

Scotts House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY331609
Inspection date	30 October 2007
Inspector	Jenny Read
Setting Address	Scotts House School, Eynsham Park, North Leigh, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX29 6PR
Telephone number	01993 883217
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Registered person	Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Scotts House Day Nursery is one of several nurseries owned by Bright Horizons Family Solutions Limited, which took over the registration of the nursery in 2006. The nursery has four classrooms, a hall, library, two kitchens and a soft play room across three buildings in the private and extensive rural grounds of Eynsham Country Park Estate, near Witney. All children share access to an enclosed hard-standing outdoor play area and a separate grassed area. Children attend from the local and surrounding village and towns.

A maximum of 119 children under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 105 children on roll between the ages of six months and five years. Of these, 30 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 all year, except at Christmas and on Bank Holidays.

Bright Horizons employs 17 staff. Of these, 11 staff, including the manager, hold an appropriate early years qualification. Two staff are currently working towards a level 2 or level 3 qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play in a clean environment because staff implement successfully the well-laid out health and hygiene procedures and competently monitor cleaning of the play areas and resources. Children show a good understanding of the simple, good health and hygiene practices and develop independence in their personal care from an early age. They use individual flannels at meal times, readily access tissues from the child-height tissue dispensers and have good awareness of the excellent hand washing routines. For example, they know to wash their hands after blowing their nose, water play and outside play. This promotes their good health and prevents the spread of infection.

Children gain good awareness of healthy living through well-planned activities and topics, such as, 'Keeping us Healthy'. As a result, children describe with clarity how germs will make them poorly and how regular exercise keeps them healthy and helps them to grow big and strong. Children are learning about the importance of warming up and cooling down during their weekly dance class and enjoy daily opportunities for fresh air and outdoor play all year round. Although, restraints on when each group can use the outdoor play area is limiting their opportunity for free flowing indoor and outdoor play, which is influencing children's behaviour in the pre-school room.

Children enjoy regular walks within the country park estate and although climbing facilities are currently not available, they access a broad selection of resources that challenge their muscle control and physical skills. For example, they practise control as they walk across the stepping-stones and balancing beams, increase confidence and hand-eye co-ordination as they throw and catch balls and improve their agility and skills when using hammers, screwdrivers and handsaws safely during woodwork sessions. The younger children try things for themselves with intelligent support from staff. They crawl, shuffle and gain confidence as they hold onto the furniture and staff's hands as they practise their walking.

Children benefit from nutritious, freshly cooked snacks and meals and easy access to regular drinks that contribute to their healthy well-being. Staff have very good awareness of children's dietary requirements because robust recording systems are well implemented. For example, they record clear details on children's individual named place mats, refer to notices displayed in each group room and the kitchen and complete daily sheets of the names of children present and their individual dietary needs. The menu is clearly displayed and reviewed intermittently by the chef, parents, staff and the children to provide a varied, balanced diet. Although children do not take an active part in mealtime routines, they readily share news with each other and staff and eagerly devour their food. This creates a social occasion and promotes children's enjoyment of food.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children benefit from a bright, cheerful and welcoming environment where great emphasis is given in all rooms to create a stimulating, comfortable and inviting play area for the children to aid their development. For example, the rooms are spacious, the displays and hanging mobiles are interactive and low-level, and photographs of the children during play and their pictures decorate the walls. The rooms for the older children are expertly set out into defined spaces,

such as an appealing and relaxing reading area, role-play area, investigation area and creative area. Children move confidently from one area to another and develop good independence as they access the abundant range of toys and resources freely for themselves. These are nicely labelled and stored invitingly in child-height units, draws and open shelving specific for the age of the children.

Children's safety and security is given good priority by daily visual safety checks and detailed risk assessments, which ensure hazards to children are effectively minimised. A keypad entry system for each of the three buildings and buzzer system for visitors to the setting safeguards the children and ensures the premises are secure. The use of digital timers and recording every 10 minutes when children have been checked ensures they are safe when sleeping. Registration systems are thorough and accurate to show clearly, who is present at any one time in the event of a fire or child protection concern. Most staff count the numbers of children present and record on the register each time they leave and return to their base room to monitor the numbers of children present throughout the day. Children display a growing understanding of how to keep themselves safe. They describe with clarity that the register is taken in case of a fire, know the dangers of cars and describe how they need to look and listen before crossing the road.

Children are protected by staff who demonstrate a sound knowledge of child protection issues and the line management process to follow if concerned about a child in their care. Detailed induction procedures ensure staff have a secure knowledge of the comprehensive policies and procedures. Vigorous and robust vetting procedures securely monitor adults caring for the children to safeguard their welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy a wealth of experiences that stimulate and encourage their exploration, senses and creativity. For example, the babies have fun crawling and rolling around in shredded paper, rubbing, patting and exploring the feel of paint on their hands and have fun as they explore making sounds with the numerous shakers. They begin to express themselves through facial expressions and early sounds, building confidence in what they can do as they experience new things, such as investigating shaving foam, spaghetti and ingredients when cooking. The babies show pleasure and squeal with delight as they freely explore their surroundings, look at themselves in the low-level wall mirrors and play hide and seek with staff in the cave. This helps them to respond imaginatively to the world around them, express their feelings confidently in a safe environment and build their relationships with staff.

Staff skilfully adopt a heuristic approach to play through providing a broad range of resources, activities and displays that children can access for themselves. This enables the children to develop their own ideas and interests. For example, the children in Acorns group spend periods filling and emptying the wet sand into containers, imitating and mirroring the staff to develop their skills. They develop their early communication skills well as they investigate treasure boxes with numerous natural objects and pretend play in the home corner using their own experiences and play modelled by staff. This enables the children to make connections, play imaginatively and experiment with sound and other media.

Children in the Oaks group readily show interest in books and enjoy many opportunities to share a story together. Staff provide many resources to enable children to play imaginatively and use their own first hand experiences. For example, they make phone calls, use the keyboard in the children's office, and acquire social confidence as they play alongside each other making

dinner and acting out roles in the home corner. Staff show interest in what the children do and confidently support their play to encourage communication. As a result, the children are beginning to express themselves, freely responding to staff's questions about their dinosaurs in the water, and imitating new language, such as sticky, smooth and slimy when experimenting with paint.

Staff have a distinctive knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters and smart awareness of how the younger children become a skilful communicator and competent learner to support their development. Consequently, children are happy and have fun. The planning is flexible and staff spontaneous in their approach to children's play, instinctively making changes according to what the children want to do, or show interest in. For example, children in Acorns show interest in large cardboard boxes, excitedly climbing in and out and banging the top. The member of staff is inventive and quickly asks the children if they would like to bang the boxes and make 'Acorns band', skilfully extending this further by singing familiar songs and taking the boxes outside.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making generally good progress and staff support them appropriately through their clear understanding of the Foundation stage curriculum and sound awareness of the purpose of the activities. Planning covers all areas of learning well, is carefully based around children's individual starting points, the seasons, cultural celebrations and children's interests. For example, a topic about hibernation evolved because children showed interest in hiding within the room. Short-term plans are informative and completed daily to enable children to contribute ideas and for staff to observe the children and highlight any areas to help them build on what they already know and can do. Tick sheet assessments are completed each term and indicate sufficiently children's attainment to help guide planning. Although observations are detailed and time-consuming, these are not completed routinely to intelligently inform and support children's assessments. However, many show children's next steps to provide appropriate extension and challenge.

The new pre-school team are creating a holistic play environment where children confidently make choices in their play, are forging good relationships with their peers and are mostly engaged and interested. The pre-school teacher demonstrates a generally good degree of skill and understanding of how to support those children who have learning difficulties or those that are more able. For example, small group times to introduce letters and sounds and show and tell sessions are well planned. This provides clear differentiation and an opportunity for children to develop their self-confidence and communication skills.

Although children do not self-register, all children recognise their written names on their place mats and some children that are more able write some recognisable letters to represent part of their name. The pre-school provides good opportunities for children to practise and develop their writing skills both in adult-led and free-play activities. For example, they imitate staff taking the register and writing children's diaries, they make books about their holidays and scribe their stories about the journey their model boat took in the water tray. However, children are not encouraged to write their names on their pictures. All children enjoy books and stories and eagerly listen, readily participate and respond to staff's questions about the characters and successfully recognise rhyming words throughout.

Children explore simple calculation successfully through a number of well-planned activities and effective adult support. For example, they sequence pictures of themselves as they grow

up, sort clothes into different groups depending on the item, their pattern or colour and organise bugs into groups depending on how they moved. Children use mathematical language spontaneously in their play and use non-standard units of measurement, such as woollen worms to compare how tall they are. Children count confidently beyond 10 and with adult support are beginning to recognise some numbers in the environment and problem solve these. However, counting the number of boys and girls present each day and counting the cups and plates required each day at lunchtime means children do not use numbers or language such as more than and less than during every day routines.

Children's knowledge and understanding of the immediate and the wider world is excellent. They confidently use a broad range of everyday technology in their play and during planned activities, for example, they use the light box to support various areas of learning and to explore light and dark, colour and patterns. Children are beginning to understand about the passing of time as they identify the day of the week, yesterday and tomorrow and talk about change in the environment through topics on the different seasons, purposeful questioning from staff and regular walks through the country park estate. They build and construct using construction sets, recyclable materials and wood.

All children enjoy good opportunities to spontaneously create using a wide and varied range of media and materials, which stimulate their interests and increase their awareness of texture. Children cut straws, stick lids and use corks, shiny objects, wool and rubber bands to freely express their creativity. They paint pictures of flowers on the country estate from memory and from still life and discover what happens when they mix different colours together or press shells and various shapes into clay. Children enjoy regular music sessions with the saltbox instruments and regular occasions to sing familiar songs and rhymes to their parents during Harvest festival and termly concerts.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff know the children very well and plan successfully to meet their individual needs and interests. The key worker system is working well to enable the children to feel special to someone and allows staff to work closely with parents and other agencies to gain and share valuable information about their key children. As a result, children are happy, settled and feel a valued member of their group. Children enjoy a broad and varied range of well-planned festivals and activities to increase their awareness of diversity. For example, they design Mehendi hand patterns, decorate clay Diva pots, learn Diwali songs and access cultural programmes on the computer during Diwali celebrations. Children wearing the nursery logo sweat tops and displaying their photographs and pictures fosters a strong sense of belonging. Collecting food parcels during harvest festival and participating in charity events is helping children become aware of those less fortunate than themselves. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered.

Children are confident and most are well behaved because all staff are positive, calm and supportive in their approach to managing children's behaviour. They respond positively to the frequent praise and sensitive reminders from staff to share and take turns. Children in the pre-school room help to create and agree golden rules of acceptable behaviour, which helps to give them ownership and learn to manage their own behaviour. However, inconsistent implementation of the rules to manage some challenging behaviour in the pre-school as the session progresses means a small number of children become boisterous, loud and do not engage in purposeful play.

Children benefit from an effective partnership and relaxed, friendly contact between their parents and the staff. Parents have a proactive role in contributing to the setting and their child's care through the parent partnership group quarterly meetings, the yearly parent survey, the suggestion box and their children's daily diaries. They receive detailed information about the setting through the colourful and very informative prospectus, notice boards outside the rooms with photographs of the staff and children in each group, useful newsletters and access to the nursery policies and procedures. Parents are well informed about their children's development through informative displays and photographs relating closely to the Birth to three matters framework and pre-school learning programme. Six-monthly conference meetings with all parents and daily communication with staff helps parents feel involved in their children's progress and development.

The partnership with parents and carers receiving nursery education is good. They receive good quality information about the pre-school education provision, their child's progress and useful ways to be involved in their learning. For example, the clear and informative planning explains daily what their children will be doing and learning. In addition, suggestions for activities and how these can be extended are displayed on notice boards around the nursery. This enables them to assist their child's learning at home. Children requiring specialist help are well supported and parents take an active part in their on-going assessments and programmes of work. Parents feel staff are welcoming and approachable and indicate their children are keen to come to the setting everyday.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A clear management structure supports staff effectively in their personal development. The new manager is professional, knowledgeable and very keen to continue to develop the strong ethos that every child matters and values the contribution staff have in fulfilling this. As a result, staff work very well as a team and are enthusiastic and motivated to attend training and committed to providing good quality care for the children. For example, staff have key roles and responsibilities throughout the nursery, such as regularly reviewing risk assessments to ensure children play in a safe and secure environment. There is a good balance of qualifications and experience throughout the team and staff and the management team meet regularly to plan and assess their practice. The setting meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

A comprehensive recruitment, induction and appraisal programme, along with implementation of a mentor and buddy system for all new staff and regular informative staff meetings are very effective. As a result, staff have a sound knowledge of all policies and procedures to securely protect and enhance children's health, safety and welfare. New systems to track staff's training needs help to closely monitor staff's on-going suitability. Staff complete all records and documentation competently with parents and maintain the comprehensive records and information confidentially.

The leadership and management of the setting is good. Children's learning is of a generally good standard and they are making sound progress from their individual starting points because the new manager, area manager and pre-school teacher have a clear vision for the nursery and demonstrate sound knowledge of their strengths and areas for improvement. Yearly parent survey questionnaires, participation in a quality assurance scheme and liaising closely with the parent partnership group is enabling the nursery to monitor their practice successfully.

All six areas of learning are given equal emphasis and organisation of the pre-school room lends itself well to promoting children's independence and autonomy. Clear plans are in place to develop the outdoor environment to make best possible use of the space. The pre-school teacher is working closely with her new staff team to develop their expertise and continue to improve the role play, observations of children's learning and behaviour management. Staff promote the integration of nursery education and care well. The sharing of useful information and well-organised settling-in sessions as the children move through the nursery ensures the transition period is effective to enhance children's welfare and emotional well-being.

Improvements since the last inspection

The last inspection recommended, the provider organised activities and resources to enable children to explore their ideas and interest freely; provided children with adequate protection from the sun; used appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour and followed good hygiene practices at snack time. Good progress has been made in each of these areas to promote children's health, enjoyment and well-being. Children select play materials independently, readily follow the comprehensive hand washing routines and wear their hats and sun cream before going outside in warm weather. Staff implement generally good methods to manage children's behaviour and further training and discussion is on-going to develop staff's skills in addressing some challenging behaviour.

The last nursery education inspection recommended, the provider reviewed the maths activities to ensure these were achievable and relevant to the developmental stages of the children. Planning of activities is based around children's interests and stages of development with clear differentiation and appropriate questioning to encourage children's understanding of mathematics.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection in 2004, Ofsted has received two concerns, which required the provider or Ofsted to take action in order to meet the National Standards.

In October 2006, a concern was raised under the National Standard 4 - Premises regarding the temperature of the building not being suitable and National Standard 7 - Health regarding a lack of paper towels and soap. The provider was asked to investigate. The boiler was repaired and additional portable heaters purchased to ensure the temperature of the rooms are suitable for the children. The nursery has changed their suppliers of paper towels and soap and have an identified member of staff responsible for checking the stock and reporting to the manger when supplies are running low. The provider has made a record of the complaint in the complaint record. No further action was taken and the provider continues to remain qualified for registration.

In September 2007, a concern was raised under National Standard 11 - Behaviour regarding methods used by a member of staff to manage children's behaviour. The provider was asked to investigate. The member of staff was dismissed and policies reviewed with all staff to ensure a consistent approach in line with company policy. The provider has made a record of the complaint in the complaint record. No further action was taken and the provider continues to remain 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 satisfactory.

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):

- continue to review and implement strategies to manage a range of children's behaviour consistently (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):

- complete observations routinely so that they may inform children's assessments and planning securely.
- plan and organise the outdoor environment to reflect and extend children's experiences and learning and encourage indoor and outdoor play so that children may make choices about where they play and learn.

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