

Happy Hours Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	148659
Inspection date	22 January 2008
Inspector	Anne Jeanette Faithfull
Setting Address	The Medway Building, Polehampton Infants School, Twyford, Berkshire, RG10 9HS
Telephone number	01189349088
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Registered person	Happy Hours Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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?

Happy Hours Pre-School was established in 1968 and has been at its present location since 1983. It operates from a building in the grounds of Polehampton Infant School, Twyford, Berkshire. The pre-school has its own enclosed outdoor area and access to the school's facilities. The pre-school serves families from the local community. The pre-school is managed by a committee.

The pre-school is registered for 24 children, with 45 children currently on roll. All 45 children on roll receive funding for nursery education. The pre-school is able to support children with learning difficulties/disabilities and who speak English as an additional language.

The pre-school is open from 09:00 to 11:30 and 12:45 to 15:15 Monday to Friday term time only. Children attend for a variety of sessions.

There are currently eight staff employed of these, seven hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff encourage children to begin to be aware of health and hygiene issues, such as children are aware to wash their hands after using the toilet, after craft activities and before snack time. Staff ensure tissues are in easy reach of the children so they can independently attend to their own needs as they blow their noses and put the tissue in a bin. Staff consistently follow effective policies and procedures to promote good health and minimise the spread of infection, for example, when a child felt unwell the staff contacted the parent immediately and asked them to come and collect their child. Staff hold current first aid certificates, which mean they have up to date knowledge in dealing with accidents and emergencies.

Children's good health is also promoted by healthy and nutritious snacks which are freshly prepared and include fresh fruit and crackers. However, the snack session is very adult led and children are not given the opportunity to further develop their independence skills by pouring their own drink, putting spread on their cracker or helping to prepare the snack. Staff are aware of each child's individual dietary needs and take appropriate steps to ensure these are met. Staff provide drinking water and cups for the children, however these are situated on a high storage unit and most children cannot access the water independently. Staff also do not offer or remind the children to have a drink after an energetic physical exercise session in the school hall, to ensure the children do not become de-hydrated and to further promote a healthy lifestyle routine.

Children participate in a range of activities which help to promote their physical development. They use the school hall where they join in a range of different challenging physical activities such as, balancing on beams with rubber hoops on their heads, throwing balls, climbing over climbing frames and crawling under a cane on a frame. Staff offer support and guidance to ensure children are able to join in all the activities. Children also ride bikes, use the slide and large hoops in the outdoor area. Children's fine motor skills are promoted as they use a range of tools for example, using rolling pins when playing with the play dough and using glue sticks and scissors when making items in art and craft sessions.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and safe environment. A good ratio of adults to children and effective deployment ensures children are well supervised in all areas of the pre-school. A wide variety of safe and suitable toys and resources are provided for the children, these are clean, well maintained and regularly checked for safety. All resources are stored in boxes and containers which are clearly labelled to remind the children which box or container the resources go in when they help to tidy up or wish to choose a particular resource to play with. Staff undertake regular risk assessments and the manager completes a daily safety checklist prior to the children arriving to ensure all areas are safe for the children to use. If an outing is arranged there are good procedures in place to ensure the safety of the children. For example, on a recent train trip the manager walked to the station taking the same route as the children and staff would take and went on the train beforehand to ensure all risks and hazards were identified to further ensure the safety of the children.

Staff effectively encourage the children to begin to be aware of their own safety for example, reminding children not to run along the sports beam as they may fall off and not to throw the sand as it is very fine and may go in someone's eyes and hurt them. Children and staff regularly practise the fire evacuation procedures to ensure the children are aware of the steps to take in an emergency. Staff have a good awareness of security. They ensure that children cannot leave the premises unsupervised and there can be no unauthorised access to children. There are clear procedures to ensure children are collected only by authorised people. For instance, a parent phoned in to say they could not pick their child up as a sibling was ill and gave the name of another person who was coming to pick their child up from pre-school. The manager checked in the child collection book to see if this was the name of the person also identified as being authorised to collect the child and informed the child of the change and the reason why before letting the child leave.

Children's welfare is promoted by the staff's commitment and understanding of their role in protecting and safeguarding children. There is a clear safeguarding procedure in place, and systems to document any existing injuries. Staff are vigilant, aware of the signs and symptoms of possible abuse and of the procedures to follow should they have any concerns about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy, confident and settled, as they are cared for by a consistent staff team who are sensitive to their needs and help them to feel at ease. They enter the pre-school enthusiastically and quickly leave their parent or carer with ease. A visual timetable each day informs the children of the activities and timetable of the day, this helps the new and younger children to become familiar with the routines. Staff realise that children learn through play and ensure a wide range of play activities are available to support children's learning and development for example, during free play sessions; children confidently build with large and small construction resources, paint and play with the sand. Children enjoy the company of their peers and meeting the children who attend the infant school when they join them for singing sessions. This gives the children the opportunity to meet the school staff and become familiar with the school building.

Nursery education

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Staff have a clear understanding of how children learn and progress. They are very skilled at communicating with children and use effective questioning techniques to successfully stimulate thinking, extend knowledge and encourage children's language skills, for example, asking the children what they had been doing at the week- end and asking them to explain about the items they have bought from home which are linked to the letter of the week. The planning is flexible and children have the opportunity to suggest the activities and experiences they would like to participate in. Staff realise that children learn through play and ensure a wide range of play activities are available. However, children are not always given opportunities to independently participate in daily routines, for example the daily weather, date and day chart is completed by the staff before the children arrive and some planned activities are very adult led and children are not able to complete the tasks for themselves. This does not promote children's independent learning. Children's progress is recorded in their progress files and all members of staff observe and make notes of children's achievements. These are then transferred to the child's file by their key worker. Staff also take photos of children's achievements for example, taking a picture of a child and the car he had managed to build on his own. Some verbal evaluations take place

between the staff on the planned activities and experiences offered, however these are not recorded to inform all staff if the activity was suitable to meet the learning needs of all the children and to help the staff plan the next steps for the children.

Staff ensure there are opportunities for children to write for a purpose by the positioning of writing materials in areas of play, such as the role play area set up a post office. Children write envelopes and letters to each other and some children use their imaginative skills to dress up and pretend they are a postman and deliver the letters. Children show an early appreciation of books. They handle them well, turning the pages correctly and talk about the pictures and what they think is going to happen. They enjoy sitting with a member of staff, listening to the story and predicting what happens next in the Beauty and the Beast story. Staff link planned activities to the letter and number of the week, for example children participate in a recall activity. Items beginning with the letter 'B' are put on a tray then a member of staff removes one and they have to say the item that has been removed. Children thoroughly enjoy this activity and readily respond. They enjoy saying the names of the items, such as, butterfly, bee, bat, badger and binoculars and this further reinforced their learning of the letter and sound.

Children regularly count and use mathematical language. For example, they count the number of children and adults each day at registration time and the number of sides on a triangle they are using to make a flower picture. Children show a great interest in information and communication technology. They independently access the computer, operating simple programs and performing simple functions with good skill. Their mouse control is excellent when using the computer and they show good physical skill and control when moulding and manipulating dough and other malleable materials.

Children construct with a purpose in mind and use their imagination well in their creativity. They enjoy explaining to the inspector about the fire engine they are making and use a range of different shapes including triangles, circles and squares to make a flower picture. Children have many opportunities throughout the session to use their imagination especially in free play sessions where they dress up as lions, princesses, firemen and participate in role play with their friends for example, being lions in the jungle and looking for something to eat. Staff help to extend their play by making suggestion or providing further resources for them. Children's knowledge and understanding of the world is also encouraged through a variety of outings in the local community and by planting seeds and bulbs in the garden and taking responsibility to ensure the plants are watered on a regular basis to ensure they grow. They talk to staff about what will happen if they do not water the plants in the garden. The children comment on the weather and if it is cold or warm, they talk with the staff about the need to put their coats on as it is cold outside. Children readily join in the daily singing session where they sing a rhyme about the day and month at circle time.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are helped to consider and value diversity. All children are positively welcomed and staffing arrangements are designed to meet the individual needs of the children and ensure that children are able to participate fully in the life of the setting. Children are becoming aware of the wider world because staff provide children with positive images of diversity and plan activities centred around various festivals and cultural celebrations. Children have the opportunity to become familiar with the local community, for example they walked to the local train station to catch a train to Henley. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Most children's behaviour is good in response to the staff's positive and consistent approach to behaviour management. The setting is currently in the process of updating their behaviour management policy and is sending parents a questionnaire to seek their views on behaviour issues to ensure they meet the needs of all the children attending and to work with parents on dealing effectively with any behaviour issues which may arise. Staff regularly praise children and take time to acknowledge good behaviour. Children's efforts are clearly valued by staff who take time to listen to children and celebrate their achievements

The partnership with parents and carers is good. New parents have the opportunity to attend coffee mornings to meet the staff and committee and each parent receives a welcome pack which they complete to inform staff of their child's likes, dislikes, favourite television programmes and any special toys. However, parents are not asked about their child's progress and achievements they have already made at home, to ensure staff are aware of their child's stage of development so they can plan for the child's next step in their learning and development. Parents have many opportunities to be involved in their child's learning in a range of meaningful ways, including staying as a parent helper at a session as part of the parent rota system. This gives them the opportunity to see what a typical session is like and the experiences their child has. Parents comment on how happy their children are at the pre-school and how approachable and friendly the staff are. They comment that they are pleased with the feedback they receive regarding their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play in a well organised environment, they benefit from having free flow between the two rooms and the outdoor area. This enables them to make choices about the activities they wish to participate in. All of the required documentation is in place; however, the complaints procedure does not include the correct contact details of the regulator. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure that children are well protected and cared for by qualified staff with good knowledge and understanding of child development. Regular staff appraisals are used effectively to highlight any future training needs. The majority of the staff team have worked in the pre-school for many years and this allows both children and their parents to experience a sense of familiarity and security from the stability provided.

Leadership and management are good. The setting is lead by a committed and well qualified manager. All staff have a high regard for the well-being of the children and work effectively as a team, they plan the curriculum together and work well with other professionals including the teachers at the school and other advisory staff to ensure the needs of the children are met. The manager and staff team comment on how approachable and supportive the committee are and how they all work together to continually improve the care, learning and play provided for the children. The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the pre-school was asked to ensure the procedures in place to record all visitors present are effectively implemented and to ensure children's age and stage of development is considered when planning group activities. Staff now have implemented the procedures to ensure all visitors to the setting are recorded in the visitors book to further ensure the safety and welfare of the children attending. When planning activities staff now take into consideration the age and stage of development of the children and plan suitable group activities to ensure the learning needs of all the children attending are covered.

At the last education inspection the pre-school was asked to provide opportunities for the older, more able children to extend their knowledge of the written word, writing simple captions and using phonic knowledge for spelling. Children are now encouraged to write and recognise the written word in a variety of ways, such as writing familiar words in celebration cards, participating in a small groups looking at words and beginning to read the labels around the rooms. Children also participate in jolly phonic sessions where they repeat sounds, look at sound books and talk about word building. These measures further promote children's learning and understanding of the written word and phonics' for spelling.

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.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

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

- ensure drinks are accessible to the children at all times and further promote children's understanding of a healthy lifestyle
- provide further opportunities for children to develop their independence and complete tasks for themselves (this also applies to nursery education)
- update the complaints procedure to include the latest contact details for the regulator

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):

- record evaluations of planned activities to help plan the next steps
- seek, value and act upon information from parents about their child's progress and achievements

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