

Heirs and Graces PDN

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 323096

Inspection date 07 December 2007

Inspector Judith Anne Kerr

Setting Address Heirs & Graces Nursery, The Old Schoolhouse, Greenfield Road, Dentons Green, ST. HELENS, Merseyside, WA10 6SG

Telephone number 01744 451925

E-mail

Registered person Mr Alan Dawe and Mrs Susan Dawe

Type of inspection Integrated

Type of care Full day care, Out of School 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?

Heirs and Graces Private Day Nursery is owned and run by a private partnership. It was registered in 2000 and operates from nine rooms in two buildings. One building is purpose built and the other is converted from a former school. It is situated in the Saint Helens area of

Merseyside. A maximum of 118 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 to 18.00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children have access to securely enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 136 children aged from birth to under 11 years on roll. Of these, 47 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend on a variety of full and part time places. The nursery offers an out of school service. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 38 staff who work with the children; of whom 34 staff members including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Four staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery employs four support staff, including a qualified cook. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a very clean, well maintained environment. They stay healthy because staff exercise good hygiene practices to minimise the risk of cross infection. For example, cleaning rotas are in place and surfaces are regularly wiped down before and after children eat or after messy play. The children are becoming aware of basic hygiene routines as they are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times of the day, such as before eating and after toileting. An effective sick child policy is implemented to protect children from the spread of infection and promote their well-being. Accurate accident and medication records are maintained and staff hold up to date qualifications in first aid which enables them to administer the appropriate treatment in the event of an accident. However, parents do not always countersign accident records to acknowledge the entry. As a result, they are not consistently fully informed.

Children enjoy a wide range of activities which contribute towards their good health. They benefit from fresh air and exercise as they engage in regular outdoor play. They have lots of opportunities to enjoy themselves and develop their physical skills in the outdoor area. Coordination skills are developed as they run, jump and practise their ball skills. The mini gym equipment proves very popular with the older children as they use the rowing machine and cycle. Children are able to rest according to their needs. For example, children sit in the quiet areas and rest their bodies when they are tired.

Children's dietary needs are successfully met because staff gather information from parents about their children and take this into account when planning menus. Meals are prepared and cooked on the premises each day using fresh fruit and vegetables. The menu is well balanced and nutritious to promote children's growth and development. Mealtimes are social occasions where staff and children sit together and enjoy each other's company. Children are provided with appropriate cutlery. Self-help skills are promoted as children are encouraged from a young age to feed themselves. All children have access to fresh drinking water throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming, child centred environment with lots of space which allows them freedom to play and learn in comfort. The buildings benefit from lots of natural light with rooms being maintained at an appropriate temperature and well ventilated. The environment is enhanced with lovely photographs of the children involved in activities and attractive displays of children's work.

There is a wide range of child-size, good quality equipment and furniture which promotes children's safety and meets their needs. Toys are age appropriate, safe, clean and encourage children's all round development. Children are able to make choices about what they do as the resources are easily accessible. This helps to promote their independence. They access a good range of natural materials including sand, water and soil to promote their sensory development.

There are many procedures in place to keep children safe. These include visitors signing in and out of the premises and regular checks of electrical appliances. Emergency evacuation procedures are practised regularly with the children, so they know how to leave the building safely in the

event of an emergency. Staff have a good awareness of safety issues. Regular risk assessments are carried out to minimise the risk of accidental injury. Most reasonable steps are taken to ensure that the environment in which children are cared for is safe and secure. However, two drains in the outdoor play area are accessible and pose a hazard to children's safety. Children are developing an awareness of keeping themselves and others safe. They are reminded to walk when indoors, sit on chairs correctly and take responsibility for keeping their environment safe by tidying toys away.

Staff have a good understanding of child protection issues through relevant training. They are aware of possible signs and symptoms of abuse and a designated person takes responsibility for liaising with other agencies. This helps to ensure children are well protected from harm and abuse.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy in the care of the committed staff team. They enjoy close and warm relationships with adults who know them well. Babies receive very good care to support their individual routines to provide opportunities to rest, play, learn, and develop their sensory awareness. This increases their sense of well-being and security. Staff deploy themselves well to provide good care and support to the children. They respond well to children's individual needs. Children spend their time purposefully and develop good social skills, as they play alongside each other and cooperatively with their peers. Staff are confident in using the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use this to plan and support each child's individual development and monitor their progress. Activities build on what children already know and can do; they are planned to meet the next steps of children's learning. Children have a gentle interaction when they transfer to their next room and information is shared to ensure a smooth transition.

The children learn to explore and investigate as they have access to a variety of interesting materials including sand, water, shaving foam, spaghetti, shredded paper and play dough. They enjoy a wide range of creative activities and new experiences, such as flour and water and being encouraged to use their own ideas when making cards. They develop their imaginary skills as they play in the home corner looking after the baby and making tea. Children are learning about numbers through songs, such as 'five currant buns' and 'one, two, three, four, five once I caught a fish alive'. They learn about colours through painting activities and matching games. Staff nurture children's early communication skills by repeating sounds and encouraging letter recognition as they begin to identify their name.

After school children arrive very happily and are familiar with the routine. They have the opportunity to relax at the end of the school day and have access to a range of toys and craft activities that they can opt in and out of doing. They enjoy creative activities and interact well with each other sharing their news.

Nursery Education:

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Staff know the children well and plan appropriate targets for their next stage of development. All children have a key worker to ensure a two way sharing of information. The staff are confident in using the Foundation Stage curriculum. Children's progress is monitored and recorded in their assessment records. Staff meet regularly to plan and evaluate sessions. Themes are planned and children also have the

opportunity for free play. Children are keen to learn and listen well to instructions. They receive plenty of praise and encouragement and are keen to display and discuss their work. Staff use a variety of effective teaching methods to help children learn. For example, the use of the white board is particularly successful, as children are eager to discuss the letter of the week.

The children are eager to express themselves, talk confidently about their families and are eager to share their news and ask questions. They extend their role play with the support of staff, for example, when dressing up and choosing favourite costumes. They have the opportunity to be creative and use their own imagination and ideas. They experiment with paints and know if they mix red and white they will get pink paint. They are eager to talk about what they are painting. They concentrate well at their chosen tasks and listen well at circle time. Children are beginning to understand the meaning of print and enjoy looking at books, listening to stories and reading to each other. Writing materials are accessible throughout the session. However, children's opportunities to attempt writing for their own purposes are limited as writing materials are not readily available in all areas of the provision. They are developing good concentration skills and have access to tools and materials to make models. They do not, however, have independent access to a good range of materials which allows them to explore ways of joining things together.

During the day children count as part of the routines. For example, they count the number of children round the table. They learn the concept of volume and understand mathematical language, such as bigger, longer and smallest. Children have independent access to technology, such as computers. They learn to be independent with putting their scarves and coats on for going outside to play. Children are confident and engage well with each other and visitors sharing their achievements. Their behaviour is good and reflects the staff's high expectations. Children take turns, share and negotiate roles in games. They are successfully supported to learn how to manage their own behaviour and respect others. They enjoy learning about the world in which they live from activities, visitors and through planned outings. For example, they add food colouring to the water and add flowers to see what happens next. The lollipop lady explains the importance of her role and trips out to the allotment provide opportunities to see things growing and collect items of interest.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff give a high priority to providing support to all children throughout the nursery to ensure their individual needs are met. Children are encouraged to develop their confidence and self-esteem and to be thoughtful and kind to each other. They benefit from the happy environment within the nursery. The staff know the children well and ensure individual routines are met well. For example, when children wake after being asleep staff give them time, ensure they have a drink, and give them time to rejoin in activities and give up their comforts, such as their dummies, blanket or favourite toys that they have brought in from home. Children learn about their local community through outings and finding out about different cultures, such as Hindus, Buddhists and celebrating festivals, such as Chinese New Year. This helps to raise their awareness of diversity. Children enjoy participating in events, such as a Christmas play in readiness to show their parents. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children with learning difficulties and disabilities are well supported. Staff are supported by the manager who has completed training, is very aware of inclusion, and ensures that children's individual needs are met without impacting on other children. Children's progress is regularly

reviewed and advice and support sought from outside agencies. Close liaison with parents ensures consistency of care. Children behave very well. Staff have completed training and ensure behaviour is managed consistently throughout the nursery. Positive behaviour is encouraged and children are treated with individual care and respect. Children learn to share and take turns from a young age. They learn to value the resources and eagerly help to tidy up.

Children benefit from the friendly relationships shared between parents and staff. Parents are kept well informed on a daily basis of how their child has been. Babies' daily routines are recorded, they have a diary for the exchange of information between nursery and home. Daily discussion takes place on arrival and departure to ensure parents and staff are well informed and parent's wishes are respected. There are informative notice boards throughout the nursery keeping parents up to date with information. However, children's individual dietary needs are clearly displayed, and as a result confidentiality is not fully respected. The nursery operates an 'open door policy' with parents being welcome. Parents have an informative prospectus and their views are sought through a comments box. Verbal feedback from parents demonstrates they find staff approachable and welcoming and receive lots of information about their children.

The partnership with parents in receipt of nursery education funding is good. Parents receive verbal and written information about the Foundation Stage and early learning goals. They are invited to parent's evenings to discuss their child's progress and look at their work and assessments. They know their child's key worker well and have a daily update on what their child has been doing and how they have been. The staff working with this age group have a good understanding of the importance of keeping parents informed so they can be involved and extend their child's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by well qualified, enthusiastic and experienced staff who have a secure understanding of children's different stages of development. They work extremely well as a team and are very clear of their roles and responsibilities. They ensure children's needs are met and that they provide a very happy caring environment in which to learn. The staff know the children very well; they know their likes, dislikes and how to deal with them, for example, when children wake after sleeping. The staff present as very positive role models for the children who know they can trust them.

Children's play areas are organised well to provide the appropriate environment for each age group. Children's health and welfare are given a high priority. Documentation is in place to support children's placements and policies and procedures generally meet the standards and regulations. The nursery liaises with the local school in preparation for children moving on to school.

Leadership and management is good. The proprietors have a high commitment to providing quality care and education, and are involved in the nursery on a daily basis. Detailed procedures are in place for the selection and appointment of staff. All staff are vetted to ensure they are suitable to work with children. There is a good induction procedure for new staff and all staff have regular staff appraisals. The management have a good overview of the daily running of the nursery and provide consistent support to the staff. Staff have regular team meetings and in-house and external training. They keep up to date with current legislation and regularly evaluate their practice.

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

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to: acquire resources to help children learn about disability and gender; ensure all medication records are signed by the parent; provide the toddler groups with ready access to fresh drinking water; and record the hours of attendance for children aged under five.

A broad selection of resources are available to help children learn about disability and gender and all medication records are countersigned by parents to ensure they are fully informed. All children have access to drinking water throughout the day to quench their thirst and registers show hours of attendance for all children.

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):

- minimise hazards to children from drains in the outdoor play area
- ensure accident records are consistently countersigned by parents and confidentiality of information is consistently maintained for individual children.

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 children with independent access to a good range of materials which allows them to explore ways of joining things together
- ensure mark making materials are available throughout the provision to encourage children to write for a purpose and further develop their writing skills.

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