

Glebe Farm Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY277519
Inspection date	05 December 2007
Inspector	Gill Ogden
Setting Address	Glebe Farm, Heighington Road, Canwick, Lincoln, Lincolnshire, LN4 2RJ
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Registered person	Glebe Farm Nursery School 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 outstanding. 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?

Glebe Farm Nursery School is a privately owned provision which has been registered since 1996. The provision operates from a converted barn within the grounds of the owners' home. The nursery is situated in the rural village of Canwick, but is within easy reach of commuter villages to the south east of Lincoln city. The nursery is open from 08:00 until 17:30 throughout the year, with the exception of bank holidays and the Christmas period. The school holiday club is only open to school age children who previously attended the nursery.

The premises is a converted barn on two floors. On the ground floor there is a large hall, three activity rooms for different age groups, children's toilets with a separate nappy changing area and an open plan area adjacent to the kitchen which is used for messy play, activities and meal times. The first floor has a pre-school classroom, additional toilets, the office and staff room. There is an enclosed outside play area and a garden.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 70 children aged from 18 months to eight years at any one time and there are currently 125 children on roll. This includes 57 children who receive funding for early education, some children who have learning difficulties and/or

disabilities and some children who speak English as an additional language. There is a holiday club for school age children who previously attended the nursery,

Of the 13 staff who work with the children, 12 hold a relevant early years qualification and the other is working towards hers. The owner/manager is a qualified teacher.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive because staff follow highly effective procedures and practices which meet children's health, physical and nutritional needs. Thorough, regular cleaning routines ensure that the premises are kept as hygienic as possible and parents are very well-informed about illnesses that prevent children from attending the nursery in the best interests of all the children. Children develop excellent personal hygiene habits such as covering their mouths when they cough and washing their hands thoroughly through consistent routines and superb role modelling and explanations from staff. Because they can freely access the toilet from an early age they become very competent in their toileting skills. All of this contributes effectively to cross-infection being minimised.

Children have outstanding opportunities to access fresh air and exercise regularly throughout the day which significantly contributes to their good health. In good weather they enjoy all curricular activities outdoors which is extremely beneficial to those children who learn better in an outdoor environment. During the colder months outdoor activities are carefully planned for and children know the importance of wearing the correct clothes to keep warm and, wearing Wellington boots and competently using umbrellas to keep themselves dry in the rain. As well as thoroughly enjoying learning to ride tricycles and climb outdoors children have extensive opportunities to develop all their large physical skills indoors too because there is a considerable amount of space which is organised very well and the equipment they use is stimulating and of very high quality. Children benefit from being able to rest or sleep whenever they wish in comfort. There is a dedicated sleep room and there are plenty of sofas throughout the nursery creating a homely environment, which is particularly beneficial to the youngest children and those who spend regular long days in the nursery. This means that children are able to rest when they need to without feeling they are missing out on anything because they can still see others playing and they can share cuddles with adults and their friends or look at books.

Meals and snacks are an extremely important part of the nursery day and a highly nutritious and varied menu is provided which ensures children's individual preferences or special dietary needs are fully recognised. Staff know that children do not always want to eat at set times but may be hungry or thirsty at any time and so snacks and drinks are freely available throughout the day as well as at formal snack times. Snacks include for example, fresh and dried fruit, crackers and cheese and digestive biscuits. The nursery grows most of its own vegetables and some fruit and children are fully involved in the cultivation therefore children have exceptional practical experience to help them fully understand about where their food comes from. Other foodstuffs are bought fresh from local supermarkets and is of the best quality. Because shopping is done frequently on as domestic a scale as possible children enjoy treats such as toasted tea cakes for a change. At meal times children can have as much to eat as they wish. Brimming platefuls of sandwiches with a variety of healthy fillings and vegetable sticks are prepared for lunch and the children can see them being made as they play because the kitchen is open plan. This ensures that children are always fully aware of what they will be eating and know how it's

prepared rather than taking part in an occasional activity related to food although they enjoy doing this as well. Children are also in the same way involved in observing the preparation of the cooked tea, the mouth-watering smell of which permeates the whole building. These meals are made from scratch and include dishes such as casseroles, lasagne, fish pie, fruit salads and milk puddings.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is outstanding.

Children are cared for in an exceptionally safe and secure environment where they have much more than the minimum required play space. This means that they have a much bigger area for all play activities and this is especially significant in the opportunities it affords children for large physical play, messy play and role play especially which impacts very positively on their learning and development experiences. Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are extremely vigilant and safety issues are given very high priority. As a result of recent training the co-owner is fully reviewing risk assessments, although these are already very effective. All staff are highly competent regarding safety issues because this is a priority during their induction period. The premises are maintained in an excellent state of repair, are airy and have good natural light. Access to them is carefully monitored. All the necessary safety equipment is in place and frequent rigorous checks are recorded. The inspiring range of toys, play equipment and furniture is very good quality and checked regularly for its ongoing suitability and maintained to a high standard.

Staff have an excellent understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. For example, children are exposed to lighted tea lights as part of their learning about Hannukah and they are able to enjoy them fully because they are placed safely where they can see them and they make no attempt to go anywhere near them because they well know the danger of fire. When staff get matches out to light the candles the children immediately remind staff that they must be careful when using them. Additionally children have a superb understanding of how to keep themselves safe outdoors in the countryside because they spend lots of time there observing farmers working in the fields whilst keeping themselves at a safe distance. discussions include safety around large farm machinery. The older children's home room is on the first floor which means that they use the stairs regularly and because of consistent staff guidance they all manage the stairs extremely capably and safely.

Children are further safeguarded because all staff are extremely well-versed in their child protection roles and responsibilities. Parents are also fully aware of the nurseries responsibilities regarding child protection because they have very thorough discussions with staff when they first start to use the facilities and they all policies and procedures are clearly written and freely accessible. Other measures to protect children include the nursery requiring parents to give a password that is to be used by any person who is not known to staff and is picking up their child. Additionally, parents are reassured about who is a staff member because all staff wear informal but clear uniforms and wear name badges.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children of all ages flourish in the nursery which exudes a very warm and caring atmosphere. Children's emotional development is fostered extremely well through the close and trusting

relationships they develop with forward-thinking and dedicated staff. They relish their time in the nursery because they have a lot of fun and staff create a vibrant environment to support children's learning and development through purposeful activities that are embedded in children's interests. Each age group has their own 'home room' where they spend some of their day but all children use the communal areas where they have lots of space to thoroughly enjoy a full range of free creative activities including role play and more messy activities such as sand and water play. Children arrive happy and eager to get involved. New starters or those that may have changes in their home situations are soon settled because staff are extremely sensitive to, and aware of, their individual needs. The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used effectively to plan exciting play activities for the younger children according to their stage of development and to help staff reflect on their practice. The emphasis put on developing high quality relationships between staff and children ensure that they feel secure and they soon develop friendships, play together harmoniously and help each other to achieve. The close attention paid to children's welfare needs, especially the youngest, provides a strong base to enable them to develop and learn as they get older. Encouraging children to be independent, confident and able to communicate with others is central to the nursery's philosophy. The need for younger children to learn through their senses is given high priority. They use an interesting variety of man-made and natural materials to create unusual collages and models such as a huge snow globe, which relates to the current time of year and helps children learn about the world at a very appropriate level to their understanding. Children spend as much time as they wish taking part in creative and imaginative play which stems from their own initiative and is extended and fully supported by staff who are skilful in knowing when they need to intervene and when to allow children free rein to explore and learn from each other.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. All children make excellent progress with many achieving beyond expectations by the time they start school. Teaching is rooted in staff's expert knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how children learn. This enables them to plan a broad range of purposeful, practical play activities that relate to the children's interests. All aspects of each area of learning are covered in plans and activities relate very well to learning intentions. Staff are confident to go along with children's interests, even though it may mean plans are not followed, because they are skilled in knowing how to make the most of spontaneous events and are easily able to identify any elements that have been missed which will need to be picked up later on. The whole staff team contributes ideas towards planning so there is always something different for children to do. Ongoing observation of children provides a solid basis for assessing their progress against the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Expectations from similar activities are clearly differentiated for more and less able children and key workers are acutely aware of, and share with other staff, the next steps for the children they are responsible for. Detailed individual education plans are in place for children with learning difficulties. A varied range of teaching methods are used to engage children in learning. The use of props is particularly successful especially in drawing responses from the shyest children but also suggesting, modelling and questioning are other techniques that are used successfully. Children's drawings are used very effectively to create learning resources by staff adding words to them and laminating them for display. Children's work is mounted and displayed carefully demonstrating to the children how much it is valued. The use of the available space to provide the best learning environment for the children is constantly being reviewed to ensure the way it is used still meets their needs

Children are well-motivated to learn and concentrate and persevere exceptionally well with tasks such as manipulating and sticking paper chains together. They know the nursery routines

and expectations of them very well and consequently sit and listen carefully when the register is being called or a story is being told and tidy up eagerly when prompted. Children very quickly make links between things such as one child talking about his father which prompted another to talk about watching a film with his father and then proceeding to confidently retell the whole story. They recognise the shapes of words and letters, most knowing the initial sound of their own names, others recognising other children's names and some able to sound out their whole name. Children's interest in problem solving is demonstrated by their spontaneous use of mathematical language in all areas of play. Children count thoughtfully and carefully during routines and activities such as counting how many candles there are on a real Menorah which they also use to do simple calculation by working out how many more candles needed to be lit before they were all alight. The constant availability of sand and water play effectively support children's understanding of quantity and concepts of weight and give them ample opportunities to practice and reinforce their learning. Similarly, they compare their different heights on the attractive, nearby wall chart. Children have an excellent grasp of what computers can be used for and are skilled at, for example, using the mouse to draw and then print out their creations. They create models such as Christmas candles using a wide variety of materials and media including cardboard tubes, foil, paper, glitter, glue and sticky tape. Regular baking activities and seed planting ensures their full understanding of growth and change and they have unprecedented opportunities to explore and understand the natural world first hand. Children make the most of the full range of creative activities they have access to and particularly enjoy dressing up and pretending to be, for example, fire fighters and police officers, creating stories about putting out fires and making sure that everyone in the nursery is behaving themselves. In this way they are able to work through the knowledge that has been shared with them until it makes sense and so their learning is well-consolidated.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children's behaviour is exemplary. They have a full understanding of the impact of their behaviour on others because they are supported extremely effectively by staff to resolve conflicts for themselves. The emphasis staff put on care for all is demonstrated clearly by children when they talk with concern about their friends who are ill. Children play together harmoniously and are fully aware of the importance of using good manners at all times.

Unparalleled efforts are made to ensure all children are welcomed and play a full part in the nursery. They are all treated as individuals and their abilities and family background are completely respected and valued. The fully inclusive environment ensures that children who have additional needs play a full part in the life of the setting. On entry to the nursery there are very visible signs which are written in all the languages used by the children attending. Staff know important words in languages such as Polish and German which helps significantly in helping children feel that they belong. The reinforcement of children's own cultural backgrounds by the staff then provides a profound basis for them to have a more meaningful understanding when they are introduced to differing ones. Parents demonstrate cultural activities such as celebrating Diwali so that it is a real life experience for the children and they are entranced by an African teacher who visits the nursery through their fund raising links with her school. Some children attend French lessons if their parents wish and most show a good understanding of basic phrases with some speaking them quite fluently.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. It contributes significantly to children's well-being because staff have a very clear understanding of the impact their relationship with

parents has on the children in terms of their basic life needs and stability. Therefore a considerable amount of time is given to listening and taking on board everything parents have to say about their child's needs. Parents are made very welcome in the group and managers spend much time with them when they first visit so that they are thoroughly aware of the nursery's ethos and the day-to-day routines as well as the curriculum and how children learn. This is further supported by some very useful written information booklets and newsletters. Various notice boards give them up-to-date information such as plans for the repair of the track leading to the nursery as well as what the children will be doing that week and the daily menu. Parents are fully involved in their children's development and learning through having unlimited access to staff, especially the manager and key workers, a weekly surgery which they can book an appointment for, open events and children's concerts. A current initiative in children's learning is a 'sound pot' which helps children to develop their listening and speaking skills. Children take this home and parents are given full information about its use so they can help their children use it to reinforce their learning. Children's records are always available to be looked at and parents of younger children receive daily information sheets about their children's eating and toileting. Parents comment extremely positively about the nursery and the support for parents is above and beyond that which might be expected.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

Children's care is greatly enhanced by the exceptional quality of the organisation of the setting. Rigorous employment systems are in place and very thorough induction is carried out for new staff members. This includes giving them time in the setting as a supernumerary member of staff until they are fully competent in all the procedures. Along with the deputy and manager being extra to ratios, this also contributes to there always being more than the required number of staff on duty which is extremely beneficial to both children and parents. Sessions run very smoothly because staff deploy themselves well and work efficiently and effectively together as a team. Staff comment very positively on how valued they feel.

The owners have high expectations of all staff and ensure they are very well supported to take on responsibilities and feel that they are as responsible as the owners for the success of the nursery. Additionally, twice yearly appraisals give staff formal opportunities to identify their strengths and development needs. Staff attend ongoing training regularly and are expected to cascade their learning back to the whole team at the fortnightly meetings. This ensures that all staff are kept fully up-to-date with current legislation and best practice and policies and procedures can then be reviewed accordingly. All the required records are maintained to a high standard and all the other necessary documentation is in place and supports everyday practice effectively.

Leadership and management is outstanding. The manager and her husband, who are the co-owners, are both very active and visible in the nursery and motivate the staff because they act as excellent role models for the philosophy and ethos of the setting in ensuring that children's physiological and psychological needs are fully met in order for them to be able to reach their maximum academic potential. Every use is made of advisory staff to support the monitoring of best practice. The nursery has a clear development plan resulting from thorough ongoing monitoring and evaluation of children's care and learning and which is reviewed regularly. Priority areas for development range from ensuring that the Early Years Foundation Stage curriculum is in place by Easter 2008 to further developing the vegetable gardens to increase the nursery's self-sufficiency and to plant more trees as part of global awareness. This clearly indicates an outstanding awareness of the need for everyone connected to the nursery, not in

the least the children, to become fully conversant with world issues. There is no doubt that the owners are fully committed to the continual improvement of care and learning for all the children. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

As a result of recommendations made at the last care inspection there is now a more detailed child protection and behaviour management procedure in place and sleeping children are supervised better because they can be seen more easily from two other rooms and monitors have been installed so that they can be heard better. This means that there is now a first class framework in place to support children's safety and well-being.

At the last nursery education inspection it was agreed that the nursery would increase the opportunities children are offered to learn about diverse faiths and cultures and this has now become a real strength of the nursery.

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 outstanding. 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 MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of care are outstanding.

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