

Home From Home Day Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY283653
Inspection date	12 October 2007
Inspector	Patricia Mary Champion
Setting Address	7 Westminster Drive, Westcliff-on-Sea, Essex, SS0 9SJ
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Registered person	Home From Home Day Nursery Ltd
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?

Home From Home Day Nursery is privately owned. It opened in 2004 and operates from three playrooms within a converted house in central Westcliff. The premises are located within walking distance of shops, schools and the railway station. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 23 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The setting opens five days a week all year round, apart from public holidays and one week at Christmas. Operating times are from 08:00 until 18:00.

There are currently 44 children aged under five years on roll. Of these, 14 children receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions or full day care. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas. The setting supports a small number of children who have learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who have English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 10 staff, all of whom, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from local authority and the Pre School Learning Alliance (PSLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children thrive because their health and nutritional needs are promoted through effective procedures and practices followed by staff. Baby items are sterilised and staff wear aprons and disposable gloves when changing nappies to prevent the risk of cross-infection. Children are consistently protected from illness as there are clearly written guidelines that cover the procedures in the event of a child being unwell. Staff have attended first aid courses and keep clear records of any accidents and when medication is administered. Older children manage their personal care needs independently and are developing an understanding of things that may affect their health. For example, they carefully wash their hands using liquid soap to remove any germs.

Children have good opportunities to make healthy choices at meal times. A range of different fruit such as apples, oranges, pears and melon are selected from the fruit bowl at snack time. Midday meals are cooked by an outside catering provider and staff ensure that children receive a balanced diet and develop good eating habits. Menus are varied and includes food from other countries, which educates the taste buds and adds to topics of conversation. Drinking water is freely available so that children do not become thirsty or dehydrated. Staff are well aware of any allergies or special dietary requirements and the youngest children are fed according to their individual routine. Mealtimes are very happy social occasions when children are encouraged to feed themselves and confidently interact with staff and each other. Babies are sensitively cuddled as they are bottle fed in comfort.

Children rest or sleep according to their needs. They sleep peacefully and undisturbed in cool, darkened areas of the playrooms and are closely monitored by staff. Each baby and child has a separate cot or mattress and this is consistently positioned to help children settle to sleep. Individual bedding is provided, which is frequently changed and washed.

Children of all ages take part in a range of activities that promote physical development and coordination. Daily access to outdoor play enables children to play in the fresh air and move in a variety of ways. They ride bicycles with control as they manoeuvre around obstacles. They show strong hand-eye coordination as they throw and catch balls and hoops confidently. However, due to the limited space the nursery does not have challenging climbing apparatus. There are occasional opportunities for the children to visit nearby parks where the older children can run energetically and use apparatus to develop their climbing and balancing skills. However, these visits are not routinely planned and consequently there are insufficient opportunities for the older children to regularly take part in energetic physical challenges.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play and investigate in a welcoming, homely environment where staff give their safety a high priority. A wealth of posters, signs, photographs and examples of children's work relating to recent learning experiences are displayed both indoors and outside. A decked area has been added outside to provide a secure, safe area where the youngest children can play. All potential hazards and risks to children are minimised because staff diligently check the premises each day. Staff are vigilant about the security of the children. Visitors are closely monitored as staff scrutinise identification documents and record their entry into the premises. Children learn

about their own personal safety. Fire drills are held and the children know what to do if they need to evacuate the premises in an emergency. They learn that they need to take care as they walk down the stairs and understand about potential hazards, for example, they patiently wait for their dinner to cool before they start to eat.

Children use a wide range of good quality play equipment that is suitable for all ages. A comprehensive inventory and photographic evidence of resources are available. Toys and equipment are checked regularly for damage and cleanliness. Children use tools such as cutlery or scissors carefully and in safety. All play items within reach of babies are safe for them to explore using their mouth or hands.

Children are safeguarded because the nursery has a thorough child protection policy and clearly written procedures to take if there are concerns regarding a child's well-being. Regular child protection training is offered to staff. This ensures that staff are secure in their knowledge of current information regarding child protection, which makes certain that they always act in the best interests of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children have a lot of fun and are extremely happy and settled within the nursery. The youngest children achieve well due to the staff's excellent understanding and use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff plan an interesting and stimulating range of activities to provide high quality care and education. There is a strong focus on activities that promote investigation, exploration and experimentation. Children show high levels of curiosity as they plunge into new sensory experiences such as exploring jelly, mashed potato or shaving foam. They also demonstrate a great deal of pleasure playing with well-loved favourites such as sand and water play.

The staff's interaction with the children is warm, caring and always positive. They make time to listen to the children and develop their conversation, such as encouraging them to recall past events in their lives. Children chat animatedly to staff while watering plants in the garden or taking part in telephone conversations. Staff use stories, songs as well as the themes and topics to broaden children's vocabulary and language skills. Babies are alert and extremely interested in their surroundings. For example, babies explore body painting and there is a treasure basket with natural sensory materials to keep children absorbed and intrigued in purposeful play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have developed a good understanding of the Foundation Stage and the way young children learn. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals through purposeful play. Staff plan a well balanced and stimulating curriculum. Effective systems are in place to identify children's starting points and staff observe children as they play to chart their progress and achievements. Information is used successfully to inform future planning. However, the planning does not consistently show how activities are adapted for individual children. Indoor and outdoor accommodation is used effectively to promote learning in all six areas and allow children to make decisions about their play. Although there are constraints due to the size of the premises, staff make very good use of every inch of space. The outdoor space has been imaginatively renovated to create an outdoor classroom.

Children are keen to learn and are developing their concentration as they become absorbed in their play. They communicate confidently and contribute to discussions. Children are very curious about visitors and confidently ask questions. They understand the need for responsible behaviour and are managed appropriately so that they understand right from wrong. Children's independence skills are developed as they pour their own drinks or safely chop their fruit at snack time. Story sessions are thoroughly enjoyed and children quickly become engrossed in the animated telling of the tale about 'Green eggs and ham'. Children learn that information is obtained from books and are fascinated by the children's atlas. They point out with interest the landmarks and animals found in other countries. Plenty of opportunities for mark-making and writing are provided. Children practise their emergent writing as they take telephone messages or make appointments in role play scenarios, for example, when they visit the vets.

Children use mathematical language during play and talk about the shape of objects. They are encouraged to count during everyday tasks, for example, when working out how many dishes are needed at snack time. Planned activities allow children to measure how tall they are and children count and sort items according to shape and colour as they play.

Children learn about the natural world and features of their environment using exploratory skills, direct observation and investigation. They explore mini beasts as they go on bug hunts or observe and tenderly take care of the plants growing in the garden. Children are introduced to a broad range of cultures through well-planned topics. For example, they learn about the polar regions and the people and animals that live there. Children learn about technology as they access the computer sited in the playroom and play imaginatively with cameras and telephones. They are proficient at building models from a diverse range of construction toys.

Children have creative learning experiences each day, which give them the opportunity to experiment and use different techniques. They explore colour when they are painting and know that two colours mixed together make a new colour. Children make play dough and enjoy manipulating this by rolling and cutting to make shapes and models. They are familiar with a variety of songs, which they enthusiastically sing from memory. Children show good imaginative skills when using the role play area as they spend time in an igloo, take care of their sick pets at the vets, develop their hairdressing skills or cook dinner for visitors in the home corner.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Babies and children develop a secure sense of belonging as they develop strong bonds with their carers. Affectionate and gentle care is given by staff with plenty of cuddles and good eye contact. As a result each child understands that they are valued by and important to their carer. Children are encouraged to bring things from home to carry, suck or play with because staff recognise and understand that this may help young children move between home and the nursery. Praise and encouragement is given freely to all children, ensuring that they develop confidence and self-esteem and understand that they have done well. Children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities are welcomed into the nursery and are helped to reach their potential. The manager also acts as the special educational needs coordinator and has attended relevant training. She has a good understanding of her role and is effective in meeting children's needs, through liaising with parents and other agencies.

The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children learn about diversity and the wider world as they play with a culturally rich variety of play materials, musical instruments and books. A wide range of cultural festivals and traditional events are celebrated

with the children. Children behave well and play harmoniously together. The staff act as calm, sensitive role models and as a result children show signs of genuine concern for one another, particularly as they show interest in the babies and offer them toys. There are opportunities during the day for siblings of varying ages to meet and play with each other.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Babies and children benefit from the superb partnership between staff and parents. Staff find out as much as they can about the babies and their care needs right from the beginning. Highly effective communication takes place, through ongoing dialogue, daily communication diaries and notice boards detailing the day's activities. A well-written prospectus is provided and a wealth of information is displayed throughout the nursery. Regular reports are shared regarding the children's progress and achievements. Parents are invited to become involved in their children's learning. They make comments and suggestions through regularly completing questionnaires regarding the themes, topics and the care provided. Children receiving funded nursery education take home and share 'home-links' activities with their parents. Parenting courses are organised at the nursery. The parents make extremely complementary comments about the nursery. They show gratitude towards the way the staff settle the children and appreciate the friendly atmosphere and homely environment.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from being cared for in a small environment, where all the staff know the children and their families extremely well. There are sensitive settling-in procedures that give both new parents and children confidence. Effective staffing ratios ensure that children are strongly supported as there are additional staff above the minimum requirements. There are robust recruitment and induction procedures and all staff are re-checked through the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) when they join the nursery.

Leadership and management of the nursery is good. The manager spends time directly working with the children and inspires and motivates the staff team with her enthusiasm and commitment to provide the best possible care and education for children. The manager and deputy constantly reflect on their practice, search for ways to improve and are both currently attending further training courses. They have set clear actions leading to the enhancement of the organisation of the nursery and outcomes for children. The management and staff endeavour to ensure that resources are organised to stimulate and promote children's welfare, enjoyment and achievement. There is an impressive training programme because each member of staff completes a training profile every six months. Activities are evaluated and staff meetings are regularly held. The dedication of the manager and staff team ensure that good quality care and education with outstanding aspects are provided. The manager has recently won an award for her leadership and management skills from the local authority.

Documentation is exceedingly well presented. All the essential paperwork required for the efficient management of the nursery is systematically organised with a high regard for confidentiality. There is an excellent operational plan, which very effectively explains how the setting runs. Policies and procedures that are individual to Home From Home Day Nursery promote the smooth running of the setting. Staff demonstrate an excellent knowledge of the policies and procedures and implement these very effectively to ensure that children and babies are kept safe, flourish and thrive.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider agree to ensure that some domestic style furniture is provided in the baby room. A comfortable armchair has now been provided so that babies can be cuddled and fed in comfort. Babies can also use the chair to pull themselves up from a crawling position to assist their developing mobility. Consequently, the life experiences of the babies within the nursery have been enhanced.

At the last inspection for nursery education the provider was asked to review the use of resources to allow children to write for a purpose and to monitor and evaluate the daily routine. There are now always writing and mark-making materials provided within role play scenarios. The routine and curriculum is now monitored and evaluated regularly to make sure that activities hold the children's interest and encourage them to persevere and develop their listening skills. Consequently, the provision for nursery education has been enhanced.

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

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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 more regular energetic physical challenges are provided for the older children (this 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 that the planning consistently shows how activities are adapted for individual children.

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