

Honeycomb Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	142776
Inspection date	27 September 2007
Inspector	Brenda Joan Flewitt

Setting Address	Pollard House, 60 Crimchard, Chard, Somerset, TA20 1JT
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Registered person	Penelope Kilbride
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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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Honeycomb Nursery School opened in 1995. It is a privately owned setting situated in a detached cottage in the town of Chard, Somerset. The nursery school occupies a separate annex with three play rooms each offering different activities. The kitchenette and toilet-cloakroom facilities are based just off the main playroom. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area available on the premises.

The nursery school is open from Monday to Friday during school term times. Sessions run from 09.00 to 12.00 noon. On Mondays and Thursdays there is an afternoon session from 12.30 to 15.30. Children attend for a variety of sessions and have the option of bringing a packed lunch. A maximum of 16 children may attend at any one time. There are currently 22 children on roll. Of these, 17 receive funding for early education. The setting supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities.

A total of four permanent staff work with the children, including the owner. All members of the team hold relevant early years qualifications, two of which are in teaching. They are supported by relief staff as required.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's health is promoted well. They learn good procedures for their own personal hygiene which include washing hands after using the toilet and messy play, and before handling food. They get to know that they are washing away germs through discussion with staff. Children are protected from the spread of infection as they use paper towels for drying hands and they learn not to put fingers in their mouth when cooking. There is a clear sickness policy which ensures that children do not attend if they have an infectious illness. Children's medication and accidents are well managed. All staff have up-to-date first aid training and first aid resources are readily available. The relevant records are completed appropriately.

Children enjoy a healthy lifestyle. They have daily opportunities for fresh air and exercise which promotes their good health. When playing outside children competently manoeuvre wheeled vehicles, stopping and starting and avoiding each other. Others confidently climb to the top of a climbing frame and slide down, they are made aware of using equipment safely by looking where they are going and holding on tight. Children learn to make healthy choices in what they eat through good example and discussion. They are offered options such as bread sticks and apple at snack time and can drink whenever they are thirsty as water is made readily available.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in safe and secure premises where hazards and risks are identified and minimised. Effective organisation of the space available and daily risk assessments, both inside and outside, ensure the environment is safe for children to move around freely and in safety. The effective security system means that children are protected from uninvited visitors and cannot leave the building unsupervised. Children learn about their own safety as staff frequently encourage them to think about how they move around and use equipment. For example, when using the kitchen for cooking activities, staff remind children about the stove which is 'always hot', and the steps they must negotiate.

Children learn what is expected if they must leave the building in an emergency as they are involved in regular fire drills. Staff are sure about their roles and responsibilities, and fire exits are clearly marked. This all promotes children's safety in a real situation. Children are kept safe on outings through routine procedures which include written parental permission, an increased adult-to-child ratio, and making sure that a phone and contact numbers are readily accessible. Children learn about crossing roads safely and people who will help them.

Staff have a clear understanding of how to recognise signs and symptoms of abuse and the procedures to follow with concerns. This helps protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are happy settled and secure. They enjoy their time at the nursery and make excellent relationships with staff and each other. They are cared for by an enthusiastic team who have a very good understanding of how children learn through play. Children are motivated to learn

in a friendly, calm and stimulating environment where they are highly valued as individuals. Staff are skilful in helping children learn to work in harmony and respect each other.

Children are very confident to make their needs known and are encouraged to develop skills in practical tasks and making choices, which helps them become independent learners. They become increasingly adept at managing their own clothes, pouring drinks and tidying away equipment. Children use an extensive range of play provision and resources which are organised effectively so that children can choose from a full range at all times, to extend their own play and learning.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have an excellent understanding of the Foundation Stage and use this to provide a very broad range of exciting activities and experiences, linked to children's individual interests, which encourages children's appetite for learning. Staff are consistent in their approach and use effective questioning and sensitive interaction to promote children's vocabulary and understanding of the world around them. The thorough assessment system, together with staff's clear knowledge of each child, is used to plan children's next steps and helps them reach their full potential. Therefore, children make outstanding progress in their learning.

Children use all their senses to explore and investigate through a wide variety of self-chosen and adult-led activities. Staff are skilled in linking all areas of learning to a theme and providing resources and opportunities for children to extend their own learning and build on what they already know. For example, children enjoy making 'fairy cakes'. They are encouraged to predict what ingredients are used, the colour, and whether they are 'solid' or 'liquid'. They use their senses to feel the texture, and taste sugar. Children like to join in counting how many spoonfuls are needed as directed in the 'recipe', they use a variety of equipment and tools including 'big' and 'little' spoons as they help to add to and stir the mixture. They notice changes as ingredients combine and then cook, noting the time on the clock. Later in the session, some children recreate the event in role play, one child talks about how many 'grams' she is using and that 'the cakes need to cook for 20 minutes'.

Children use language very well to communicate and express themselves. They are confident to initiate conversations with adults and peers. Children enjoy books and stories and develop a very good understanding of using reading and writing for a purpose through routine activities such as self-registration and writing their own names on their work. Children become skilful in using a computer, confidently using a mouse or key board to move images on the screen. They develop a real sense of number and problem solving through meaningful activities and during their play. They regularly help count the number of children present and enjoy number songs like 'Five currant buns', where they pretend to be a 'bun' in the shop, when one is 'bought' children easily calculate how many are left.

Children have daily opportunities for expressing their ideas in various forms such as collage, painting, construction, small world toys, and role play. For example, a child decides to make a car with stickle bricks, she confidently names colours and shapes as she builds, adding an 'engine' and a 'boot'. She works out how to make the car longer so that she can balance enough coins on it to go 'shopping'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children are highly valued as individuals. Staff know each child extremely well through the effective support they provide for children's activities and the on-going communication with parents. Children with additional needs are very well supported. The Special Educational Needs Coordinator liaises with parents, staff and connected professionals to ensure that all children are fully included. Children develop a strong sense of belonging and being part of community. They like to see photos of themselves and their work displayed in the nursery and are made to feel special on their birthday as they blow out candles and are sung to by their friends. They go on walks to venues such as the fire station, post office and museum in their area where they observe nature and features of the local environment. They start to become aware of the wider world as they explore celebrations and festivals including Diwali and Chinese New Year, when they experience role play, art and cooking activities.

Children behave exceptionally well. They know what is expected through clear and consistent explanations from staff. Children are encouraged to work as a team and respect each other. They respond positively to being given tasks of responsibility. For example the 'helper of the day' encourages children to help pack away at the end of a session and helps prepare and serve snacks. One 'helper' is heard to praise another child for tidying saying 'well done, you've done a great job'. Children receive constant praise and encouragement for their efforts and achievements, which helps build their self-esteem. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Information about the themes are supplied to parents and they are invited to contribute items and resources for the letter of the week and other topics. Children take a book home, linked to their interests, to share with their family. Parents are very well informed about their children's progress and there are effective systems for involving parents in their child's learning. Progress records are accessible to parents at all times and there are formal opportunities for discussing these on a termly basis. This enables staff and parents to work well together to fully support the children's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by committed and experienced staff who work very well together as a team, providing smoothly run sessions. Therefore, children know what to expect, settle well and feel secure. The staff recruitment procedures are satisfactory as they include making sure that new staff have been vetted to assess their suitability. However, there is no formal system for obtaining information about health issues, to ensure that the children's welfare is fully protected.

The effective organisation of the premises, resources and structure of the day means that children are active in a safe environment, and take part in a rich variety of experiences, both inside and outside. All the required documentation and records are in place, well organised, stored confidentially and completed appropriately.

Leadership and management of the provision for nursery education is outstanding. The registered person and staff have clear aims and objectives with regards to children's learning. They are dedicated to maintaining the high quality provision through constant evaluation of activities and practice. Staff meet weekly to review and plan to meet children's individual learning styles

and needs. They continually attend training to develop their knowledge and develop their skills. There are strong links with schools, which helps the children's transition as they move on to various reception classes. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last care inspection recommended that parents sign to acknowledge the record of any medicine administered; and that the complaints procedure includes Ofsted contact details.

Parents sign to acknowledge medication administered to their child, which helps promote the children's ongoing health. The complaints procedure includes Ofsted details which supplies information for parents to promote the children's welfare in the case of concerns.

The last nursery education inspection recommended that evaluation methods of planned activities were reviewed.

Staff complete detailed evaluation of adult-led activities which includes how well the learning intention was achieved, providing information for future planning for children's progress.

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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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):

- develop the staff recruitment procedures to fully include all aspects of new staff's suitability.

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