

Half Pint Nursery @ Westwood

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY362265
Inspection date	09 May 2008
Inspector	Anne Daly
Setting Address	Westwood Primary School, Beresford Close, Hadleigh, BENFLEET, Essex, SS7 2SU
Telephone number	01702 559 467
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Registered person	Half Pint Nursery
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?

Half Pint Nursery @ Westwood is one of two nurseries run by Half Pint Nursery. It opened in 2008 and operates from a purpose-built, demountable building within the grounds of Westwood County Primary School in Hadleigh, Essex. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery opens on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 09:05 until 13:00 and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 09:05 until 11:45 during school term times. All children share access to enclosed outdoor play areas.

There are currently 21 children from two to five years on roll. Of these, eight children receive funding for early education. Children from the local community and surrounding areas attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery can support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and also children who have English as a second language.

The nursery employs 10 staff. Of these, five hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a further early years qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority and from the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PSLA).

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children have daily opportunities to choose from a worthwhile range of both indoor and outdoor physical exercise to contribute to their good health. They have plenty of time to explore, experiment and refine their movements and actions when negotiating play equipment, for example, when using the activity cube and climbing the slide steps before sliding down. They are learning through using their senses when seeing things from different perspectives, including from the top of the activity cube or from inside a tunnel. Staff show a good understanding of the needs of younger children by providing them with appropriate activities and resources to support their physical and emotional development. Staff encourage children's independence by allowing them to freely access play provision from low-level shelves. Children have a very cosy book area where they may wish to have a cuddle from a staff member or to quietly look at books after physical activities.

Children understand simple good health and hygiene practices. They are able to manage their own personal care and to understand why poor hygiene may affect their health. They know that their hands may carry germs, which may make them ill if they go into their tummies. Younger children are protected from cross-infection during nappy changing by staff following sound procedures, including wearing disposable gloves and disinfecting the changing mat after each child. Staff members have attended relevant first aid training to ensure the provision of appropriate care for the children in an emergency. However, children are potentially not being fully protected in an emergency through staff not requesting parents' or carers' written agreement for them to seek any necessary emergency medical advice or treatment. Staff ensure that children are being fully protected from the effects of the sun when playing outside by not allowing them to play outside without wearing a sunhat.

Children stay healthy through staff demonstrating a good awareness of positive hygiene practices, including cleaning the tables with antibacterial sprays before allowing them to sit and eat their snacks and lunch. Children's dietary needs are well met through staff requesting and adhering to information from their parents and carers about any dietary requirements and allergies. Children are increasing their understanding of the importance of a healthy diet through staff rotating the choices of fresh fruits and vegetables. Staff explore children's personal likes and dislikes by allowing them to taste different foods, for example, carrots, cucumber, raisins, bananas and apples. Children are able to make decisions and to develop their independence by pouring their chosen drinks of either milk or water.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a secure, warm and welcoming environment, in which staff ensure that they have good access to a worthwhile range of toys and equipment to successfully promote their development. Staff undertake daily written checks to ensure that the premises and equipment remain safe for children's use. However, there remains some risks which may potentially compromise children's safety from the ranch-style guarding on the steps leading into the outdoor play area.

Bright posters and creative displays on the walls provide a welcoming atmosphere for children, families and visitors and develop children's sense of achievement by seeing their creations on

display. The classroom has been organised to promote free-flow play and to enable children to extend their own play and learning in a comfortable environment by the provision of child-height furniture and good accessible storage.

Children are learning about personal safety through regularly practising emergency evacuation procedures in any weathers to ensure that they know what to do if they have to evacuate the premises in an emergency. Before children play outside, they understand that they must wear their sunhats. Some children confidently tell staff that the sun will burn them and that their parents or carers have applied suncream to their faces and arms.

Children are being well protected through staff having a secure knowledge of child protection issues, recognising their roles and responsibilities and knowing how to implement their own and local child protection procedures. Children are being safeguarded from potential harm through the recording of all staff, children and visitors entering or leaving the nursery and detailed policies for the collection and non-collection of children.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

New children to the nursery are helped to settle through staff being very sensitive to their individual needs. All children are becoming familiar with the setting's routines and surroundings as evidenced by their happiness and eagerness to participate in the majority of activities. They are building on their natural curiosity as learners through playing and discovering new ideas and experiences when undertaking both planned and spontaneous activities. On a hot sunny day, staff place a blanket in the shade of parasols, before suggesting to children that they have a teddy bears' picnic. Children are therefore engaged in concentrated imaginative play when choosing and talking about the pretend food they will provide for their teddy bears.

Children investigate what happens when they pour water onto grass and are acquiring new knowledge and skills through watching what happens when they mix together paint of different colours. They are purposefully engaged throughout sessions, working and playing enthusiastically, either alone or with others. They are well behaved and are developing a clear awareness of right and wrong, for example, when describing how they must wait their turn to see the 'pretend doctor'. They respond to simple instructions, for example, when all stopping what they are doing when the whistle is blown three times. Staff consistently praise children's achievements to raise their self-esteem and to develop their confidence.

Children aged under three years are becoming confident learners through staff supporting their play. Staff implement the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are able to plan for children's next stages of development through a sound knowledge of their capabilities.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Senior staff have a good knowledge and understanding of how children learn and of the implications of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones. Staff gather information about children's starting points through observation of the children and from talking to their parents or carers. All staff are involved in deciding which themes are to be covered. Senior staff finalise the planning after discussion with staff to ensure the inclusion of all children's next steps. A key person system has recently been introduced, but senior staff are only now beginning to formally monitor junior staff to ensure written records of their observations and assessments for individual children. This will now

ensure that all children's next steps of learning will be identified through staff matching their observations to their expectations of individual children's stepping stones towards their learning goals.

The long, medium and short-term planning details the learning intentions in all areas of learning. Staff know the children well to ensure that the short-term planning details the main learning intentions for the week in all six areas of learning. The short-term planning and discussions prior to each session ensure that all staff are made aware of the purpose of the activities. The staff team is beginning to develop focussed activity plans linked to the learning intentions, the resources required, the vocabulary to be used and how the activities are to be adapted for the differing needs of individuals or groups of children. However, there are some missed opportunities in children's learning through these activity plans not being fully operational, for example, when children had no envelopes to post when playing in a pretend 'post office'. Staff work well as a team to deliver a focussed range of themed activities using a variety of teaching methods. They build trusting relationships with children, encouraging them to try new experiences and effectively managing their behaviour to ensure that they know how to be considerate to others, for example, by sitting quietly and waiting their turn to speak during group sessions. Children are able to learn at their own pace through staff providing a good balance between adult and child-led activities. Children with learning difficulties are involved in activities and staff support them to help them to gain the most from their different experiences. The environment is well organised through good use being made of both the inside and outside to ensure that children are able to independently access activities, to make choices about their learning and to have time to complete their activities.

Children are able to use initiative and to be self-sufficient within their learning by choosing activities and independently accessing resources. They are developing a good sense of belonging in an environment in which they can predict the shape of sessions, for example, by changing the pictures on the clock as time progresses through the morning.

Children are making sound progress in communication, language and literacy by sharing books, talking with staff and peers during circle times and listening to and joining in with stories and songs. Children are being introduced to the recognition of their names at circle times. More able children can confidently write their names correctly by forming letters, while others can mark-make when drawing and painting. Staff encourage children to talk about their pictures and introduce letter sounds and formations to them, for example, when encouraging them to draw 's' in the air when singing songs about the snake in the jungle. Staff introduce new language, such as 'fluffy', 'smaller' and 'bigger', to children when they are thoroughly enjoying visits from the 'Beat Babies'.

Children are developing their mathematical skills through a wide variety of enjoyable, practical activities, including stories, songs, puzzles, patterns and problem solving. They enjoy mathematical learning because it is made purposeful and fun by staff, including seeing connections and relationships when identifying shapes while playing with cones. They sort the cones into different coloured sets, lining them up to see of which they have more, with more able children confidently counting them. Staff introduce the words of 'lighter' and 'heavier' when children have sorted the cones into piles of different colours. They engage children in calculation through singing number songs, for example, when subtracting sausages as they 'go bang' in the frying pan. Children have many opportunities to explore volume when playing in water, while themed weeks encourage them to learn about different shapes and numbers, for example, rectangles and the number four.

Children enjoy a wide range of physical activities to help them in the development of their confidence and skills when using both large and small apparatus, tools and equipment. They have a varied range of small objects to handle, for example, 'small world toys' and construction sets. They can confidently manipulate materials and objects when picking up, arranging and threading beads. They thoroughly enjoy exploring with malleable materials when patting, poking and pinching the red play dough.

Children are beginning to make sense of the world around them by investigating and exploring through first hand experiences. They investigate objects and materials by using their senses, for example, when observing a turtle swimming around his tank. They plant nasturtium seeds, which they know that they have to water if they are to grow. They are using some information technology to support their learning and have regular opportunities to practise and refine their skills in role-play situations, for example, with telephones and cash registers.

Children have good opportunities to develop their own creativity and to explore a wide range of mediums and materials. They are able to use an increasing and varied range of resources, materials and tools to help them to express imagination when creating village wall collages. They have many opportunities to understand the purpose of tools, for example, why glue and a spreader are used to make items stick and that scissors can cut different materials into required shapes and sizes.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children enter the setting with confidence and feeling a sense of belonging through staff welcoming them by name. They are able to settle quickly into nursery life through the provision of good procedures to support their move from their home environment. Children and their parents or carers can visit before starting at the setting to familiarise themselves with staff and the environment. Once children start at the setting, parents or carers can stay as long as they wish until they and their children feel ready to say goodbye to each other. Staff deal very sensitively with toileting accidents by ensuring that they respect children's privacy and dignity.

The caring staff team show interest in what children are able to see and utilise everyday opportunities to develop children's knowledge of the world around them. Children show great interest when watching a large crane moving building materials and aeroplanes in the sky. They are able to use a variety of resources reflecting diversity, such as books and dolls, to help them appreciate and value each other's similarities and differences.

Staff work very well with parents and carers to support all children, including those with learning difficulties. They take time to gather information from parents or carers about each child's needs to ensure that they are meeting the needs all children attending the nursery. There is a named member of staff to co-ordinate the sharing of information from parents and carers to enable all staff to meet all children's individual needs and to plan for their ongoing developmental progress.

Parents and carers receive clear information about their children's care and education through a prospectus, newsletters and notice boards. However, the policies and procedures are not made freely available to parents and carers to ensure that they are fully informed about procedures that staff may take to ensure that the well-being of children is not compromised.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. They are learning social skills, such as sharing, taking turns and remembering to say 'please' and 'thank you'. They know how to behave in different situations, for example, at lunch time, they know that they can only eat what their parents or carers have provided and they are aware that they have to share the fruits and vegetables at snack time.

Children behave well and know what is expected of them. They are confident in the environment and in their relationships with staff. They are allowed time by staff to negotiate the sharing of the outside wheeled toys, with staff only 'interfering' if they are unable to settle their differences. Staff use plenty of descriptive praise and encouragement to raise children's confidence and self-esteem.

Partnership with parents and carers of children in receipt of funding for early years education is good. They speak very positively about their children's education and the informal meetings with staff to keep them informed of their children's next steps of learning. The activity plans are displayed on the notice board and they receive regular newsletters to inform them of the weekly topics. This ongoing communication enables them to become involved with their children's learning by helping their children to find items from home linked to the theme of the week. Staff are beginning to formalise children's developmental records, but have yet to provide opportunities for parents and carers to make written comments and observations about their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for by a sensitive, supportive and caring staff team. The registered providers ensure that staff have been vetted to fully safeguard children. New staff receive induction training to ensure that they know how the setting operates. Staff appraisals encourage their professional development by ensuring identification of their training needs for the benefit of children. Children have free-flow play for the majority of the session, when they are able to independently choose their area of learning to explore through play.

The majority of the required documentation is in place for the safe day-to-day management of the nursery and to promote children's welfare. However, parents and carers have not given their written consent for staff to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and the risk assessments require review to ensure that children's safety is not being compromised. There is an operational plan, but it has still to be effectively collated and lacks some of the necessary aspects to explain the operation of the setting for some staff and parents and carers.

The leadership and management is good. The registered providers have a clear vision for the nursery to ensure the provision of the best possible outcomes for children. They successfully help staff to work together to assist all children to make good progress towards the early learning goals. They have a strong commitment to improvement through the training and professional development of their new staff team, for example, by ensuring that staff complete developmental records linked to the stepping stones. They evaluate the effectiveness of the provision, working with staff to influence the quality of their teaching for the benefit of children's learning.

Overall the children's needs are met.

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, 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):

- request written permission from all parents or carers for seeking emergency medical advice or treatment
- take reasonable steps to ensure that hazards to children on the premises are minimised (this refers to the guarding on the outside steps)
- review and update the operational plan to ensure that it effectively explains how the setting runs and that it is made freely available to parents and carers.

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):

- ensure formalisation of observations and assessments of each child's achievements and match them to the expectations of the stepping stones towards their learning goals to ensure identification of their next steps of learning
- provide further opportunities for parents and carers to make written comments and observations about their children's targeted next steps of learning.

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