

Hurst Hill Out of School Club / Hurst Hill Pre School / Little Monsters

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253868
Inspection date	20 February 2008
Inspector	Patricia Dawes
Setting Address	Hurst Hill Primary School, Paul Street, Coseley, Dudley, West Midlands, WV14 9AJ
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Registered person	Hurst Hill Pre-School and Out of School Club
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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hurst Hill nursery and pre school, the out of school group and Little Monsters playgroup are all run by a committee under the governance of the school. The setting opened in 1996. All of the types of provision operate from within a primary school, which is situated close to Coseley West Midlands. The nursery and pre-school is located in a self-contained unit; Little Monsters playgroup in the community room and the out of school group uses the community room, the hall and the computer suite. A maximum of 56 children may attend the nursery, pre-school, playgroup and out of school at any one time during school term time only. The nursery and pre school is open daily from 08.45 to 11.30 and 12.30 to 15.00. The out of school club is open daily from 07.45 until 08.50 and 15.00 until 17.30 and Little Monsters playgroup is open on Monday, Wednesday and Friday from 13.15 to 15.00. All children share access to secure enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 53 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Of these, 45 children receive funding for early education. It is the admission policy for the out of school club to allow children up to the age of 11 years to attend. Children who attend the provisions are from the

local area. The setting currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The provisions employ 15 members of staff. Of these, 12 hold appropriate early years qualifications and three are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play and are cared for in warm inviting and clean environments throughout the provisions. Most staff take positive steps to enhance children's understanding and awareness of good health and hygiene practices through established routines. For example, most children know they wash their hands after using the toilet and before cooking activities, snacks and playing outdoors. However, not all staff are consistent in their approach and as a result children's well-being is at times compromised. Adequate arrangements are in place to minimise the risk of cross infection. For example, the staff ensure tabletops are cleaned before snack-time or cooking activities and the bathroom areas are clean and well organised. Children receive suitable care in the event of an accident or illness because several staff have current first aid qualifications, a suitable first aid box is maintained and detailed accident and medication records are kept and signed by parents. Written parental consent is sought to enable the setting to seek emergency treatment or advice. All of this promotes children health and well-being.

Children are developing a good understanding of healthy eating and their social skills are promoted well. They are well nourished as they enjoy a variety of nutritious healthy snacks and access regular drinks such as fresh fruit, toast, cheese, milk or water. Staff discuss with parents and record children's individual dietary and cultural needs. Older children in pre-school and out of school help themselves to a drink and snack, younger children in playgroup sit at the table with the staff. Snack times are a sociable occasion and children benefit from a calm, relaxing atmosphere where they are able to discuss their play and activities.

Children's physical development is adequately promoted as daily routines and activities ensure an appropriate balance of energetic outdoor play and opportunities for indoor quiet time. They have a good awareness of space and competently use a wide range of small and large equipment. For example, they pedal bikes, play with a parachute, dig in the garden or use scissors, rollers and paint brushes during art and craft times. Further opportunities for children to enhance their physical growth and develop their skills are available, such as a climbing frame, water and sand trays. This helps to consistently promote children's physical development and self-confidence.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises are extremely warm, welcoming, well maintained and clean throughout. A colourful display of children's artwork and posters make the environment a pleasant place for children to spend their time and helps to promote children's sense of belonging. The community room is well organised to enable both the Little Monsters Playgroup and the out of school group to share the facilities. There are suitable areas for relaxing, eating, messy activities and playing outdoors. Ample space is available between activity tables or areas to allow children to move around freely and explore their environment in safety. The computer suite and school hall are

also available for children after school to use the internet, or take part in more boisterous play during inclement weather.

Children in all groups use high quality equipment appropriate to their age and stage of development. It is checked and cleaned thoroughly to ensure it meets safety requirements. All children have equal access to resources which are not restricted as resources are sorted into labelled containers. These are securely stored on shelves or in low cupboards to prevent accidents and allow children easy access. Staff immediately remove broken or damaged items for mending or replacing. An appropriate selection of outdoor play resources are available for the children in pre school and out of school groups; however for younger children in playgroup the range is very limited and not always appropriate, such as the bikes and scooters are too big for the children to use comfortably and this compromises their enjoyment and sense of achievement.

The main entrance door is secure once children are on the premises. Staff remind parents to ensure the door is closed when they leave to prevent children leaving the premises unnoticed. All visitors are required to show their identification and sign in and out of the premises. Staff supervise the children well at all times and conduct regular visual risk assessments in each room, recording or removing all items requiring attention. The provider ensures all required work is quickly completed. For example, the poles in the community room were considered hazardous; these have been covered with a thick foam protector which means all children can use this area in safety. All staff are fully aware of the excellent emergency evacuation procedures. They practise fire drills regularly with the children, recording and identifying any hazards or concerns which are quickly rectified.

Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a clear, sound knowledge and understanding of child protection issues, which is updated regularly through attending training. Staff are pro-active and fully aware of where to seek help and advice if they are concerned for the safety of a child in their care. A written policy is in place which is shared with parents, however the procedure is not in line with the current Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures. This has the potential to compromise children's welfare with regard to passing on information to the relevant authority or the regulator.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

All the children arrive at the settings enthusiastic and eager to play, learn and explore in the stimulating environment. They are happy to leave their parents/carers due to the good relationships they have developed with the staff. Children have free access to a range of toys and resources which enables them to make their own choices and decisions. For example, staff have rearranged younger children's equipment and resources in low cupboards or on the floor, older children can request equipment or in some cases help themselves. All children enjoy a good balance of adult-led and free-choice activities each session. They work in appropriate groups supported well by the staff. For example, a member of staff is available at each activity area. Throughout the playgroup, children are encouraged to develop their confidence and independence skills such as putting on their own coats for outdoor play, sitting still during snack-time, walking together outside and sharing toys.

Within the out of school group older children are encouraged to use their initiative and behave well. They eagerly initiate conversations with staff and talk with enthusiasm about what they have done during their school day. Positive relationships are developing as older children are content to play as a group with younger children, which promotes a happy, settled atmosphere.

Staff facilitate activities well and encourage children to join in although respect children's decisions to opt in or out of activities. Children are able to decide when they access the creative tables. They are encouraged to use their initiative and have produced some very creative art work such as Chinese lanterns and valentine cards. Staff have a good understanding of how to motivate children by ensuring activities are adapted so all children can participate. This helps to maintain children's focus and involvement.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff use in-depth planning which fully incorporates the early learning goals and stepping stones. A balanced range of innovative and practical activities help children learn, as they access a substantial range of high quality equipment. There are some children currently attending with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who use English as an additional language. Very effective systems are in place to provide excellent support and inclusion within the setting and all activities, such as staff using the internet to research a lesser used or unfamiliar language and then discussing with parents how to adapt this to promote their child's learning. Systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements are systematic and innovative. They are used effectively by staff to support children and plan exciting experiences to help children progress.

Staff are very skilful and support children's learning well through planned and naturally occurring opportunities throughout the day. Children become interested and absorbed in their activities and staff use open questioning exceptionally well to encourage children to think for themselves. Key workers know the children well as they record regular observations, identifying each child's next steps in their progress and development. Staff creatively incorporate children's interests into the programme when possible. For example, extending a construction activity based on 'Bob the builder' to a builder's yard indoors and a construction site outdoors.

Children are making outstanding progress through the early learning goals and stepping-stones. They show enthusiasm towards the activities provided, as they are interested, motivated and keen to learn. Children are animated and keen to share their experiences of pancake making at home with the staff. They are able to concentrate for long periods when they undertake activities of their own choice. For example, while building a bridge from construction blocks or colouring a ginger bread man. Many children have made close friends in the group and all are developing excellent independence skills, such as helping themselves to snacks at the self-service snack bar, taking themselves to the bathroom or putting on their own coats ready for outdoor play. Children's self-esteem is promoted as they particularly enjoy being named helper for the session, completing simple tasks set by the staff.

Children's communication and language skills are excellent. They are able to express their feelings and vocalise their emotions. For example, one child needed to tell everyone his mummy used a spatula just like this one when she cooked eggs. They regularly enjoy exploring letters and sounds with the staff as some children participated in a 'jungle adventure' roaring like a lion and hissing like a snake, chopping down trees and squelching with heavy feet through swampy ground. They enjoy looking at books, listening to stories or using the interactive white board to access a game about a colourful elephant. Children have many opportunities to develop their writing and mark making skills writing in sand or shaving foam, during role-play making shopping lists at the builder's merchant or labelling their own paintings or drawings. As a result, most children are able to write their own name, using recognisable letters.

Children have numerous opportunities to develop their mathematical and counting skills each day as the environment is rich in both number and letter collages and posters. Staff incorporate these into the daily activities as they count the children in and out of the room, count children's bricks in their tower and talk about long and short when building a bridge. Most children are able to confidently count to 10 and beyond. Children are developing their understanding of mathematical positional language as they move over and under the large play apparatus. They discuss heavy and light as they fill their buckets with sand or soil and bigger and smaller when they compare the towers they have built.

Children enjoy daily opportunities to explore sand, water, soil, dough and paint. They discuss the changes that occur as they mix paints or flour and eggs during cooking activities. All the children competently use the computer and other programmable toys. They enjoy learning about people "who help us" as they have regular visitors to their group from the police and fire service. Some children particularly enjoyed recalling how the police officer had some handcuffs, a baton, and a radio and went on to describe how the items worked.

All the children move confidently around the pre-school and have a good awareness of space. They confidently use the larger apparatus such as the climbing gym or run and jump on the games painted on the playground. Many are becoming aware of how their body works and know when they need to take a rest or a drink. Children enjoy using an extensive range of toys and equipment for the development of their large and small muscles. For example, they handle scissors, cutters and rolling pins as they play with dough, paint brushes and rollers competently to produce effective art work. They have enthusiastically built an aeroplane and racing car with the construction materials. Children use their imagination as they retell stories, move rhythmically to different types of music or play outdoors pretending to be monsters.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and play a full part in all of the provisions because staff treat them with equal concern, support and respect their individuality. Staff use detailed information provided by each parent to provide professional care for every child in the setting. All children are encouraged to play with everything available. For example, boys enjoy shopping and playing in the home corner and girls enjoy building models with the construction equipment. Children are developing respect for each other as they learn about different cultures and the roles of other people in their local community. For example, police officers and fire fighters. They access an extensive range of toys and activities reflecting other cultures, race and disabilities. This is a positive approach and fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Staff are proactive in their approach to caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities or who speak English as an additional language. Appropriate systems currently support the children attending well, such as, a designated special needs co-ordinator who will ensure all staff are fully informed about the specific needs of individual children and have access to their file as required. This ensures all children identified with special needs receive the care and support they need to progress and develop to their individual potential.

Children behave very well throughout all of the provisions. Staff have high expectations and are excellent role models. They set realistic boundaries for children, which helps them learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. All provisions are calm and happy environments where children require minimal behaviour management as they are learning to share the toys and take turns. Staff further increase children's understanding of

right and wrong by giving gentle reminders to care for their environment, the resources and each other, such as, staff calmly reminding younger children to sit quietly during snack time and older children not to go outdoors until a staff member escorts them. All children are regularly rewarded by staff with praise, encouragement and smiles.

A positive partnership with parents is developing which enables children to make good progress in all areas of their development. Staff actively seeks parents' views about their children's needs and interests before the child starts at the setting, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Short-term plans are shared with parents via the notice board, which means that parents can be involved directly in their children's learning. Children benefit from the involvement of their parents in projects, which contribute to their good health, safety, development and learning.

Partnership with parents or carers of children in receipt of nursery funding is outstanding. Staff have highly efficient systems in place for sharing information with parents to meet their child's individual needs as they receive detailed information on the educational programme such as weekly newsletters. Staff actively invite them to become involved in their child's learning within the setting through regular activity mornings which focus on the areas of learning. These sessions are well attended and parents' comments in questionnaires show this to be a very positive experience for the children, their parents and the staff.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

All staff undergo rigorous and robust checks to ensure they are suitable to work with children. Most staff are qualified and have a good working knowledge of the age group of children that they care for. Some staff have attended additional training opportunities since the last inspection, keeping themselves updated in child care. Most staff have worked in the groups since they opened and there are appropriate contingency arrangements in place to cover staff absences. This provides stability and continuity of care for the children.

All rooms used within the premises are well organised. Indoor and outdoor space is laid out to maximise play opportunities for children. The setting operates a good system for registration which ensures staff, children and visitors are accounted for at all times. Parents see their child's records at any time and there is an additional room available for confidential discussions if required. All children are happy, comfortable and settled in a warm and caring environment where their individual needs are met. They spend their time purposefully and activities are planned to maximise play, learning and development opportunities.

Some of the documentation which is required and contributes to children's health and safety is in place, however it is not always maintained appropriately, kept up to date, reviewed regularly or pertinent to each provision. This has the potential to impact on the safety and continuity in the children's care. The committee is aware of their duty to report any significant events or changes to the regulator.

The leadership and management of the provision is outstanding. The newly formed committee and manager are committed to continuing to provide an excellent standard of education for the children attending. The manager supports the staff team well, encouraging them to attend relevant training opportunities whenever possible to help them keep abreast of childcare matters and changes. Plans are in place for a revamp of the outdoor play areas and a review and update

of all policies and procedures which demonstrates that the manager and the committee have a clear vision to continue to improve the education they give to the children.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection three recommendations were raised with regard to parents acknowledging entries made in the accident and medication records; the organisation of the playgroup room to meet children's needs and reviewing the operational plan to ensure policy statements cover all aspects of the provision.

The committee and manager have addressed two of the recommendations sufficiently well. Namely parents now sign all entries in the accident and medication record. The posts have now been covered within the playgroup room to provide a safer environment for children. This has had a very positive outcome for children's safety and well-being. The operational plan which contains policies and procedures covering all aspects of the provision has still to be addressed due to changes in the committee. This has been raised again as a recommendation for both care and nursery education.

There were no significant weaknesses to report for nursery education, however the committee were asked to consider the following point to increase opportunities for children to self-select resources and initiate their own play. They were also asked to develop the partnership with parents and increase the opportunities to share information with them about their child's progress and attainment. Changes have been made which mean children now have ample opportunities to initiate their own play from a range of accessible resources. Parents are now fully included in the setting and regularly attend sessions and receive written information concerning their children's progress. All of this supports children's development and learning exceptionally well.

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 good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

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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):

- ensure good hygiene practices are consistently promoted in order to reduce the risk of cross infection
- increase the range of outdoor equipment available for children aged 2-3 years to promote physical development
- improve the organisation of the operational plan to cover all aspects of the provision.

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