

# Holmsdale Manor Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| <b>Unique Reference Number</b> | 223221   |
| <b>Inspection date</b>         | 14 November 2007                                   |
| <b>Inspector</b>               | Susan Andrews                                      |
| <b>Setting Address</b>         | 150 High Street, Ibstock, Leicestershire, LE67 6JP |
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| <b>Registered person</b>       | Mr Andrew Ward & Mrs Hazel Ward                    |
| <b>Type of inspection</b>      | Integrated   |
| <b>Type of care</b>            | 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](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?

Holmsdale Manor Nursery School opened in 1986 and operates from a converted 17th Century listed building and two adjacent properties with access to enclosed garden areas, paddock and a tennis court which are available for outside play. The setting is situated in the village of Ibstock in Leicestershire.

A maximum of 88 children may attend the setting at any one time. It is open each weekday throughout the year, excluding public holidays, from 08:00 to 18:00. There are currently 160 children aged under eight years on roll. Of these 33 receive funding for nursery education. Sessional, full day care, after school and school holiday care is provided. Children come from the local community and nearby towns and villages. The setting has experience of supporting children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

The setting employs 26 childcare staff. Including the registered person, 25 staff hold appropriate early years qualifications. Additional staff are employed as lunchtime helpers, relief childcare cover, artist in residence, archaeological specialist, food handler, minibuss drivers, gardener and

staff who provide administrative support. The setting is a member of the Pre-School Learning Alliance, North-West Leicestershire Network of Excellence, the National Association of Private Day Nurseries and benefits from regular guidance offered by Local Authority support and advisory staff.

## THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

### Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean, hygienic premises and good care practices are in place. For example, staff clean surfaces with antibacterial spray, use disposable gloves when changing babies nappies and disposable towels and hot air dryers are used, which minimises the risk of cross-contamination and keeps children healthy. Children develop a good awareness of hygiene and health, because the setting has activity themes and personal care routines that support this. For example, staff explain the reasons for washing hands after children go to the toilet area, before mealtimes or after stroking the nursery pets. Children and staff have regular discussions about the importance of keeping healthy and the need for fresh air and exercise. Parental consent is obtained for any medication that needs to be administered and accidents are recorded. However, in some instances the records lack sufficient detail, regarding the injuries and any follow-up checks that are made. Staff are able to respond positively should a child have an accident or become unwell whilst in their care. This is because they have current first aid training and good policy and procedural arrangements are in place to readily access first aid equipment within the nursery and on walks and outings.

The setting promotes healthy eating and well balanced nutritious meals are served. These include vegetables and fruit, such as beans, courgettes, peas, potatoes and strawberries that the children plant, tend and pick from the nursery's vegetable garden. Activity themes, such as foods from around the world and the celebration of Diwali, and Chinese New Year encourage children to experience various cultural foods. This encourages familiarity with a variety of foods, tastes and textures and promotes good dietary health. Staff ensure they have knowledge of children's special dietary requirements and information regarding any allergies is gathered at the time a child is placed at the setting so that food is always suitable to maintain children's health. Children have access to drinking water throughout the day which they can access independently and have a choice of water, milk or juice at snack and meal times. They are encouraged to take extra fluids after physical exercise and during hot weather. This keeps them well hydrated, comfortable and supports their active play and learning.

Children develop physical movement and skills by taking part in a variety of outdoor activities. They also benefit from the fresh air and exercise during field walking events. Children use large equipment and other resources to climb, slide, go through, under and balance. They experience planned activities that provide them with challenge and encourage them to try different ways of moving, for example, through movement to music. When playing on tricycles, pushing dolls pram's and using ride on toys, they negotiate each others space well, manoeuvring and starting and stopping with precision and purpose. They display good spatial awareness. Children gain good ability with balance and co-ordination and they become aware of changes to their body when active, such as getting warmer and feeling their heartbeat faster.

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

The provision is good.

Children feel welcomed into the setting, which is very well maintained and in excellent decorative order. The layout of the areas used by the children and displayed information for parents, enhance the environment and help to make it warm and inviting. Children's safety and comfort is supported by an appropriate range of child-sized furniture and safe play equipment that are kept in good order. Staff use good policy and procedures to keep children safe. For example, the deployment of staff is well planned which ensures children are supervised at all times, including the toilet areas and during outdoor play. Risk assessments are conducted to reduce risk and the security arrangements, for the arrival and departure of the children to the setting, are extremely well-managed.

Children have developing awareness of keeping themselves safe because staff educate them about relative aspects, such as a visit from Leicestershire Fire and Rescue Service to learn about fire safety. They are involved in fire evacuation practises, learn about road safety on walks and outings and children take an active part in helping to tidy away activities throughout the session to keep the room in an organised, safe order. The setting has written child protection procedures and contact details for relevant local agencies. The staff group discuss child protection issues in their team meetings and revised their knowledge as part of a child protection quiz. In addition some staff have attended further training courses to further develop their skills and awareness. They have a good understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow if they have a concern. Staff are clear about their duty to protect the children in their care and therefore children's welfare is safeguarded.

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

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time at the setting and they enthusiastically participate in the wide range of stimulating and challenging activities. Babies and children settle well because the setting has very good arrangements for them to make visits with their parents prior to their full placement. Staff provide supportive contact and develop caring relationships with their key children to support their emotional needs. As a consequence, children's sense of security and well-being are increased and they become confident to explore the environment and engage in activities that support their play, learning and development. Children benefit from shared information between parents and the setting, which promotes continuity in their care arrangements. For example children's feeding routines, play interests and food preferences or allergies.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used to assess children under three years and to plan good learning and development opportunities. For example, children's key workers have sound knowledge of children's abilities, based on initial assessment using information from parents and a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities allow children to learn at their own pace. Young children begin to play happily with each other and with adults and they enjoy sensory play and the use of natural materials, such as sand, clay, water and cornflour. Their ongoing development is enhanced as they self-select books, engage in role play and explore the outdoors.

Children's behaviour is good, they learn to share toys and equipment and take turns because staff talk to children about this. They are consistent and therefore, children know what is expected of them and are beginning to be aware of how their behaviour affects others. Staff

are good role models always saying 'please' and 'thank you' to the children and expecting them to do the same in return. Activities are provided to promote co-operative play, such as taking turns with the use of small world equipment and holding the soft toy at story time.

## Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage guidance and demonstrate awareness of the six areas of learning. They know their key children well and use this knowledge to promote children's learning within planned and child initiated play, such as number recognition with numbers in various forms being displayed around the room. All staff have responsibility for observations, in particular, their key children and have involvement in planning of the curriculum to support children's learning using the Foundation Stage guidance. However, the learning intentions for some focussed activities and the use of these observations and assessment evaluations are not always effectively used to influence future planning for all children. This has the potential for some children not progressing as well as they might. Staff generally make good use of time, routines and resources to support children's learning.

Support workers and specialist childcare staff are employed, for example, artist, archaeologist, gardener, cleaners, food handler, minibuss drivers and administrators, which frees up childcare staff to work directly with the children and provide an environment that is organised to help children to be independent and make choices. There are a wide range of interesting and stimulating activities provided by the setting, and as a consequence, children make good progress overall. Children benefit from staff questioning, for example, during the circle time and in their informal play, which encourages them to talk about their interests and home-life events and to express their feelings. Children's behaviour is managed well and they respond appropriately to adult requests, praise and encouragement.

Children show confidence in being without their main carer and form good and trusting relationships with adults and their peers. They interact co-operatively in group activities and within their play, for example, when sitting together to listen to a familiar story, when going for a walk into the garden to visit the nursery pets or when exploring the visiting fire appliance. They follow adult instruction very well and talk about their experiences with enthusiasm. They show good levels of concentration and involvement in activities and when opportunities arise, children show sound levels of independence, for example, putting on their own coats and pouring their own drinks. Children start to understand that print has meaning and recognise their own name on name cards and on artwork displayed around the room. They use spontaneous opportunities to make marks and write for purpose. For example, children are encouraged to write down a telephone message whilst in role play. Children enjoy books and show good interest in stories read by adults, in large and small groups. They are able to anticipate aspects of the narrative accurately predicting what is going to happen next in the story. More able children are developing increasing ability with phonic knowledge, for example, sounding out the first letter of their names or identify similar sounds in the story, such as 'fire fighter Fred' uses 'foam' to put out the 'fire'.

Children sing and 'act out' songs that include numbers and simple addition and subtraction, for example, by singing songs about the seven days of the week and counting the numbers of children as they line up to go out to play. Children are developing ability to count numbers in the right order up to ten and beyond, often using objects such as threaded beads, by saying one number name for each bead. Children can match and judge space through use of resources

such as puzzles. They can select or name a particular shape, for example, children draw around templates, recognising them as 'a triangle' or 'a circle'.

Children learn about natural things and patterns of change, by planting and growing vegetables and fruit in the garden and creating and observing the changes to the nature pond. They enjoy investigating and examining items to see what they are used for and how they work or change. For example, examining items with a magnifying glass or weighing them with scales. They use available information and technology equipment, including programmable toys, role play items, such as a shop till, calculator and telephone. Children have opportunities to use items such as a computer or digital camera, to support their play and learning. They can construct and shape forms using various materials when using construction toys, collage pictures, model making from household items and in using malleable materials. They have a sense of place within their local community as they field walk looking for archaeological finds, such as mediaeval pottery. Children have a developing awareness of the wider community through activities and resources that represent diversity.

Children use a variety of role play settings to develop their imagination and enact their life experiences, for example, to dress up and pretend to bake a cake in the home corner and explore different sounds and ways to express themselves through dance and movement to music. They use musical instruments and learn to identify the differences in rhythms, pitch and tone within classical and multicultural music. Use of various materials inspires children to be creative and to investigate using all their senses. For example, they paint, make models, collages and use water, sand and malleable materials, such clay and play dough.

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

The provision is good.

Staff are welcoming and friendly and they provide an inviting environment for children and parents. Relationships between staff, parents and children are very good with ample time made available to talk and exchange information. This helps to promote continuity of care for the children. Parent's are kept well informed through various types of written documents, for example, a detailed prospectus, written policies, newsletters and various displayed notices. A written complaints procedure and the availability of a suggestion box and daily information displayed on the whiteboards about activities and events, encourage parents to feel confident in the good quality of care, welfare and education offered to their children.

Children are respected and valued as individuals, and inclusion is effectively supported by staff. For example, by developing children's knowledge and understanding of other cultures and abilities. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are valued and supported so they are able to participate fully in the setting's activities. The staff work in partnership with parents and relevant agencies in order to meet children's individual and developmental needs. Diversity is promoted and children develop awareness and familiarity through access to a good range of play materials and pictorial images that promote positive images. For example, as they play with multicultural dressing up clothes, small world toys and access a range of books. Children are very well behaved and have sound awareness of adult expectations who take time to talk to children about suitable behaviour, for example, reminding them to share and take turns during circle time and outdoor play. Children become confident and willing to try new experiences because staff regularly praise them for their efforts and involvement in activities, saying such things as 'well done' and 'thank you for helping to tidy away the toys'. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive written information from the setting that includes information on the Foundation Stage. Newsletters provide useful information on events and current matters of interest and there is a range of displayed information on the whiteboards regarding topical events and the daily activity programme. The effective partnership with parents contributes to the children's educational needs. Aspects of their development are discussed and recorded with the parents when the child begins placement at the setting, enabling staff to have a base-line assessment for planning. The staff welcome informal contact with parents at the beginning and end of the sessions, they share information about the children's activities and achievements on a regular basis and parents are able to view their child's development file at any time. Parents receive regular progress reports and have opportunities to be consulted through parents evenings and information sharing sessions, for example, about the 'Letter Land' reading scheme.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Well organised deployment of staff provides children with stable levels of care. For example, there are more than the required number of staff on duty, which allows them to help each other during group activities such as circle time and to support children individually. This encourages children to feel valued and secure. There is a high number of staff with appropriate childcare qualifications including first aid, basic food hygiene and many staff have advanced qualifications and specialist skills. Adults working with children undergo rigorous vetting procedures and effective strategies are in place to ensure unauthorised person such as students and visitors are never left alone with children. The setting has a detailed set of policies, which are accessible to parents. These procedures are designed to keep children healthy and maintain their well-being, including procedures, for lost or uncollected children, child protection, equality of opportunity and behaviour management.

Leadership and management is good. The registered person and senior staff have an overview of the planning for the nursery education, which supports children's learning and development. There are sufficient systems to evaluate and monitor the use of the Foundation Stage guidance and service delivery. For example, advice from the local authority mentor teacher, area Senco and link officers are acted upon. The setting has a committed, enthusiastic, highly qualified and well motivated team of staff. Regular meetings are held to discuss ongoing practice, daily issues, planning and children's development. Although annual appraisal systems are in place, formal systems to evaluate staffs ongoing competency and suitability are not fully established. Staff embrace a high level of relevant training opportunities to enhance their skills, knowledge and professional development. Overall, children's needs are met.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the setting agreed to ensure all supervisors hold a Level 3 qualification appropriate for the caring development of children. In addition they agreed to establish a procedure for lost children.

The setting has taken positive steps to address both issues. The supervisors responsible for each of the children's areas hold a Level 3 qualification. Several staff are working towards Level 4 or degree childcare qualifications. An appropriate policy and procedure regarding lost children has been established. Therefore, children's welfare is safeguarded.

## Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint made to Ofsted. Ofsted received a complaint about a child sustaining a significant injury while at the setting. The complaint raised concerns in relation to National Standard 6 (Safety), 7 (Health) and 14 (Documentation). An inspector made an unannounced visit on 19/10/2006 to investigate these concerns. Ofsted found that appropriate action had been taken following the incident and the provider had taken a number of steps to prevent the injury occurring again. Ofsted took no further action and 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

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 accident records contain sufficient detail with particular regard to the injury and any follow-up checks that are made
- ensure strategies are in place to evaluate staff ongoing suitability and competency as part of a more formalised appraisal system.

#### 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):

- further develop the use of observations and assessment records of what children need to do next. Use these to more effectively influence planning and activities, so that they are better matched to each child's individual stage of 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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)