

Homestead Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	253205
Inspection date	02 July 2008
Inspector	Janice Walker
Setting Address	9 Mews Lane, Calverton, Nottingham, Nottinghamshire, NG14 6JW
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Registered person	Susan Mary Williams
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day 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 satisfactory. 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?

Homestead Day Nursery is a privately run provision. It opened in 1998 and operates from a converted farmhouse in the village of Calverton, Nottinghamshire. There are four areas within the nursery where children are cared for in small groups according to their ages and stages of development. All children have access to the enclosed outdoor play area which is part paved and part grass and has a separate area which contains fixed climbing apparatus.

The nursery is open each week day from 07:30 to 18:00. It is open for 51 weeks of the year, closing only for Bank Holidays and for the week between Christmas and the New Year. A maximum of 32 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 35 children on roll. Of these, 15 children receive funding for early education. Children attending come from the local and surrounding areas and attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. All children currently attending speak English as their first language.

The nursery employs 15 members of staff, a number of whom work on a part-time basis. Of these, 10 hold appropriate qualifications and two are working towards an early years

qualification. Three members of staff are working towards higher qualifications. The setting receives support from the early years support team from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's general good health is suitably promoted because they are cared for in a clean and comfortable environment. Cleaning routines which are effectively implemented by staff along with written policies regarding children who are unwell help to protect them from the risk of cross-infection. Children begin to gain an understanding of personal hygiene through daily routines which include hand washing before meals and after using the toilet. Older children engage in activities linked to topics to support their understanding of the importance of personal hygiene routines such as cleaning their teeth. Required documents to promote children's health and welfare, such as accident and medication records are all in place and contain appropriate details and systems are in place to monitor and review these in order to establish any possible concerns. There are effective systems in place to respond to children's individual health needs and staff demonstrate a clear understanding of these. Effective systems are also in place to enable staff to respond appropriately to accidents.

Children are able to respond to their own health needs if they are thirsty as they can access drinking water throughout the day. They are provided with regular, nutritionally balanced meals which are freshly cooked on site each day. They enjoy fresh fruit as part of most meals and planned activities help to support pre-school children's understanding of which foods are healthy and those which are less so. Babies' meals are mixed to the required consistency and parents of these younger children are provided with suitable alternatives if necessary, when weaning. Staff evidence a sound awareness of children's individual dietary needs as a result of discussions with parents and effective record keeping systems.

Babies have adequate space to move around and staff make good use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan a wide variety of indoor and outdoor activities to support their healthy growth and development. Staff working with babies understand the importance of the physical development of these children and actively encourage them to roll, crawl and move their bodies independently. These young children are able to eat, rest and sleep according to their individual needs and routines. All children enjoy lengthy, twice daily opportunities for fresh air and physical exercise because staff make good use of the adjoining outdoor play area and local facilities. Babies and younger children enjoy regular walks around the village in buggies as well as time in the nursery garden. Pre-school children access a variety of toys and activities to support their physical development. These children thoroughly enjoy their outdoor play times; they eagerly run into the garden and make their choices from the equipment provided. They throw, catch and kick balls and run in the open space, negotiating their way around obstacles. They climb and balance with developing ease, well supported by a good range of larger resources such as climbing frames and large tyres. They benefit from ongoing opportunities to develop their fine motor skills and use small tools with developing skill. For example, they attempt to fit their keys into locks, both real and imaginary, in the garden and practise manipulating their cutlery during mealtimes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are looked after in an environment which is welcoming and suitably maintained. Risk assessments along with daily check lists are in place to help minimise potential hazards. However, these checking systems are not yet fully comprehensive in ensuring that all potential hazards are identified and the risk of danger managed and minimised as best possible. Although staff individually take precautions to minimise possible risks regarding the security of the outdoor play area and use of the first floor windows, lack of clear guidance means that practice within the team is inconsistent. This means that children could be exposed to possible risks in the event of an unplanned or emergency situation or when staff are working in different areas.

Children are cared for in groups according to their age and level of ability which ensures that play materials are developmentally appropriate. Toys and equipment are maintained in appropriate condition and are presented in a way which enables children to access them freely and safely with adequate space in between to minimise the risk of trips and falls and ensuring appropriate levels of supervision. Children develop a good awareness of fire safety issues through regularly practising the emergency evacuation procedures. Through discussion, older children also learn how to use equipment such as scissors, correctly, and the possible dangers of these.

Children are kept safe on outings due to clear procedures that are understood by staff. They plan well to ensure that they can effectively supervise the children and respond appropriately in the event of an accident or emergency whilst outside of the building. Children's welfare is effectively promoted because staff are familiar with the setting's policies and procedures regarding child protection and relevant contact numbers are readily to hand if needed. They have a sound understanding of their responsibilities and the designated lead member of staff has attended relevant training to support this.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled. They enjoy warm relationships with staff, confidently seeking support and reassurance as needed and exuberantly sharing their excitement with them over the forthcoming nursery outing. Staff working with the youngest children provide high levels of support and attention; these children openly display their contentment as they snuggle closely for cuddles as they tire and share smiles and laughter during play. These children develop early communication skills as staff warmly interact with them during daily routines such as nappy changing times and play times. Staff know them well, recognising signs of tiredness and hunger and responding to these sensitively and appropriately. These children are making steady progress in their development as staff make effective use of their observations and assessments of each individual child to plan the next steps for their learning.

Staff working with the younger children are using the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan a wide range of activities to support their progress in all areas of their development. Babies and toddlers particularly enjoy sensory experiences by playing with different textures such as raw and cooked foods, paints, sand, water and play dough. They also enjoy some well-planned activities outside of the setting such as walks around the village and visits to the local library. Children in the 'Tweenie' room gleefully move and sound musical instruments to music and enjoy exploring with ice, watching in fascination as it slowly melts. They benefit from the good levels of support from staff, who readily and enthusiastically join in their play and learning.

However, the organisation of space and resources in this area offers minimal opportunities for children to select and make choices in their play. This limits their ability to build on their growing independence along with their learning. In addition, the systems for planning and delivering activities do not always ensure that all children have equal access to these.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Senior staff in the pre-school room have a secure knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and, through ongoing support and training, less experienced staff are gaining a sound understanding. Staff work well together to plan a broad range of activities which cover all areas of learning. Separate planning for outdoor times ensures that children participate in a wide variety of activities to support their physical development. Children's personal, social and emotional development is nurtured so that children feel confident, secure and ready to learn. They generally behave well as a result of the clear expectations set by staff which creates an atmosphere that enables them to become involved in the toys and activities on offer and share their views and ideas with staff and with each other.

Relevant teaching methods are used to support their learning. Children work as part of a larger group for stories or singing or alongside an adult to practise writing their name. Good emphasis is placed on free play. The recent reorganisation of the pre-school room supports their developing independence and they are beginning to select some of their own activities and explore at their own pace thus fostering their enjoyment and interest. This practice however, is not yet fully effective for all areas of learning with some areas, particularly the role play and creative areas, having only limited choices available. Practical experiences support children's mathematical development. They practise their counting skills as part of daily routines. For example, as they line up after outdoor play and, supported by staff, they count to higher numbers as they count the number of 'Lego' bricks in a tower. They begin to develop problem solving skills as they count the number of children present at snack time and work out how many cups they will need.

Children are developing a good awareness of the uses of information technology in everyday life, confidently and independently operating the computer. They talk with interest about their own lives and those of people they know; enthusiastically recalling outings, reminded by the readily accessible photographic story books staff have made. By listening to stories, participating in craft activities linked to different festivals, and exploring equipment which supports people with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, they are beginning to learn about the wider world. Children's progress is assessed on an ongoing basis and staff make effective use of these observations and assessments to support them in planning for the next steps of children's development.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are valued and respected. They have their individual needs met as staff gather relevant information from parents including details regarding their routines, likes and dislikes and use of comforters, at the outset to enable them to provide an appropriate level of care. Effective systems are in place to exchange information with parents on a regular basis regarding children's daily care and activities. Children are warmly welcomed by staff. Their artwork along with photographs of them at play are attractively shown on displays and they have their own identified space for coats and labels for items such as cups for snack time. This helps to develop

a sense of belonging and of their own self worth. There are effective systems in place to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Staff establish good communication with parents to ensure that they are all working towards the same identified goals and work creatively with other professionals to encourage children's progress. Children are developing their awareness of the local community through planned activities such as walks around the village. They are also beginning to develop an awareness of the wider world as the environment presents posters and play resources that reflect positive images of race, gender and disability.

Staff promote good behaviour through praise and reward. They treat the children respectfully, offering explanations to support requests and directions so that children understand why they need to follow these such as lining up to return indoors to ensure that everyone is present. Staff manage unwanted behaviour appropriately, taking into consideration their knowledge of individual children, parents' views along with advice sought from other relevant professionals. This helps all children to understand what is right and wrong and begin to understand that there are consequences to behaviour that is not acceptable. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for nursery education is good. Clear written information about the Foundation Stage is provided for parents once their children become funded so that they develop an awareness of the curriculum and how children's learning is supported in the setting. Children benefit from their parents having good opportunities to be involved in their learning, for example, by bringing in artefacts linked to topics. There are effective systems in place to share information about children's progress and development. Parents provide information on admission about their child which enables staff to build on what children can already know and can do. Keyworkers then share information informally with parents on an ongoing basis, encouraging parents to share their observations of their child's learning at home such as learning to ride a bike or learning to swim. Formal opportunities for sharing assessment records are provided at the biannual parents' evening to ensure that parents are informed about their child's progress.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who are suitably vetted and qualified. Suitable information is in place in the form of job descriptions and an induction programme to support them in undertaking their roles and responsibilities. The staff team demonstrate a commitment to improving the care and learning of children through their attendance at numerous meetings and courses over recent months and their proactive responses to advice offered by other relevant childcare professionals. Children's health, safety and well-being is promoted as all legally required documentation is in place along with children's records. These contain an appropriate level of information to ensure that staff can meet children's individual needs. Policies and procedures, which help to ensure the efficient and safe management of the provision, are in place along with systems to review these in order that they provide a sufficient level of detail to support staff in promoting the safety and welfare of children.

Children are relaxed and confident within the setting. They are well supervised and supported during activities due to the effective deployment of staff. Daily routines include a good balance of child- and adult-led activities for most children, promoting their confidence and independence along with their concentration and listening skills. They ensure that children have regular meals and can rest in line with home routines. Space is generally well organised; children are cared for in groups based on their ages and stages of development which means that they access

toys and activities appropriate to their levels of ability. They access a broad range of activities and good use is made of outdoor space. Staff make particularly good use of the local community to extend experiences for children.

Leadership and management of early education is satisfactory. The owner provides good daily support and is proactively working with relevant early years professionals to develop the effectiveness of the early education provision. Newly implemented systems are helping to monitor and evaluate the quality of the education being provided. Although, these are not yet fully effective in ensuring that best use is made of all equipment and resources to support children's learning. Staff demonstrate a commitment to improving the educational provision as they are attending training to continue to develop their knowledge of early years good practice and act upon advice from relevant early years professionals to improve outcomes for children. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection, the provider agreed to four actions regarding children's care. They agreed to ensure that required documentation regarding the administration of medication and the recording of accidents was maintained. Staff are now vigilant in recording this information and a new monitoring system has been introduced which helps ensure that children's health needs are being met. They also agreed to an action regarding safe use of the climbing frame. The area where this is sited is no longer freely accessible to the children which ensures that it's use is more effectively supervised. They agreed an action to develop their awareness and understanding of issues relating to equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice. The registered person has sought support from relevant professionals to increase staff's knowledge and ability to promote this within the setting and has obtained a variety of additional resources to enable them to do this. They also agreed an action to ensure children's required documentation regarding children's attendance and which staff have cared for them, is maintained. Staff now vigilant record this information and a new monitoring system has been introduced which helps ensure that the well-being of children is not compromised.

At the last inspection, the setting agreed to three actions with regard to nursery education. They agreed to improve the use of observation, assessment and teaching methods to ensure that learning intentions are matched to the children's next steps. The pre-school room has since been re-organised with the development of different areas of learning and new planning systems. Staff are now vigilantly undertaking observations of children and making effective use of these to plan for their next steps of development. They also agreed to develop systems to more effectively monitor and evaluate the nursery education provision and put measures in place to ensure improvements are maintained. An evaluation process is now in place although systems are not yet secure in continuing to identify its effectiveness for all children and this is carried forward from this inspection. They also agreed to ensure that all areas of the curriculum are equally covered. Newly implemented planning systems and the re-organisation of the pre-school room supports this, ensuring that children access a broad and varied curriculum.

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.

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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):

- continue to develop the risk assessment so that all risks, including the first floor window, the outdoor area and electrical equipment are assessed and appropriate action is taken to minimise these
- review the organisation of resources in the 'Tweenie' room so that they are made accessible to all and to enable children to make choices and use their initiative.

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):

- continue to develop the organisation and range of resources to further develop opportunities for children to make their own choices and to more freely explore and share their thoughts, ideas and feelings particularly through art, design and role play activities
- continue to develop the systems to monitor and evaluate the delivery of nursery education to identify its effectiveness for all children.

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