

Farley Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY330201
Inspection date	18 October 2007
Inspector	Susan Mann
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Registered person	Susan Caroline Palmer
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?

Farley Nursery school was registered in 2006. It operates from the Old School House in Farley, Wiltshire. The premises are an old school building and children use all classrooms downstairs, as well as a large outdoor play space.

The nursery serves a wide geographical area. It is registered for 48 children from six months of age to under eight years. At present 56 children attend, of whom 15 are funded. The nursery is open from 08:00 until 18:00 for 49 weeks each year. Currently 15 staff work at the nursery, of whom 12 work with the children. The manager is a qualified teacher with Early Years Professional Status. Of the remaining members of staff, one has qualified teacher status, five have a suitable qualification in childcare and two are working towards qualification.

The nursery is able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. The nursery receives support from the Wiltshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children thrive in this invigorating nursery. They benefit significantly from the opportunity to spend the greater part of every day outdoors in the fresh air. Children use the extensive gardens throughout the year. They can choose to play indoors or out, but all prefer to be outside for most of the day. Each day, babies sleep outdoors in traditional style large prams. When cold, they are protected by fresh bedding and covers to ensure they are warm and comfortable. This routine enables even the youngest children at the nursery to benefit from fresh air to foster their physical wellbeing.

Outdoors, the children have a superb area that has been carefully planned to provide an exemplary outdoor learning environment. Children relish the opportunity to run around the gardens as they play. They use an excellent range of equipment which helps them to develop their physical skills to a great extent. For example, a child demonstrates superb control of a wooden bicycle as it is ridden around the playground. Another child learns how to manoeuvre a scooter, putting a foot on the ground to balance going along.

Children's health is exceptionally well promoted by a range of highly effective routines and procedures. They are fully knowledgeable of these. They demonstrate great independence as they wash their hands before eating or after stroking the nursery's pet rabbit. Older children understand that they must do this to limit the spread of germs. Children enjoy snacks that are wholly nutritious and healthy. They take great pleasure in sitting with one another as they eat fruit, vegetables, crackers and other appealing foods. For lunch, children bring meals from home. Older children from 'Bee Garden' and 'Merry Grove' have packed lunches which are stored properly to ensure the food stays fresh. Babies in 'Marigold' enjoy meals brought from home that are appropriately heated and prepared.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe and secure in this welcoming nursery. They have a great deal of space to play both indoors and out. Staff greet the children and parents warmly when they arrive. Inside the nursery, each of the three groups of children have a spacious base room where they can play, eat, and rest as required. These rooms are well resourced with equipment and furniture suitable to the age of the children. Colourful displays of the children's work adorn the walls of the nursery, which creates a bright and cheerful environment as well as showing children their work is highly valued. The building is fully secure, and doors are kept locked to prevent children leaving the premises unaccompanied.

Children are protected from possible dangers because there is a well organised system of regular risk assessments and daily checks. These ensure premises and resources are safe and suitable for them each day. Children practise how to evacuate the nursery by doing a fire drill each month to ensure they are familiar with the procedure. This means they would be able to leave the premises quickly in the event of a real emergency.

All children are protected from harm and neglect because staff in all rooms of the nursery are knowledgeable about how to safeguard their welfare effectively. They have a good working knowledge of how to recognise, record and report signs of possible abuse, and they fully

understand their responsibilities in this. This part of the provision is underpinned by a robust child protection policy.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children are eager to participate in the vibrant and exciting opportunities for play. They relish the extensive range of interesting activities that provides exceptional opportunities to have fun and develop their skills and knowledge to a great extent. Children are wholly engaged in their play. Older children develop their ideas and games exceptionally well without adult intervention. For example, two children are completely engrossed as they fill a wheelbarrow with autumn leaves to push it around the maze of small pathways. The child with the wheelbarrow demonstrates excellent control guiding it around the twists and turns of the path, before purposefully unloading the leaves in a heap.

Children throughout the nursery demonstrate exemplary relationships with one another. They play extremely well with one another. The older children benefit significantly from learning to develop consideration and patience with the younger children. These younger children gain enormous benefit from the excellent role models provided by older children. This is because they play alongside and with one another, learning how to develop their ideas and games into accomplished imaginative play. For example, a few boys of various ages play inside a small wooden 'play house'. They chat amongst themselves about their favourite superheroes, as well as discussing what the play house is made of. They then decide they need to make a sign for the entrance to the house and ask a staff member for writing materials and assistance in writing the words. As they play, all children demonstrate great interest in what they are doing and all are exceptionally articulate in putting their ideas and thoughts across to one another.

Babies in 'Marigold' are exceptionally calm and highly content as they play. The toddler children, based in 'Merry Grove', are equally content, many choosing to play outdoors with the older children for most of the day. Children walk around the garden playing in the 'mud pit', using the hose to fill containers of water, and examining the flower beds for worms and other creatures. All are busy and are completely focussed on what they are doing throughout the day. Staff throughout the nursery are highly enthusiastic for the roles they perform. They are highly skilled at supporting children as they play, to ensure they gain maximum learning and development from what they are doing. Children's development is observed and recorded so that parents and staff know their current level of ability. Assessment folders are illustrated by photographs and samples of work so they present a clear picture of a child's learning.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Older children are progressing well towards the early learning goals. Children enjoy an exciting curriculum that they access through mainly child led activities. Each day, they have the opportunity to join in a focussed activity where learning objectives are planned and documented to ensure all children gain maximum benefit. These activities follow the nursery theme which currently is 'Space'.

The majority of children's learning takes place outdoors. Here they are led by their interest and curiosity to explore and observe a wide range of learning opportunities which excite their interest. All aspects of the curriculum are fully covered. Children can make marks in the sand, in the 'mud pit' and throughout the garden.

Staff provide skilled support so that they extend their thinking and learning. For example, some children have great fun putting balls in a zigzag of guttering and watching them roll down, dropping from one to another. At first, the balls shoot off the end and do not drop into the next chute. The staff member supporting them asks them to consider rolling the balls more gently and gives a clear explanation of what might happen, asking for children's thoughts and ideas. The children then try rolling the balls down more slowly and they successfully drop into the next piece of chute.

Children's progress is observed and recorded by all staff. This helps to build a clear picture of the stage of development and these assessment folders are used to plan the next steps of learning for each child. This ensures that children progress well at their own pace. More able children are given a high level of support to ensure they are properly challenged and interested by what they do. Senior staff are particularly skilled at gauging their level of understanding and adapting play and planned activities appropriately.

Children are confident and articulate in their speech to express their thoughts and ideas clearly. Staff give their full attention when children speak to them. They are interested in what they have to say and this gives children great confidence to be self-assured. Children demonstrate strong mathematical understanding. They routinely count and calculate items with accuracy and confidence as they play. Children show a very high level of interest and excitement in the natural environment.

Children's learning and experiences are enhanced by visiting professionals who offer classes such as music and ballet. These are provided by the nursery so that every child may participate and enjoy learning new skills in these aspects of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children demonstrate a strong sense of belonging. They are familiar with the routines and expectations of the nursery day. They demonstrate a high level of independence and self-confidence. For example, the nursery is about to reorganise the base rooms of each group, and the older children speak knowledgeably and enthusiastically about the changes. The nursery has a strong statement on how to promote equal opportunities. This is implemented well throughout the nursery by all staff to produce an inclusive environment where every child is valued and respected. Children learn about a range of cultures and beliefs by celebrating a range of festivals such as Harvest and the Chinese New Year. Children's spiritual, moral social and cultural development is fostered.

Effective procedures are in place to ensure that children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities receive a good level of support to enable them to progress well. The nursery special educational needs co-ordinator is knowledgeable and experienced to identify any children who may require additional support. She is able to liaise fully with parents, key workers, and external agencies to allow children to benefit from consistent support. Children manage their behaviour very well. Staff are consistent in their high expectations of this, with particular regard to them being kind to one another and respecting the natural environment. Staff use effective strategies to identify why a child might present unwanted behaviour. They fully liaise with parents to ensure the child benefits from a consistent approach.

Children benefit from the positive relationship that exists between the nursery and their parents. This fosters meaningful communication between home and setting about each child's wellbeing.

Parents are invited to attend events such as information evenings and coffee mornings. At these, they can socialise with one another and learn about how their children learn and develop through the outdoor curriculum offered at the nursery. All parents can learn about their child's day through discussion with their child's key worker. Most also have a daily diary which provides written details of what the child has done that day. These opportunities to share information provide a valuable insight into the child's day which parents value greatly.

Children are settled because staff and parents work together well to ensure that their induction to the nursery is a successful process. Parents are given information about the ethos and practices of the nursery to help them feel confident and knowledgeable about the care their child will receive. Many parents express extreme satisfaction with the care their child receives at the nursery. Any complaints received are accurately recorded in a suitable record. However, at present this document does not maintain the confidentiality of families as it is not anonymous.

Partnership with parents with regard to the provision of nursery education is good. Children's learning and progress is enhanced by the strong emphasis the nursery puts upon sharing information and progress with parents. Key workers meet regularly with parents to share children's achievements and information on what they need to learn next. Parents may see children's assessment records at any time, or may discuss them in meetings with their child's key worker. Information about the curriculum is displayed around the nursery, as well as being explained in newsletters, so that parents can support their child's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from the clear and effective organisation of the nursery. A wide range of robust and well designed policies and procedures provide an effective framework for the provision of care and education. Management and staff work towards a common ethos of ensuring that children are happy. Staff are well qualified and regularly update their training to ensure they keep abreast of changes in legislation as well as developing their practice. Recruitment procedures are thorough to ensure that all adults who work with the children are suitable and skilled to do so. Staff are well deployed during most of the day to ensure that all children receive a high level of care. However, there are occasions when this is not the case which means that some children are not given a high level of support at all times. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are good. The manager works well with her deputy and staff to ensure children receive a well rounded education that is delivered effectively. She is forward thinking to plan new initiatives and developments. This means that children benefit from a provision that is tailored to fit their individual needs. Staff are given full support through a detailed induction programme and system of appraisals so they perform their roles well. The manager oversees the curriculum of the whole setting, including the provision of nursery education, to ensure that children make good progress in all areas whilst having fun and enjoying the outdoor environment.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the nursery was asked to address issues with regard to the provision of care and education. All have been fully addressed. The setting was asked to further develop staff's understanding of how to support children with learning difficulties and/or difficulties. The special educational needs coordinator adopts a coherent approach to ensure that children

throughout the nursery are supported in their individual development. Staff have received training and can liaise with the setting and area coordinators for further guidance if necessary.

In the provision of nursery education, staff were asked to develop systems for recording observations of the children's progress and use them to identify the next steps that individual children need to take. All children are regularly observed and their learning is carefully charted and monitored to ensure they progress at a suitable pace. Curriculum planning has been developed since the last inspection to include short term plans. These clearly show the intended learning objectives and are properly evaluated to provide a clear record of the learning that has occurred.

Finally, the nursery was instructed to review child protection procedures with staff to ensure these are consistently followed to promote the safety of all children. Staff throughout the nursery are fully aware of the correct procedures to be taken in the event of such a concern being raised. Some have received appropriate training on this, and this part of the provision is supported by a robust policy statement and a child protection coordinator.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there have been two complaints investigated by Ofsted that required the provider to take further action.

The first related to National Standard 1: Suitable Person, National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 3: Care, Learning and Play, and National Standard 6: Safety. The concerns raised were that children were cared for by unvetted adults who were counted in the staffing ratios. In addition, there was a concern that younger children were not properly supervised by adults when playing with older children. Ofsted carried out an unannounced visit to investigate these concerns. As a result of this investigation, the provider was required to take a number of actions and these have been suitably addressed. Robust procedures have been put in place to check that staff are suitable to work with children. Any person who has not been checked is never left alone with the children. Registers clearly show the times of staff attendance and where they are deployed in the nursery. Staff ensure that the premises are secure at all times: a security bar has been fitted to the door of the nursery which makes it inaccessible to children and secure inside and out. Ofsted was satisfied that by taking these steps the provider met the National Standards and remained qualified for registration at the time the investigation was closed. Details of this complaint are properly recorded in the nursery's complaints record.

The second related to National 6: Safety and National Standard 11: Behaviour. An unannounced visit was undertaken at the setting. Following observations of practice, discussions with the provider and inspection of relevant documentation the provider was found to be meeting these National Standards. However arising from other aspects of practice discussed at the visit the following action was raised: National Standard 13: review child protection procedures with staff to ensure that these are consistently followed to promote the safety of all children. The provider wrote to Ofsted detailing the action they have taken to meet the National Standards in respect of reviewing the child protection policies and procedures and ensuring that all staff are aware of these. Ofsted were satisfied from their response that the National Standards were being met and that 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.

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- amend the existing complaints record so that it maintains confidentiality
- monitor staff deployment to ensure children receive a high level of support at all times

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):

- provide opportunities for children to extend their mark making and writing skills when playing outdoors.

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