

# Hazles Farm Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	508021
<b>Inspection date</b>	22 November 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Olwen Pulker
<b>Setting Address</b>	Hazles Farm, Hazels Road, Shawbury, Shrewsbury, Shropshire, SY4 4HE
<b>Telephone number</b>	01939 250234
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<b>Registered person</b>	Sharon Ann McLaughlin
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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](http://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?

Hazles Farm Nursery and Out of School Club has been open since November 1999. It operates from three converted farm buildings, situated in a rural location near Shawbury, North Shropshire. A maximum of 92 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting is open Monday to Saturday all year round, except bank holidays. Sessions are from 07:00 to 19:00. All children share access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 130 children from three months to 11 years on roll. Of these, 37 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, and also children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 21 staff working with children. Of these, 19 hold suitable early years qualifications and two are currently working towards a qualification. The pre-school has a qualified teacher supporting the morning sessions within the setting. The nursery offers teaching and learning based on the Montessori method and receives support from the local authority.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for within a clean and hygienic environment. Good procedures are in place for sick and infectious children which help prevent the spread of infection and help to keep children healthy. Staff adhere to a sound nappy changing procedure and children are provided with freshly laundered sheets and blankets on the sleep mats. Outdoor shoes are not worn in the baby and toddler rooms ensuring that the children are able to play and explore on clean flooring. Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene and health through their daily routines, discussions with staff and visits from the locally based Royal Air Force dental team who inform and instruct the children how to care for their teeth. A child in pre-school comments that his grandfather smokes and 'that is not good'. Children wash their hands after using the toilet, before eating or preparing food and after messy play; they are provided with soap and a plentiful supply of paper towels.

Staff work in partnership with parents to meet children's dietary needs and are attentive to the needs of the young babies, implementing their individual routines. There is a daily diary which is used to inform parents about the quantity and type of food consumed. Fresh drinking water is freely available and drinks are offered regularly throughout the session. Children enjoy a varied menu of freshly prepared balanced meals and all snacks and meals comply with any special dietary requirements to ensure children remain healthy. Cooked lunches are provided daily and a variety of fresh and dried fruits are offered to children at snack times. Children and staff talk about how nice and healthy the food is and children benefit greatly from having a vegetable patch where they plant, grow and harvest their produce such as potatoes, carrots, lettuce and beans.

Children's health is promoted well through good opportunities for physical exercise and activity in the outside play area. All are able to rest and be active according to their needs. Their coordination and spatial awareness develops as they ride on various wheeled toys and play ball games. They enjoy digging and rolling in the bark mound and using the play equipment to climb and slide in turn. In addition to the outdoor play area, children have regular sessions in the indoor jungle gym and ball pools in the toddler rooms.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Admission to the buildings is closely monitored, ensuring no unauthorised people have access to the children. All visitors are required to sign in and out of the building. A complete record of everyone on the premises is maintained at all times, helping to protect the children. Children's welfare is additionally promoted through the management's extensive knowledge and pro-active skills with regard to their safety. For example, written risk assessments are carried out to identify hazards with regard to use of equipment, spaces within the nursery, considerations for outings and use of transport. Fire precautions are in place and evacuation procedures are available in every room. Fire drills are practised regularly so that staff and children know what to do in the event of evacuation. Nursery vehicles are well-maintained and fitted with belts and appropriate seating so that children attending after school can be transported safely. Timely reminders and explanations from staff about appropriate behaviour and use of equipment help develop children's understanding of how to keep themselves safe from harm.

All children have access to an exciting range of quality toys and resources, which are suitable for their ages and stages of development. Resources have been carefully chosen to support children's play and are regularly checked for hygiene and safety. Toys are made easily accessible and at the children's level so they can independently select resources. Young children benefit from using resources, such as treasure baskets, fantasy cube and sensory hoops to enhance their play experiences.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by the staff's sound knowledge of child protection matters. Staff have attended child protection training, they know the indicators of abuse and the procedure to follow for reporting concerns. Comprehensive and effective policies and procedures are in place to promote and give high priority to children's welfare.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children enter the group confidently and enjoy their time in the setting. An effective key worker system ensures that babies and toddlers are cared for by consistent staff, whenever possible. They receive lots of cuddles and enjoy the positive interaction with staff which increases their sense of trust and well-

being. They benefit from routines which are similar with their experiences at home and staff are attentive to their needs. Babies enjoy the textures of natural materials and the colours and sounds of manufactured toys, which they explore with interest. Staff plan a wide range of interesting experiences and activities to help children learn through their play. Older children have positive relationships with staff and receive comfort and attention when they need support. They play happily together and with adults, using resources such as puzzles, making models and role play equipment. Musical activities include singing and action rhymes which contribute to children's developing communication skills. They relate aspects of their home lives as they play, for instance, when washing the dolls in soapy water one child tells staff that her 'baby likes it' and 'I have bubbles in my bath'. Exploration with paint, dough and sensory hoops helps children represent their experiences, feelings and ideas in a variety of ways. Children benefit from a colourful, stimulating and interesting environment in which they are happy, content and well cared for.

Older children attending the out of school provision enjoy playing in the jungle gym, having a game of chess with staff, using the computer to play educational games, quietly reading books or taking their 'babies' for a walk in the trolley. They take responsibility for setting the table for tea and setting out the required number of chairs. They have the opportunity to select items of their choice when they accompany staff to a large toy shop once a term to purchase new stock.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and are qualified and experienced. The setting manager and a qualified Montessori teacher have a thorough understanding of the early learning goals and they are well aware of how young children learn effectively. Consequently children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They enjoy interesting topics and themes that link curriculum planning successfully to all six areas of learning. They have a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities and staff work proficiently in ensuring all children are involved, well supported and have good opportunities to practise and consolidate their learning. Children are supported

effectively and allowed to learn at their own pace, and there is good understanding of children's individual needs. Staff consistently ask open-ended questions to make children think and provide them with a wide range of vocabulary to extend their language. There are high expectations for children's behaviour.

Written plans provide suitable guidance to staff about focused activities and what children are intended to learn. Staff undertake observations and assessments of the children which key workers enter in individual profile booklets which are then used to complete foundation stage records, marking children's progress. Staff also complete 'learning stories' for each child and use the information effectively to plan next steps to support their learning.

Children are excited and motivated to learn and become involved in new experiences enthusiastically. They form positive relationships and share space together very well. They maintain a high level of concentration and persist at their chosen activities well. Children are developing their independence through participation in routine activities, such as, selecting and tidying up play resources, pouring their own drinks and putting on outdoor shoes and coats before going outside to play. Staff encourage and support the children to resolve their own conflicts by saying 'no' to another child if they do not like the way they are being treated. This empowers children to have control over their own well-being.

Children are becoming confident speakers and engage in conversations with each other and adults. Some children share the events of their weekend with peers showing great enthusiasm at the opportunity to do this during circle time. For instance, one child told the group about his visit to a Chinese restaurant where he ate his food using chopsticks and said 'Thank you' in Chinese to the waiter. They routinely sign nursery rhymes as they sing; this enables them to communicate in a non-verbal way. Children are confident about handling books and have a developing understanding of the purpose of written language in their environment. The children enthusiastically listen to, and are involved in, stories told to them by staff. In addition, the children take great delight in reading stories to each other. For example, one child read a story to her friend using pictures as a guide. Children recognise letters of the alphabet; some confidently put three-letter words together and proudly read the words to an adult and relish the praise they receive. They practise writing letters in a sand tray and share their knowledge with others as they do so, announcing that 'o is for ostrich and off'. Older or more able children label their work, writing their names in well-defined letters.

Children have an interest in numbers and counting through the use of traditional Montessori equipment and through practical situations. They confidently count up to 20 when taking a headcount of those lined up to go outside. Children build cube towers, laying them side-by-side to compare their lengths, adding or taking away cubes until they are of equal length. Having done this, the children stand the towers vertically and count backwards from 10 as they launch their rockets. Older children confidently recognise and name numerals one to nine and know that when they draw a line down the middle of the sand tray there is half either side of the line.

Children's knowledge of their environment and the wider world is impressive. They confidently name the continents, identify the habitats and characteristics of various animals such as the cheetah being the fastest animal and warning others that 'you have to be dead' when stung by a scorpion. They recall making models of puffer fish last year. Children learn simple phrases and basic counting in different languages; they show great interest in how Chinese numerals are written and are entranced when staff sing the numerals of 'One, two, three, four, five, once I caught a fish alive' in Chinese. They learn about living things as they observe the vegetables

growing in their plot and monitor the development of chicks into hens which a local farmer brings into the setting at regular intervals. They take apart flowers, line up the component parts to learn about the different segments, what they are called and what they do. Children revisit this activity using botanical jigsaws. They have opportunities to use information and communication technology through play equipment such as phones, tills and a computer. They show curiosity when a firefighter shows them how the computer in the fire appliance works.

Children move confidently and are developing good coordination skills. Some handle a range of tools and small equipment well, such as tongs, scissors, cutlery and felt-tip pens. They concentrate well when screwing nuts and bolts or when dressing the dolls. They learn to move their bodies in various ways during weekly sessions of music and movement and develop their climbing skills and strength on the ropes in the jungle gym. Children are eager to dance in time with Chinese music; they wear a dragon costume they have made from cardboard decorated with brightly coloured tissue paper and a strip of material. Children enjoy playing in the home corner, deciding which vegetables to cook for tea and eating with chopsticks. The blue sofa in the book corner represents a swimming pool where their dolls go for swimming lessons. Different role play resources such as the garden centre or the veterinary practice are linked to themes or topics and not freely available which limits children engaging in imaginative and role play freely.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. The children are able to work harmoniously with others as they make choices and decisions. They are developing good self-esteem and respect for others. The children feel valued as they celebrate and talk about their achievements or significant events in their lives. They are welcomed and are given sufficient time to settle into the setting so they feel a sense of belonging. Effective arrangements are made to ensure children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language are included. There are many resources such as books, posters, small world people, musical instruments and Montessori world resources to help children learn about a diverse society through their play. They celebrate festivals such as Diwali and Chinese New Year and visitors from different ethnic groups also offer opportunities for children to widen their views about the world in which they live.

Children benefit from a calm and supportive approach, and learn right from wrong through careful explanation and consistency. Praise and support helps them develop self-esteem. Children are encouraged to play together, take turns and share. Manners are encouraged throughout the day and children are repeatedly praised for doing well, behaving well, sharing and cooperating with others. The children understand responsible behaviour and learn about boundaries.

Parents receive good written information on how the setting operates and have access to all policies and procedures. Daily verbal feedback, the sharing of diaries and photographs of children engaged in play ensure parents are informed about what their children have been doing whilst attending. Staff actively seek parents' views about their children's needs and interests before the child starts at the setting, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Regular newsletters keep parents informed of the activities and events within each of the settings and how they can become more involved. A detailed and effective complaints procedure is in place.

The partnership with parents and carers who receive nursery education funding is good. They receive clear information on the educational programme provided for their children. Topic sheets on the notice board inform parents of the current topic and they are kept informed about their children's progress because staff share developmental records with them at parent consultation meetings. An 'open-door' policy is maintained to enable parents to talk to staff if they wish to do so. Staff ensure that all parents know how their children are progressing and developing. Children benefit greatly from the involvement of their parents in projects, which contributes to their development and learning. They bring objects from home that begin with 'the letter of the week', such as, a violin which children were allowed to play and a terrapin which children handled under close supervision. Children take reading books home to share with their parents. The manager provides excellent support to families of children in pre-school who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

The leadership and management is good. The management team have a very clear understanding about the service their setting provides and have a sound overview of what can be done to further improve this service, such as, further developing the outdoor play area to include a forest school. Consultation with parents through questionnaires informs management of concerns or issues that require addressing. These are regarded in a positive light and affect improvements within the setting. Children are comfortable within a secure environment and benefit from a staff group who enjoy caring for children. Systems are in place to ensure that staff are aware of current good practice guidelines and can develop and extend their experience, for example through training and access to childcare publications. Staff appraisals, team meetings and a clear management structure all help to ensure that staff remain committed to providing an exciting, happy and comfortable environment for the children in their care. Staff work well together as a team and this supports a happy, relaxed and caring environment for children.

Most staff working with children have appropriate childcare qualifications and have a commitment to accessing ongoing training. Good child to staff ratios mean that children have individual attention where required and this helps them to develop well. Good procedures are in place for ensuring that children are cared for by staff who have had appropriate experience, enjoy working with children and have completed appropriate checks.

Documentation, policies and procedures are organised very well and are clearly working documents. Regular review of procedures ensures that these documents work in practice, with involvement from all staff so that they are clear about what is expected. All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed. Children's times of arrival and departure are recorded in all base rooms except for the out of school provision where children's attendance is marked with a tick. This method of recording attendance is not sufficiently robust to fully protect children. Records relating directly to children are stored confidentially and in line with requirements.

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 provider was asked to provide an appropriate range of resources and activities that promote positive images of disability and request written consent for seeking emergency medical treatment for individual siblings. The setting now has a range of small world

figures, books and pictures that reflect different disabilities and new medication and induction forms are in place which contain parental consent for medical treatment or advice to be sought for individual children.

In addition, the provider was asked to extend opportunities in the pre-school for children to practise writing skills and to develop their recognition of all letters and link them to sounds. The setting has successfully addressed these recommendations through introducing 'letter of the week', using Jolly Phonics and the Montessori reading scheme. Children use a sand tray to practise forming letters and have writing materials freely available to mark-make.

Finally, the provider was asked to ensure that staff are able to share information about particular responsibilities and skills. Regular staff meetings are held; all contribute to the agenda for discussion. Staff take part in the appraisal system and are also encouraged to have open communication with management and within the team. Staff attending training courses cascade information to others ensuring that all have the required knowledge to promote children's welfare.

### **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.

## **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):

- ensure that all areas of the nursery record children's times of arrival and departure.

#### **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):

- extend opportunities for children to engage in imaginative and role play.



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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)