

Heaton House

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 316000 |
| Inspection date | 21 November 2007 |
| Inspector | Shirley Leigh Monks-Meagher |

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| Setting Address | 553 Chorley Old Road, Bolton, Lancashire, BL1 6AE |
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| 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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Heaton House Nursery was registered in January 2000 and is owned and operated by a private individual. It is situated near to Bolton town centre and is easily accessible by bus and has car parking on site. The large, two-storey property has children's bathrooms on both floors within easy access of all playrooms. The ground floor is used to provide care for children from birth to three years with the first floor used to provide care for preschool children. A secure outdoor play area is provided to the rear of the premises.

It is registered to provide full day care for 40 children at any one time. It operates from 08.00 to 18.00, Monday to Friday, all year round with the exception of one week at Christmas and bank holidays. There are currently 54 children on role from five months to four years. This includes 18 children in receipt of the nursery education grant. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities, and children who have English as an additional language.

The manager is an early years teacher and holds a Bachelor of Arts degree. All her staff hold early years qualifications equivalent to National Vocational Qualification levels 2, 3 or 4. The nursery enjoys support from the Sure Start Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from very clean premises where efficient procedures are in place for the cleaning and clearing up throughout the day and after activities. Children thrive because staff effectively follow procedures and practices which enable children's health, physical and nutritional needs to be met. Children are developing an excellent understanding of personal hygiene and are eager to become independent in matters of personal care. For example, they clean their teeth after lunch, help themselves to tissues from strategically placed boxes and wash their hands before eating food to 'clean off the germs'. The consistent guidance and support offered by the staff significantly enhances this understanding. Staff effectively implement the nursery's policies and procedures relating to sickness and medication and this keeps the children healthy and safeguards their well-being.

Children's health is fostered through the provision of nutritious meals and snacks which effectively form the basis of a balanced diet. These are presented to appeal to children's appetites and increase their experiences and tastes. Menus are regularly reviewed and amended to respect children's individual dietary requirements. All children, other than the very youngest, eat in the conservatory dining area. Meals are a social occasion where staff skilfully and sensitively support children to choose and enjoy foods that contribute towards a healthy lifestyle. For example, they are given ample time to develop their eating skills, such as chewing and manipulating cutlery. However, staff are less informed about best practice when giving babies their bottle. They do not recognise the benefits and value of holding them in their arms when feeding them.

All children benefit from fresh air and exercise and take part in a wide range of inspiring and challenging activities which significantly contributes to their health and development. They frequently explore, test and develop their physical control in stimulating experiences. For example, they confidently climb and balance on challenging equipment, are able to manoeuvre wheeled vehicles adeptly and with regard for objects and their peers, hop, skip, dance with scarves and walk on tiptoes. They are learning to swim and to kick, catch and bat balls. Babies are provided with ample space to crawl and suitable equipment to develop mobility skills. Effective staff deployment, interaction and a secure understanding of the children's abilities support children's confidence to try out new skills, ask for help when needed and set their own limits within a safe environment. Children thrive physically because they are offered time, opportunity and support to acquire, practise and refine their skills, build strength and develop coordination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children and parents are warmly welcomed into the bright and stimulating environment. Rooms are maintained at the optimum temperature and sufficiently ventilated to ensure children's comfort. Children move around freely and safely because there is ample space. The organisation and arrangement of the nursery enhances children's ability to learn because areas are set out

thoughtfully, helping to promote independence and a range of skills. Children are able to experience a balanced range of resources in the designated curriculum areas.

The nursery is well equipped to promote all areas of learning. Resources are of a superior quality and include many natural materials and everyday items. Toys and resources are organised effectively, making them easily and safely accessible to even the youngest children. Highly effective monitoring and cleaning systems ensure resources, toys and equipment are always safe and suitable for children's use.

High priority is given to children's safety and security. For example, thorough risk assessments minimise hazards to children and vigilant staff and electronic entry systems ensure the premises are kept secure. Visitors to the premises have their details recorded and are accompanied by staff at all times. Children are cared for by vetted adults who are knowledgeable, experienced and skilful. The older children have a high level of awareness of their own safety. They use the stairs sensibly, holding the rails with both hands, watching carefully where they put their feet, use single file and respect each other's space. When the sand or water is spilt children know to clean it up quickly so no one will slip. Children's welfare is safeguarded by staff who understand that this is their priority and know the procedures to follow in the event of concerns. They record and monitor situations and issues as they arise and these are kept on file in the office. However, the file is not locked away.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are safe, secure and contented within the nursery. High quality interaction between the adults and children results in very confident children who are developing a strong sense of themselves in an atmosphere of trust. The close and affectionate relationships throughout the setting yield a harmonious environment where children thrive. Children settle quickly on arrival at nursery and enjoy their time there.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used effectively by staff to enrich all aspects of development and learning for young children and babies. For example, a wealth of opportunities is provided to help children explore their natural urges to handle objects and materials. Toddlers have great fun filling and emptying tins, nesting boxes into each other and trying to find and fit the correct lids onto cartons. They use huge cardboard boxes and blankets to make dens and scream with delight when they clap hands full of shaving foam and it splashes everywhere. Babies are soothed by soft music and light patterns and enjoy exploring an environment where they can safely test their mobility. Assessment is rigorous, ensuring staff effectively highlight the next steps in children's learning when planning, thus significantly enhancing the outcomes for young children and babies.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning for funded children is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and their teaching highly motivates, stretches and challenges children's thinking and learning. They work with children at their own individual pace because their systematic and rigorous assessment focuses planning and interaction on personalised learning. As a result, children are making rapid progress in their early education. Staff have a skilful approach to developing positive relationships and boosting self-esteem which is significantly enhancing children's confidence and learning. The learning environment is superbly organised and conducive to learning. Children show consistent levels of involvement

in all aspects of their day and have access to all areas because staff understand the importance of continuous provision.

Children talk with confidence and use a wide vocabulary to express their thoughts and ideas. They happily take responsibility for their own learning and fearlessly question how, when or why something has happened, as they engross themselves in the activities and opportunities available to them. For example, they independently design, build and modify, using a wealth of resources. They search out a particular resource, such as extra wheels for a vehicle, rearrange a tower of bricks to make it balance or try several methods to join recycled materials together until they find one that works. Children are developing good listening skills and because of this they are able to follow instructions successfully, for example, games on the computer, during French sessions and during rehearsals for their Christmas nativity.

Children have a wealth of opportunities to explore and discover in exciting hands-on activities. They hunt out mini-beasts in the garden and use magnifying glasses to identify similarities and differences. A walk in the park yields conkers and leaves of varying hues and textures and stimulates a discussion on the changes taking place and the seasons. They compose musical tunes using the computerised keyboard and discover which objects float and sink in water. Children make sense of their world by perceptively acting out their own life experiences in well resourced role play situations. For example, they are customers, waiters or a chef in the café; or they are builders, building an extension in the construction area; or they are parents and children in the home area. They lend weight to their characters by dressing up in costumes, bringing resources from other areas and mimicking adult actions and conversation.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children significantly benefit from the professional and positive partnerships that staff develop with parents and carers. Staff work conscientiously with parents and carers to effectively meet children's individual needs and ensure they are fully included in nursery life. Consequently, key workers fully understand the children's individual health, dietary, social and emotional needs, and religious and cultural beliefs and work diligently to ensure these are reflected and well catered for in the provision. A wealth of resources, play materials, activities and opportunities helps to increase children's awareness of the diverseness of our society and to develop positive attitudes towards others.

Children are warmly greeted by staff who are interested in what they have to say and encourage them to realise their ideas. Their artwork, models and photographs of them at work adorn the setting, promoting their self-image and respect for others. It helps them to feel valued, secure and a strong sense of belonging. They are learning to play harmoniously with others whilst enjoying the freedom to explore within appropriate boundaries. Children play independently and together in pairs and small groups. They are learning about responsibility because they undertake small tasks, such as tidying toys away and sweeping up sand from the floor. Children choose from an extensive range of balanced resources whilst staff effectively support them in taking turns and sharing. Children's behaviour is admirable. They understand appropriate conventions, such as using please, thank-you and excuse me and do so without reminders from staff. Calm and positive staff are exemplary role models who use consistent strategies to promote acceptable behaviour and raise children's awareness of right and wrong. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is outstanding. Parents receive high levels of information relating to their children's progress. Written progress reports are produced each term with a final full report produced at year end. Assessment records, profiles and creative work samples are comprehensive and bring children's journey through nursery alive for parents. Parents are encouraged to be involved in the children's learning in many ways. They accompany children on outings and to the swimming pool, share their experiences and hobbies, such as the visit from 'Grandma and her owl' and many are involved in the facilitation of events, such as the forthcoming nativity play. This approach promotes positive links between home and the nursery, values parents' contributions and provides stability and continuity for children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children's care is enhanced by the rich, varied and imaginative quality of the organisation. Staff have a clear understanding of the ethos of the nursery and their commitment demonstrates their regard for the well-being of all children. Policies and procedures are consistently implemented, in the majority of instances, to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to play a full and active part in the setting. The daily routines are flexible enough to cater for children's individual needs.

A comprehensive operational plan ensures staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, which enables children to significantly benefit from a secure environment and an effective key worker system that provides continuity of care. Confident staff are well deployed to give high priority to meeting children's needs, and provide excellent support and encouragement through consistent and skilful interaction. Records and documents are well maintained, respect confidentiality and are easily accessible. However, some confidential records are not stored securely.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. Children benefit from the vibrant dynamics of the senior staff and management team who are effective role models. Staff are offered clear and positive direction from a management team who are highly skilled and experienced and share their expertise by actively contributing to the planning of the educational programme. Systematic monitoring and evaluation of the teaching and learning successfully identifies and highlights areas for development and review. This positively impacts on the quality of children's experiences and the depth of their learning and is taking them securely forwards towards the early learning goals.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting agreed to inform parents of the complaints procedure, promote independent hand washing and feeding routines and improve some safety measures. There were no key issues relating to nursery education.

The setting ensures that parents are fully informed about how they can report issues and make their concerns known. Information is displayed throughout the setting and on the parents' noticeboard. The complaints procedure is detailed in the operational plan and parents are informed as part of the gradual admission procedures. Information relating to the regulator is included. Children have lots of opportunities to learn appropriate personal hygiene procedures and facilitate them independently, and appropriate cutlery is used to help children develop their feeding skills. Safety issues such as emergency evacuation are practised regularly and comfortable temperatures are maintained at all times. The heating system is thermostatically

controlled and additional heating is used in the conservatory on very cold days to maintain optimum temperatures. Staff monitor room temperatures. As a result of these actions, children's safety, welfare and independence are better promoted.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted have received concerns relating to National Standard 1: Suitable person. The concerns were originally shared with another agency. A childcare inspector from Ofsted then visited the provision on 22 July 2005. Actions were raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- further develop staff's understanding and practice relating to feeding young babies
- review the secure storage of confidential recordings.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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