tasks, and they show independence. For example, they put on their own wellingtons before going outside.

All children enjoy listening to stories. They sit quietly when staff read to them and they understand that print carries meaning. For example, they self-register on arrival and use mark-making for a purpose very confidently. They help to write the captions for the displays when they either write over the top of the text, copy this or write words independently. They take customer's orders as they pretend to be the waitress in their café and independently write their names on their work. They are able to recognise a good number of letters of the alphabet and their associated sounds and enjoy taking part in phonic activities each day. They understand about blending sounds together and confidently spell out their name as they use magnetic letters.

Children's mathematical knowledge is developing well. They confidently count to 10 during games of hide and seek and can recognise a good number of shapes. They can correctly identify how many items there are, and which is the odd one out, as they complete activity sheets and know how old they will be on their next birthday. They can correctly sequence a series of events, such as the process for choosing and booking a holiday. They do not, however, regularly use their counting skills for a purpose during everyday routines as staff do not provide opportunities for this.

Both the three- and four-year-olds demonstrate good imagination. This is evident as they access the role play area to act out both real and imagined situations. For example, they become fully immersed as they dress up as their favourite cartoon hero, pretend they are having a meal in a café and take care of the dolls. Displays of their artwork show their creative development is good. These include observational drawings of shells, three dimensional ice cream cones and pictures they have carefully coloured in of birds and sea creatures.

Children are interested in nature and their environment. For example, they plant flowers in the garden, go for walks to observe animals and learn about different sea creatures. They understand the purpose of a lighthouse, know that coral grows at the bottom of the sea and that jellyfish are dangerous as these can sting. They show a good understanding of information and communication technology. For example, they independently operate the group's computer

to complete various programs and use the play cooker and telephones with understanding during role play. They understand that they need to travel on an aeroplane to visit some holiday resorts and that they must take a passport with them, which must have their photograph to show that it belongs to them.

Children's physical skills are developing very well. They use equipment confidently and show an awareness of others as they line up to go outside. They show good fine motor skills. For example, they keep within the lines as they colour in pictures and use scissors skilfully during craft activities. Staff do not, however, provide opportunities for the children to wash their hands before snack time, which means their understanding of health and bodily awareness is not supported effectively at this time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery and are valued as individuals. Staff gather important information on the registration form and pre-placement visits are encouraged, when children's individual needs are discussed further. Staff welcome the children as they arrive and acknowledge special events in their lives, such as birthdays. Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are very welcome to attend the nursery and systems are in place to ensure they are well supported.

Children have good opportunities to learn about the wider world and their local environment through a range of activities. For example, they learn about festivals from around the world, such as Diwali, and have opportunities to learn simple words, colours and numbers in French through attending the nursery's French Club. They are regularly taken for walks in the local area to observe various animals and they hold their nativity play in the village church at Christmas. They also benefit from visitors to the group who share their skills with them, such as a doctor, firefighters and a magician. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children learn to behave well. Staff are good role models for them to follow and use effective strategies to promote good behaviour. For example, they help the younger ones to learn about sharing and turn taking and have a reward system which is used to acknowledge every child's achievements. The children understand the routines for the nursery and follow these well. For example, they know to change into their indoor shoes on arrival and that they all need to help to put the toys away at tidy up time. The older children show a caring approach towards the younger ones and are able to solve their own disagreements.

All children benefit from the nursery's positive partnership with the parents and carers. Staff welcome parents on arrival and they are provided with useful information about the service. For example, they receive a well-presented prospectus and regular newsletters, and daily information is detailed on a board in the entrance. Staff inform them about their child's care and the activities that they have been involved at the end of each day, and regular questionnaires are sent out to gain parents' opinions of the service. All parents spoken to at the inspection were keen to express their satisfaction with the service, stating that staff are caring, approachable and very attentive.

The partnership with the parents and carers of children in receipt of nursery education is good. They are provided with clear information about the Foundation Stage via the prospectus and they receive a copy of the planned programme of activities. They are able to access their child's

record of progress at any time and are very welcome to come into the nursery and share their skills with the children. For example, a recent newsletter shows a parent being thanked for their contribution to a topic on outer space.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care needs are met well and the leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The premises are well organised and the available space, both indoors and outside, is utilised well to maximise play opportunities for the children. The nursery has clear routines for times such as lunch and activities are well planned and presented overall.

Children benefit from staff who work well together, some of whom have been at the nursery for a number of years. They all have a good understanding of their roles, have designated areas of responsibility and attend training to further their professional development. There are effective systems in place for the safe recruitment and vetting of any new staff and for their induction. The quality of the care and education is reviewed regularly through parent questionnaires, evaluating activities and staff meetings. In addition, the nursery has achieved an Investors in People award, and staff's achievements are regularly rewarded, which shows they are valued and appreciated.

Clear policies and procedures are in place, which cover all areas of the service, including those to be followed in an emergency, such as a child being lost or a parent failing to collect. The registration certificate is displayed and all legally required documentation, such as child records, accident and medication records are in place and confidentiality is respected.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection it was recommended that the nursery improve the maintenance of the toilet area and the documentation in relation to existing injuries. These have been addressed successfully. The toilet area has been repainted and the damaged sky light removed and any injuries the children may have when they arrive at the nursery are now recorded in the accident book.

At the last nursery inspection it was recommended that the nursery: provide more opportunities for children to select books in a comfortable space; use mark-making independently; and develop a system of evaluation to ensure activities fulfil their objective and support future planning. These have been addressed successfully. Cushions and a low-level book case have been purchased for the book corner, mark-making items, such as paper, pens, crayons, stencils and scissors are now freely available, and written evaluations are now made of focused activities to identify where children need challenge or support. The information gathered is then used to plan for the next steps in their learning.

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.

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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):

- improve the routines for hand washing, particularly before snack time to prevent the risk of cross infection
- improve the planning of activities for the two to three-year-olds.

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 opportunities for children to learn about health and bodily awareness
- provide more opportunities for children to use counting for a purpose and simple calculation during everyday routines.

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