

Happitots Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 316020 |
| Inspection date | 28 November 2007 |
| Inspector | Shirley Leigh Monks-Meagher |
| Setting Address | 31 Chorley Road, Westhoughton, Bolton, BL5 3PD |
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| Registered person | Diane Margaret Swift |
| 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 satisfactory. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Happitots Nursery was registered in 1992 to provide care for children in the local community. It is owned and operated by a private individual from a terraced house in Westhoughton, Bolton. Children attending the nursery have access to three ground floor play areas for children aged two to five years with en-suite toilet facilities and two rooms on the first floor are used for babies and toddlers under two years. Suitable nappy changing facilities are available. There is a fully enclosed area for outdoor play.

There are currently 36 children on roll from six months to four years, who attend on a variety of placements, of these 10 receive funding for nursery education. Happitots operates from 07.30 to 18.00 Monday to Friday, all year round. It is closed on Bank holidays.

There are six staff working directly with the children and this includes the registered provider. All the staff hold relevant early years qualification equivalent to National Vocational Qualifications (NVQ) levels 2 or 3. The setting receives support from the Sure Start Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are generally protected from the spread of infection and cross contamination as the nursery generally maintains appropriate levels of hygiene. However, dummies are stored together and bottle teats and dummies are not always cleaned after contact with the floor. Staff follow guidelines and policies, such as food hygiene and nappy changing procedures. Older children are developing their personal hygiene skills as they are encouraged to use the toilet and wash their hands. Children are well taken care of if they are ill as staff follow the appropriate sick child and medication policy.

Children enjoy a healthy, balanced diet. They are offered nutritious meals and children's individual dietary requirements are taken into account. Children's independence skills are fostered at meal times, however, they are not sufficiently encouraged to use appropriate cutlery. This often hinders their good attempts at feeding themselves. Children are offered juice at snack and mealtimes and drinking water is readily accessible throughout the day. Babies sleep and are fed in accordance to their needs and routines, which helps them to feel secure.

Children greatly enjoy physical, indoor and outdoor play and are developing an awareness of the value of exercise. The outside play area and adjacent park are well used and gives children opportunities to progress in various areas of development. Regular music and movement sessions are helping the children develop flexible body movements and good coordination skills. The large equipment in the park challenges the more able children appropriately. Children enjoy walks in the park to collect natural materials or hunt for mini beasts.

Staff are developing good relationships with the babies and getting to know them well. They have an understanding of their needs and are sensitive to their individual non verbal communications, for example, signs when a baby is tired or hungry. However, there is insufficient equipment and furnishings in their rooms to promote their early sitting and mobility skills. Staff are flexible and work closely with parents in order to meet children's individual sleeping routines and their health and dietary needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery has natural light, is kept at a suitable temperature, is ventilated and adequately maintained. Children settle quickly and the two to four-year-olds move confidently within the areas of the rooms and in the outside play area. Furniture and equipment for the majority of children is of acceptable quality and meets their needs. The first floor rooms, however, have insufficient age-appropriate furniture, equipment and resources of their own. Procedures are in place for cleaning and maintaining toys and equipment, however, staff do not consistently apply these procedures resulting in children using some dirty and broken toys which pose a risk to their health and safety.

The premises are secure and access to the nursery is well managed. All visitors are required to sign in and out of the building. Risk assessments are in place to generally minimise the risk of accidents to children. However, the bathroom water is very hot posing a hazard to children's safety. Children are learning about their own safety. For example, they regularly practise how to evacuate the building in an emergency.

Children are suitably safeguarded. A satisfactory policy is in place and clear procedures to follow in the event of a concern about the safety or welfare of children. All relevant contact details are displayed for staff and parents are informed about the nursery's responsibility to keep children safe from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Generally children enjoy their time at the nursery and arrive happy and eager to participate. Babies are generally content throughout the day in the care of the supportive staff team. Good relationships are developing which enhances children's confidence and contributes to their well-being. They have enough space to explore their environment and enjoy crawling and pulling themselves up on the gates. They interact eagerly with staff and begin to play alongside other children as they develop a stronger sense of self and interest in others. However, staff make insufficient use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan and provide age appropriate activities and opportunities for children under two years. For example, babies have very few natural materials to explore and handle. Their creative play and treasure basket materials are too small because they are borrowed from the older children. There is no continuous provision for children under two, therefore, they cannot freely access resources and toys or make choices. Staff record observations of the babies development but do not use the information to identify the next steps or inform their planning.

Toddlers between two and three years, play alongside the pre-school children on the ground floor. They freely make choices about where they will play and know where to find resources to extend their ideas. For example, they know where to find cars to add to their play in the sand. They join in many adult led activities with the pre-school children which stretches their learning. However, staff do not always effectively recognise and plan for the toddlers capabilities in group activities. For example, the circle time activity on speaking and listening skills was too demanding for many of the younger children who consequently became disruptive spoiling the activity for the more able children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are familiar with their environment and daily routine. The children who are in receipt of funding are mixed with younger children. Older children are keen to help the younger children and share their skills. For example, they help them to pour a drink or fit tracks together for the train and explain which side of the magnifying glass to look through.

Children benefit from a good balance of adult planned and child initiated activities. Staff sit and play with children during the activities to introduce them to new experiences and vocabulary. As a result, children are confident in the company of adults and ask questions. The staff plan activities based on topics and record observations into children's files. However, they are not yet effectively assessing children's abilities to ensure that they provide appropriate levels of challenge or plan for individual progression.

Children are developing an understanding of communication skills. They bring books to adults and enjoy listening to stories, such as 'Peace At Last'. Children are able to re-tell familiar stories, such as 'Poppy Cat' using the pictures as prompts. In their role play they can be heard taking messages on the telephone and food orders in the café. They record their observations by

painting pictures, taking photographs or making models and mark their work with their name so that it can be identified.

Children are developing an understanding of early number concepts. They group items together by colour or size and more able children can successfully count them by touch. They are beginning to understand size. For example, they solve the problem of undressed dolls by sorting through clothes to find items that will fit. They describe them to each other as 'too big' or 'too small' until they successfully complete the task.

Children enjoy many hands-on experiences that help them to discover for themselves. For example, they melt chocolate to make crispy cakes, mix colours and collect leaves and conkers in the park to reinforce their learning about the seasons. Children consolidate their learning in many role play activities. For example, after a visit from the fire fighters, they develop a fire station and make sense of their learning through acting out situations and stories.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

The setting works with parents in order to maintain consistency of care for children enabling their individual needs to be met. However, there is less consistency in the organisation and allocation of resources and environmental stimuli. There is a marked difference between the provision for children under two years and those who are older. For example, on the ground floor children's art work, mobiles and photographs create a purposeful learning environment and give children a sense of belonging within the nursery. However, this does not happen on the first floor where the under two's are cared for. Older children have opportunities to learn about the diversity of our society as they access a selection of resources that portray positive images and staff ensure that children are able to make choices without conforming to stereotypes. Children's behaviour is appropriate. There is a behaviour management policy in place and staff are confident and consistent when managing children's behaviour. As a result, children's understanding of right and wrong is suitably fostered. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Parents are able to look at policies and procedures within the parent pack. This includes information about the Foundation Stage curriculum. Information is gathered from parents about children before they start at nursery and Parents share information about their children during the settling in process through discussions with their child's key worker. Staff share information regarding children's development through daily record sheets and verbally at the end of the day. Parent's feedback is positive, they state that they are happy with the care provided and are happy that their children enjoy attending.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The majority of children are able to enjoy their time at the nursery and are well settled. In the main, a satisfactory balance and range of activities and opportunities are provided for children's enjoyment and learning. There are clear systems in place for the vetting of staff, which ensures that children are cared for only by staff who are suitable to do so. Staff deployment successfully fosters good relationships but does not always serve the best interests of the youngest children. The nursery has all of the required documentation, such as registers of attendance, accident

and medication records, in place. There are satisfactory policies and procedures, which are implemented by the staff to promote the well-being of children.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The management team are working hard to develop the education provision and receive regular support from the Sure Start partnership. The registered provider and the new manager work hands-on with the children and consequently have not fully developed a system for monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning. This results in some gaps in children's learning and inappropriate levels of challenge. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery agreed to develop the key worker system, improve nappy changing procedures, carry out a risk assessment on the gas fire and update some policies and the maintenance of required documentation. The nursery education had a number of significant weaknesses linked to children's abilities to develop independence and initiative, staff's understanding of the Foundation Stage and how children learn and gaps in their personal and social learning and their opportunities to explore, experiment and think things through for themselves.

Since the last inspection the nursery have worked hard on the recommendations and have made good progress which has improved outcomes for children. The key worker system has been effectively implemented at the setting resulting in all the children who attend enjoying warm, trusting and affectionate relationships with consistent adults. The procedures for changing nappies have been addressed successfully. All staff have a clear understanding of healthy and hygienic procedures to follow when changing children's nappies and these are demonstrated consistently in their practice. Staff ensure that no objects are placed on the large fire guard that surrounds the gas fire minimising risks of fire and accidents to children. All policies and procedures have been reviewed and updated as required to meet the requirements of the National Standards. Accident and medication records are maintained and respect confidentiality. A diary recording system effectively demonstrates the settings compliance with keeping Ofsted informed of significant events. As a result children's health, safety and well-being are better protected.

The staff have made huge progress in their approach to the nursery educational programme and are developing a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning. They have re-arranged and re-organised the play areas into specific learning areas and stocked these with appropriate resources which are in well marked tubs and low level drawers enabling children to easily and safely access them. Children know what toys and resources are available and where they can find them. As a result children develop their own ideas and interests into play situations and confidently select and transport resources and equipment from other areas to extend their play. This has also had a positive effect on children's willingness to replace toys when they have finished playing, helpfulness in tidying up their environment and ability to share resources and ideas as they play together comfortably. The balance and routines of the day have been improved, to ensure that children have ample opportunity to initiate their own activities and ideas in addition to taking part in planned adult led activities. This has resulted in children being purposefully engaged. Planning is linked via topics to the learning areas and addresses the stepping stones however, there are still some gaps in the provision. Children are making steady progress towards the early learning goals.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted have received concerns relating to National Standard 2 - Organisation, National 3 - Care, Learning and Play, National Standard 6 - Safety and National Standard 12 - Working in partnership with parents and carers. Ofsted visited the provision on 29 January 2007. Actions were raised. A monitoring visit was conducted on 8 February 2007 to ensure that the actions raised at the initial visit has been completed. The actions have been 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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- provide children with appropriate equipment to increase their independent feeding skills and improve staff's practice with dummies, bottles and feeding cups to further minimise contamination
- review the procedures for maintaining toys, resources and equipment to minimise hazards to children's health and safety and regulate the temperature of the water in the pre-school bathroom
- Increase equipment, toys and resources for children under two years and provide age appropriate opportunities and activities in line with recommended guidelines, such as the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Gather information relating to the children's abilities and use it to plan for their next steps
- arrange and organise the play space for children under two years to stimulate their curiosity, encourage a sense of belonging and enable them to make choices and enjoy their time at the setting
- deploy suitably qualified and experienced members of the staff team to effectively support the development and learning of children under two years, in line with the requirements of the National Standards.

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):

- review the assessment of children's individual learning to identify children's abilities across the learning areas and inform the planning so activities build on their knowledge

and understanding, challenge them appropriately, address gaps in their learning and move them forward towards the early learning goals

- develop a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating the quality of teaching and learning to ensure a balanced curriculum which challenges children appropriately and effectively highlights areas for staff development.

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