

Theresa's Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	321520
Inspection date	18 October 2007
Inspector	Linda Cook
Setting Address	The Pavillion, Calf Close, Haxby, York, North Yorkshire, YO32 3NX
Telephone number	01904 765005
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Registered person	Theresa Roberts-Hardy
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Theresa's Nursery School was established in 1987 and has been registered at the current premises since 1992. It operates from the sports pavilion sited on the playing field in Haxby, a village situated on the outskirts of the City of York.

It is a privately owned provision and is a member of the Pre School Learning Alliance (PLA). The nursery is based on the first floor of the building and has the use of three areas. Toilet and kitchen facilities are available on the ground floor and they have use of the playing field for outdoor play.

The nursery is registered for a maximum of 16 children at each session and they take children from two and a half to five years old. Session times are currently between 9.00 and 13.00 Monday to Friday and on Wednesday afternoons from 12.00 to 15.00 and children can bring a packed lunch. These times are operated during term time and in addition, the nursery also opens for two weeks in August when children up to eight years old may attend.

The nursery serves the local community and the surrounding area and has links with the three local primary schools. There are currently 30 children on roll, including 20 children who are in

receipt of nursery education funding. Children with learning difficulties and those with English as an additional language are welcome to attend.

Three of the four staff members hold a level 3 childcare qualification. They receive support from the local authority and are part of a cluster group, including local schools and other childcare providers.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, clean environment where they learn about good hygiene practices.

The children learn to wash their hands before eating and after taking part in messy activities, such as painting. They know that this important to ensure they 'don't get germs in their tummies because they make you sick'. Children's good health is further protected because there is a clear sick child policy which is shared with parents.

All staff have current first aid certificates and accident and medication records are appropriately maintained. However, while children are provided with individual means of drying their hands in the cloakroom, the shared towel they use after craft activities does are not fully protected them from cross infection.

Children enjoy physical play and the daily routine ensures the children play outdoors most days. They move around the setting confidently and with control. They demonstrate a good awareness of space as they avoid collisions when they play and when they manoeuvre wheeled toys outdoors.

The children enjoy their healthy snacks and they know that milk is good for them. They respond eagerly to name fruits that they like and which are good for them.

Children are also aware of foods which should be eaten in moderation and they know that too much chocolate is not good for you. They chat happily with their friends as they have their snacks and develop their independence as they pour their own drinks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The setting has sole use of the first floor of the premises which means the children are welcomed into a very child-friendly environment where their artwork and educational posters decorate the walls and ceiling.

In addition to the wide range of commercial play equipment, the staff demonstrate a good understanding of how children's interest is captured by natural and household items for their play and learning. They provide a wide range of shoes, handbags and tape measures to resource the role play area as a shoe shop.

The children learn how to keep themselves safe. They learn about how to leave the building in an emergency because they practise the emergency evacuation procedures regularly.

The children's good behaviour also promotes their safety because they learn to listen carefully to the adults and follow their guidance, particularly when playing outdoors. Staff give children's safety high priority and are vigilant in their supervision of the children at all times.

The staff continue to update their child protection training regularly and all necessary local and national information is kept on file, should guidance be needed. The children are protected and their wellbeing is safeguarded, as staff fully are aware of their duty to protect the children in their care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The environment is child-centred and staff give excellent attention to children's needs, feelings and ideas. This allows them to initiate their own play and provides skilled support to extend their learning.

Children eagerly enter the setting and greet staff and friends. They are confident in their surroundings and soon engage in their chosen activity. They initiate conversation with staff telling them about themselves other members of their family. They are eager to demonstrate what they know at circle time, joining in conversations about the weather.

Staff are aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework which is used in the planning process. This is flexible to meet the needs of all the children who attend. These are supported by a wide range of toys and resources. During the day, the children have the opportunity to engage in planned activities and to initiate their own play to bring a good balance between free and structured play.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff work well as a team they are clear in their roles and provide consistent levels of support and interaction with the children. They are very attentive to children's ideas and skilfully adapt the intended learning to follow through on the children's interests and contributions.

Children make good progress through the stepping stones, towards the early learning goals. Staff are secure in their understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and this is demonstrated in the detailed planning linked to the areas of learning.

Regular observations of the children contribute to the assessment process and these are recorded in the children's individual assessment files. While the staff know the children well and are instinctively aware of the individual children's next steps in learning, the system of planning and assessment does not clearly show these links.

The available space is organised well, this enables the children to successfully initiate their own play.

Staff show particular skills at extending children's learning through sensitive questioning. They encourage children to extend their thinking and predict what might happen next. For example, 'what do you think will happen when and how do you think we can do that?'

Children are developing very good communication skills, they are confident in speaking to others and eager to share their experiences with the staff, as they tell them their news at circle time.

The children are demonstrating growing writing skills, with the more able children writing their name on their work and others forming recognisable letters. They begin to recognise their name in print as they identify their own name card. They are starting to link letters to sounds as staff practise phonics with them. The children name the letter their name begins with and make the corresponding sound.

Children have good access to a very wide range of books, they handle them well turning pages appropriately and following print from left to right. They enjoy listening to stories and request their favourite stories.

Children are developing good understanding of numbers, they can count confidently to ten and are beginning to recognise corresponding numerals. They learn to recognise and name shapes as part of the planned topics and in every day conversations with staff. They are using size language well and understand concepts such as big and small, bigger and smaller. This is demonstrated in the role play area being used as a shoe shop, when children measure feet and compare shoe sizes.

They are provided with opportunities to use simple problem solving in every day routines and activities. At snack time, when they are asked if there are enough cups or if there are four boys and three girls, how many children are there altogether.

Children use a range of programmable toys well and have daily access to a computer. They control the mouse confidently and complete simple programmes with minimal support from staff.

Children are beginning to develop a sense of space and move around the setting with control. They demonstrate good strength and agility as they skilfully manoeuvre wheeled toys outdoors and use the climbing frame and slide indoors. They show good dexterity as they use a variety of tools including pencils, crayons, paint brushes, glue sticks and scissors.

Children enjoy being creative they are able to explore colour, texture shape and form, through the varied selection of craft resources and creative activities provided. Good use is made of the role play area and small world resources to develop the children's imaginative skills.

The children have access to a range of musical instruments, enjoy singing and participate in an increasing range of children's songs and action rhymes.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is developing well through a wide range of topics. They talk about the weather, monitor the seasons and have studied the life cycles of butterflies and frogs.

Children are gaining an awareness of their own culture and that of others, as they celebrate various festivals throughout the year. They danced a dragon dance at the Chinese New year and marked the festival of lights at Diwali.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The staff get to know the children very well through ongoing dialogue with parents and through observation of the children as they play. There is a high level of mutual respect on all levels. The clear focus on this aspect of the children's care and development promotes positive outcomes for the children in all other areas.

Children are respected as individuals and as the adults foster the children's self esteem, the children are relaxed, confident and behave very well. They happily help to tidy up and they beam with pride when they are praised for their contributions to group discussions.

There is a satisfactory range of resources showing positive images of cultural diversity. Children learn about their local community and the wider world as part of the planned activities. Visitors to the setting and parents who share their skills with the children, further increase children's awareness. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The parents of new starters receive a prospectus and the key worker system is effective in providing them with a point of contact. They receive written information about the early years curriculum and the associated areas of learning.

Parents are invited to share information about their child as they start at the setting. Individual copies of the planned activities keep parents informed of the activities their children enjoy.

Those parents spoken to at the inspection visit, stated they are pleased with the service provided, their children enjoy coming to the group, they take part in a wide range of activities and make good progress in their development. They comment particularly on the caring staff who show genuine interest in their children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Leadership and management of the provision is good. The staff are conscientious and they work well as a team.

All staff have a positive approach to progression and attend regular training. The regular staff meetings are used effectively plan a range of interesting, stimulating topics and associated activities.

Similarly, the staff work well with the Local Authority in addressing the National Standards and they welcome the inspection process as a positive part of their ongoing development. However, the quality of the care and education provided by the current system of self assessment has not been fully developed for effective monitoring purposes.

The high staffing ratio supports the children's care and learning well, this facilitates a high level of interaction throughout the sessions. This is particularly useful for the rising five's. They spend individual time with a staff member, facilitating individual assessments of their learning.

Indoors the available space and resources are organised effectively to ensure children are able to move easily and safely accessing their chosen activities and toys, as a result children initiate their own play and learning well.

The organisation of the daily routines ensures children enjoy regular access to fresh air in the outdoors. The learning opportunities outdoors are limited by the location of the setting on a public playing field with no defined play area.

Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures together with a clear induction procedure and a staff appraisal system, ensures children are cared for by staff that are suitable and have the knowledge and understanding to promote children's all round development.

There is a range of policies and procedures in place and most requirements for record keeping and documentation are in place to meet the requirements of the National Standards. However, these are not fully organised to be clear and accessible and a record of staff attendance is not consistently maintained.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting was asked to complete regular risk assessments and keep an accurate record of children's and staff attendance. Also to organise the daily routines to ensure children were not required to sit for long periods of time and to improve the opportunities for children to extend their design making skills.

Risk assessments are completed and these are reviewed on a regular basis helping to ensure children's safety. An accurate record of the children's attendance is maintained however, a record of staff attendance is not consistently maintained.

The daily routines have been reviewed to ensure they meet the children's needs effectively and children are not sat for prolonged periods of time. The children are provided with a range of opportunities to develop their design making skills, they have regular access to a range of commercial construction resources and enjoy 'junk' modelling.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection, there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that require 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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- ensure a record of staff attendance is consistently maintained and documentation and record keeping organised to be easily accessible.
- improve hygiene procedures by ensuring children are provided with individual means of drying their hands at all times
- further develop the current self assessment system to monitor the quality of the care and education provided (also applies to Nursery education).

The quality and standards of the nursery education

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

- ensure planning clearly shows how the individual next steps in children's learning are to be met.

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