

Hobby Horse Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY223229
Inspection date	18 September 2007
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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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hobby Horse Day Nursery opened in September 2002. It operates from a modern three-storey building in the Plympton area of Plymouth. The ground floor is used for children under two; the first floor is used for three and four-year-olds and also has a kitchen; the second floor is used for children aged between two and three years, with younger children joining prior to their second birthday. There is a small sensory room on this floor. There is a small, secure outdoor area leading from the babies' activity room on the ground floor. Children also have access to a sensory garden. The nursery is registered to care for up to 42 children under the age of eight years and there are currently 83 children on roll, 18 of whom are in receipt of funding. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting supports children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who have English as an additional language. The nursery opens five days a week, all year round. Sessions are from 08:00 to 13:00 and from 13:00 to 18:00, although children can attend all day. Including the proprietor, who is qualified to Level 5 Foundation Degree, a staff of 12 support the provision. Five staff are qualified to N.V.Q. level 3 and one is studying towards this level. Two staff are qualified to level 2 and three are studying to this level. The setting receives the support of the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in a fresh, clean, attractive and fragrant nursery. They are protected from infection in highly effective ways. All children, staff and visitors to the nursery clean their hands with antibacterial gel when they arrive. Surfaces and floors in all rooms are pristine and are regularly cleaned. Babies crawl on scrupulously clean floors as staff all wear slippers to ensure the carpets are fresh. Hygienic procedures are used when changing nappies as staff wear gloves and aprons and each child has their own nappy changing items securely enclosed in individually named plastic drawers. Nappy changing apparatus is scrupulously cleaned after use. Older children wash their hands using liquid soap and paper towels and this protects them from the risk of cross infection. They also have their own toothbrushes in individually named boxes and they carefully clean their teeth after meals, this helps them learn about keeping themselves healthy. Children are extremely well cared for in the event of having an accident or becoming unwell whilst at the setting. The majority of staff in attendance have up to date qualifications in first aid and there are rigorously implemented systems for the recording of any accidents or the administering of medication. These records are countersigned by children's parents to ensure continuity of care.

Children enjoy warm, tasty breakfasts of, for example, toast and porridge. They also have highly nutritious lunches, prepared by commercial caterers and delivered to the nursery. These are prepared using fresh ingredients and all essential food groups are represented. A vegetarian option is prepared each day which presents a meal as close as possible in appearance to the meat based alternative. This ensures that all children feel included. Children have a healthy five portions of fruit and vegetables a day. They enjoy fresh fruit and bread sticks at snack times and are kept very well hydrated, as they receive frequent drinks of water and juice. Babies and toddlers develop their independent feeding skills as staff help them progress from pureed food, to food with larger lumps in and then foods they can bring to their mouths with their fingers. They clearly relish the flavours of the meals they are given and all children are able to have extra helpings if they wish. The nursery has a high regard for excellent standards of hygiene and food preparation and has taken guidance from the appropriate agency to ensure their practice is excellent.

Children develop their large muscles effectively by climbing, sliding, balancing and exploring obstacle courses. They enjoy the fresh air every day as they play in the nursery's outside play area and garden. They are carefully protected from the harmful effects of the sun by wearing hats and by the judicious application of sun cream.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in a warm, welcoming setting where they are cared for in units dedicated to their individual age groupings. Each unit is bright, safe and very well organised to provide ample space for play and rest, and each age grouping has a dining area where children enjoy their meals. Older children are accommodated on the first floor as they have the mobility skills to access the toilet facilities on the second floor easily and safely. They are always accompanied on their trips to the lavatory and are extremely well supervised at all times. The sensory room on the second floor is well equipped to provide a safe and stimulating environment. Each unit is equipped with an exceptional array of high quality toys, games and resources and children

access these easily and safely. Babies are provided with materials to play with that are prepared in very thoughtful ways to ensure they are safe to use. Equipment to support the care of babies, for example, cots, high chairs, low cradles and nappy changing apparatus is of very high quality and in pristine condition. Furniture supporting babies early clambering and standing skills is stable, clean and in excellent condition and vigilant supervision, ensures that small children's use of the small ball pool is safe. Children play in a secure outside play area where all equipment is regularly checked, stable and in very good order.

Vigilant, rigorous attention to procedures ensures that children are kept safe in the setting. A biometric finger pad entry system for parents, and closed circuit video monitoring of visitors ensures that no unauthorised persons gain entry to the setting. Parents are made aware of the importance of following safe procedures when delivering their child to the setting. Thorough risk assessments have identified all hazards and these are effectively managed, for example, French windows and balconies are efficiently protected and all stair gates are securely in place. A risk assessment is undertaken each day, by the staff of each unit, to ensure that essential checks are completed on all areas of the nursery, for example, the outside play space, and to make sure these areas are safe for children to use. These are recorded to ensure consistency. A very clear and accurate register is kept each day of the times of arrival and departure of children and adults and this means there is a reliable record of who is on the premises, for example, in the event of an emergency. Children are secure in the routine to be followed in the event of an emergency evacuation, as these drills are completed in a very rapid time, this helps to keep them safe. All fire equipment is regularly checked to ensure it is in complete working order.

Children's safety is further supported by the staff's very secure understanding of the child protection procedure. Many members of staff have undertaken specific training in this area and there is comprehensive and up to date guidance displayed and available to help the setting proceed appropriately in the event of concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children of all ages have a wonderful time in the nursery. They are cared for in family sized groupings where they develop relationships with key carers. The setting ensures they also become confident with other staff members and their sunny, happy dispositions bear testimony to how confident and settled they are in the setting. Staff have a strong understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and use it effectively to assess children's progress. Young babies develop independence as they become mobile and move between activity areas. They develop their senses, exploring texture and taste, making discoveries as they manipulate boiled pasta, squeezing it between their fingers and transporting it about. They become competent learners as they work out what they have to do to make a musical toy produce a tune. They become skilful communicators, making early attempts at words and sounds, which staff repeat back to them. They benefit from staff's enthusiasm for baby signing, activities where they develop communication skills before they are able to talk. Toddlers eagerly clamour to share what they have been doing, remembering clearly how they made play dough. They sing familiar songs in groups as they wait patiently for staff to ensure it is safe to go outside, clapping along and interacting extremely well with staff and with each other. They wake happily from their naps, eager to explore their environment and meet their friends again.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of learning. They have lively and eager dispositions to learning, confidently choosing their activities at the start of the day. Staff have a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage and use thoughtful effective, methods to help children to progress, based on what they already know about the child. This is particularly evident in small group activities, but periods of the session when the children are all together do not give sufficient focus to learning. For example, there is a lack of emphasis to helping children to explore the sounds that letters make, thus helping them to begin to recognise their names and appreciate rhyme. The setting have established a system of identifying the next steps for all children, but the planning format used has not yet evolved sufficiently to make it clear how activities will be organised to support learning and children's individual progress. Staff use effective methods to help children count and think about quantity, for example, encouraging them to slow down and count a little slower to get the correct answer. They also make good use of time and group children appropriately, for example, to ensure that circle time does not go on too long for children to sustain their concentration. Children enjoy talking about their experiences and some are extremely confident to share imaginary stories with the whole group. They make marks whenever they want to, but are not encouraged to attempt to write their own names, for example, on their artwork. They find their own names on the chart at the start of the day, but there is limited exploration of letter sounds to help their recognition. Children count and add together as they order and sort items in their free play. They think about quantity and position and, for example, who has made the longer line of elephants. Children are confident in the use of technology, such as computers and programmable roaming devices. They eagerly explore the outside area for treasure using metal detectors. They learn about their local community by having visitors to the setting, for example, from the library and the emergency services. They also send and receive postcards from the nursery's teddy bear as he travels around on his holidays. Children develop their small muscles effectively as they connect small construction pieces and manipulate paintbrushes. They enjoy the process of being creative as they explore the texture of paint, applying it in satisfying amounts until they feel their artwork is complete. They develop extensive imaginative role-play and enjoy playing the group's collection of musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a strong sense of belonging, for example, chatting over breakfast very sociably. They benefit from the nursery's strong family atmosphere and some children chat about their siblings in other age groupings in the nursery. They co-operate extremely well, for example, helping to fold table cloths, and work well together as they assemble train tracks and construction games. They show great concentration, as they complete their paintings. They laugh with glee when they successfully operate a programmable toy and glow with pride when they are chosen as ' helper of the day'. Children are all given opportunities to shine, for example, telling a story to the whole group. They confidently greet visitors. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children wait their turn patiently, for example, in circle time, and say please and thank you most politely. They demonstrate self care skills as they put on their own coats before going outside to play. They also follow agreed codes, such as tidying away resources. Children are extremely polite and their behaviour is exemplary. They learn to share and staff explain how important it is to respect other people's property. They learn about cultural diversity by playing with resources that depict positive images of other cultures and differences of ability. Children develop a strong sense of self worth as their home languages

are respected. The children are learning Spanish as part of the regular programme and this widens and reinforces their understanding of others.

Children's individual needs are known and respected. Those who have specific needs enjoy their time in the nursery, as activities are planned and provided which will interest them and help them to develop. There is a co-ordinator for this area of provision who is experienced in working with local supporting agencies and creating individual plans to support progress.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes and parents hold the setting in extremely high regard. They appreciate the strong family atmosphere that prevails and the warm welcome that is extended to them. This confidence and appreciation helps to foster the obvious security that the children feel in the setting. There is an effective system of communicating children's day to day care. The setting makes it clear to parents that they are welcome to view their child's developmental assessment file whenever they wish, but does not set aside specific opportunities to encourage this. This means that parents opportunities to see children's assessment files, particularly in the area of nursery education, are inconsistently taken up. Plans are displayed, but do not make it clear what the children will be learning from the activities. This means that opportunities to support children's learning at home are reduced. There are good systems in place to keep parents informed about regulatory procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a very well organised setting, by a happy staff team who enjoy their work with children. Staff enthusiastically undertake additional training to enhance the experiences of children in their care. Children of all ages enjoy a range of activities that help them to feel secure and comfortable. These activities support their development in all areas. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Time, space and resources are used well to help children enjoy their time in the setting. All regulatory documentation is in place and is securely stored. There are efficient, well implemented recording systems throughout the nursery to support good care. The setting regularly reviews and evaluates practice to ensure that they continue to provide a good service to the children in their care.

Leadership and management of the Nursery Education is good. Regular meetings enable staff to discuss and review the provision. They liaise closely with local advisers to identify and implement improvements, for example, the planning and assessment system is in the process of being developed. Effective teamwork ensures that each member of staff understands how to support children in their learning and adapt activities where appropriate. Through thoughtful leadership and management the setting has identified a worthy vision for the future, involving improving opportunities for gathering parental feedback and consolidating the happy staff team.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting were requested to provide appropriate furniture for children under two years of age to rest or sleep and to ensure that children in low chairs are restrained in safety harnesses. There are now very good facilities in place for babies and young children to rest safely and comfortably, this has improved children's care. They were also required to improve safety regarding access to the baby feed preparation area and the fire escapes. These

issues have been thoroughly addressed and children's safety has been rigorously improved as a result.

The last nursery education inspection required the setting to improve children's awareness of their community and give increased coverage to communication, language and literacy and mathematics. The setting has improved the programme in these areas, but communication, language and literacy remains an area to develop. They were also required to improve time tabling and staff deployment. This has been completely addressed, improving learning opportunities for children.

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):

- improve parents' opportunities to be informed about their children's progress (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):

- develop the planning to make it clearer how children will be supported in their learning and give increased emphasis to exploring the sounds that letters make.

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