

Head Start Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY365921 |
| Inspection date | 24 July 2008 |
| Inspector | Sarah Measures |

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| Setting Address | 54 Abington Grove, NORTHAMPTON, NN1 4QU |
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| Registered person | Head Start Day Nursery |
| Type of inspection | Integrated |
| Type of care | Full day care |

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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

The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Head Start Nursery School group opened under its current ownership in 2008. It is part of a small chain that contains three nurseries and is known as Head Start Day Nurseries Limited. The nursery operates from a Victorian house in the Abington area of Northampton. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. A maximum of 56 children from three months to under five years may attend the nursery at any one time. Children from the local community and further afield attend for a variety of sessions. There are currently 79 children on roll, 19 of these are in receipt of funded nursery education. The nursery supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties. It is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 all year except bank holidays. The nursery employs 13 members of staff, 12 of whom either hold or are working towards appropriate child care qualifications. One staff member is qualified to Level 4 and another is working towards this qualification. The setting 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 clean and hygienic setting. Their good health is promoted further because staff follow thorough cleaning routines, for example when they are changing children's nappies. Good continuity of care is provided for babies and younger children because staff work well with parents in order to understand their individual routines. Children enjoy good opportunities for outdoor play and choose from a variety of fun outdoor activities. Children learn to keep themselves healthy as staff talk to them about the importance of washing their hands before eating and about protecting themselves from the sun. Children enjoy varied and nutritionally balanced meals and snacks and good systems are in place to ensure any dietary needs are met. Children are well protected in the event of an accident because accidents are recorded with clear detail and signed by parents and most staff have training in first aid. Medication records occasionally lack clarity which means the welfare of the children is not fully promoted in this area.

Children in receipt of funded nursery education make good progress because staff carefully plan for this area of their development. Children choose from a range of fun and challenging equipment in order to encourage their physical skills and co-ordination. For example, they use various wheeled toys and park in a parking bay marked on the play ground and work their way around cones in order to negotiate space awareness and stop and start. Children also enjoy action songs that further promote their physical confidence and imagination.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe and secure setting that is well organised to meet their needs. Good quality toys and equipment are available across all areas of the nursery in order to effectively promote children's independence and ensure they feel welcome. Comprehensive risk assessments are completed across all aspects of the provision in order to ensure children are safe at all times. Staff have a good awareness of safety issues as they check areas before they are used and as they talk to the children about how to keep themselves safe.

Children are well protected in the event of a fire because regular fire drill practises are carried and clear emergency escape procedures are in place. Off site visits and specific activities are separately risk assessed in order to fully promote children's safety. Children are well safeguarded because many staff have received child protection training and show a good understanding of how to recognise the signs and symptoms of abuse and how to deal with any concerns. Good written information is available to staff so support them in this areas in order to further secure children's protection.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are settled and confident in their environment. They show a good sense of belonging that is effectively fostered by staff's warm and caring interactions. Staff show a very good understanding of child development as they skilfully involve children in discussions that develop their knowledge and understanding as they play. Young children are effectively encouraged to develop confidence as they explore with a range a tactile and sensory activities. Staff take

pride in the variety of opportunities and experiences that they plan for the children who choose from a full range of activities that promote all development areas in fun and interesting ways.

The quality of teaching and learning for children in receipt of funded nursery education is good. Staff observe the children and use their very good knowledge of the Foundation Stage to plan a balanced range of activities that help children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. Very good quality observations help to effectively identify the next steps in children's learning, however, these next steps are not closely linked to daily plans in order to ensure children have every opportunity fulfil their potential. Children are eager to participate in activities and demonstrate their interest and enjoyment as they sing, play and tell staff about their interests. Children cooperate well as they use their imagination and make sense of everyday situations and engage in very purposeful role play. For example, during the inspection children pretended to go on a picnic and demonstrated well extended imagination and vocabulary. Children develop some good friendships amongst themselves and are given good opportunities to share fairly.

Children show a keen interest in books and stories as they readily select books to share amongst themselves and with staff. They have good opportunities to learn to make marks before moving on to form letters correctly. A good range of pre writing equipment is always available to children within the writing area, although, opportunities to learn to write for a purpose are not fully developed. For example, children do not routinely access writing equipment during other activities available, such as, role play. Children count during every day situations and take part in a good selection of opportunities that help them to understand the meaning of number. For example, they enjoy a counting story called 'Don't count your chickens' and they have daily access to mathematical games, puzzles and practical maths activities.

Children enjoy good first hand experiences to develop their knowledge and understanding of the world as a variety of activities are planned for them under various themes of learning. For example, children have grown beans and looked at the life cycle of a frog. Children use a lap top, computer and various computerised toys to help them to use information and communication technology to support their play and learning. Children choose from a good variety of large and small construction activities as they design and make their own creations. They explore freely with texture and colour as they take part in different painting, collage and printing activities and enjoy jelly and corn flour play. Children learn to express themselves confidently and creatively as they sing songs, move to music and use musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued as individuals by staff who know them well. Children learn to value those that are different from themselves because they play in an environment that successfully represents a diverse society. For example, good quality toys and books that positively represent different cultures and disabilities are well integrated into the setting. Children's experiences are broadened further as staff include a range of different cultural and religious festivals when planning activities and events. The provision for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities is good because staff carry out good quality observations that are used to monitor progress with the help of parents and professionals.

Children are well behaved because they feel secure and are well stimulated. They learn responsible and considerate behaviours because staff act as good role models and because staff use careful explanations to help them understand the consequences of their actions. Staff

work to communicate effectively with parents in order to promote good continuity of children's care. As a result, parents clearly value the care offered to their children. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers for children in receipt of funded nursery education is good. Parents feel well informed of children's progress through written weekly reports and purposeful ongoing conversations with staff. Staff value parents contributions and comments and good systems are in place to help parents extend their children's learning at home.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Very good policies and procedures are in place to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and their ability to make a positive contribution. Very secure operational procedures ensure children are provided with good quality care and education. Staff are well aware of adult to child ratio requirements and communicate effectively between themselves in order to ensure these are in place. Children are grouped effectively across the nursery according to their needs and development stages and the key worker systems works well to help staff to get to know the children. Space, play resources and equipment are well organised to create a welcoming and stimulating setting for children. Robust vetting and recruitment procedures ensure staff are suitable to work with the children. Good recording systems are generally in place and used to promote children's welfare. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff are well motivated and committed to helping children make good progress towards the early learning goals. Very good systems of self reflection are deployed in order to secure improvement in the provision for children. Managers act as good role models to staff who are well supported and make up a well qualified team working with the children.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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. They complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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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):

- improve medication written records kept of all medicines given to children to ensure they are clear.

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):

- further develop planning to include clear links to the next steps in children's learning and to include regular opportunities for children to write for a purpose.

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