



Hook Village Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507936
Inspection date	21 September 2005
Inspector	Deborah Jaqueline Newbury
Setting Address	Ravenscroft, Hook, Hampshire, RG27 9NN
Telephone number	01256 761154
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Registered person	Hook Village 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

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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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The quality and standards of the nursery education are inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hook Village Nursery is a committee run group, which opened in 1988. It operates from a room in the Hook Community Centre and is close to the village centre. It has an enclosed garden, and regularly uses the public play area, adjacent courts and playing fields, directly across the road. The nursery serves the local area.

The nursery is registered to accept a maximum of 18 children under 5 years of age at any one time. It accepts children from 2 years 8 months of age. There are currently 26 children from 2 to under 4 years on roll. This includes 18 children who are in receipt of nursery education funding. Children attend for a variety of sessions, half or full days.

Currently, there are no children with special needs, but the nursery supports 2 children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens Monday to Friday during school term time only. Sessions are from 09.00 to 11.30 (or 12.30 if staying for lunch), and from 12.30 to 15.00. Children bring their own packed lunches if they are staying all day or for the morning session followed by lunch.

There are 5 part-time members of staff who work with the children. The manager is working towards an NVQ Level 3 in Early Years, Education and Childcare and one member of staff has a level 3 and level 4 equivalent qualification. Two members of staff are currently on appropriate training programmes. The setting attends the local authority cluster meetings. Staff also receive support and advice from the Area Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator, the Bi-lingual Support Service, and the Pre-school Learning Alliance (PLA) development worker.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is inadequate.

Arrangements to minimise the spread of infection and prevent cross contamination within the nursery are inadequate. Children know that they need to wash their hands after visiting the toilet, after painting and before they eat lunch. Some display understanding of the reasons for this as they talk about germs going in their mouths if they do not wash their hands. Staff do not, however, ensure that children wash their hands prior to eating at snack time despite the fact that many of them play outside in the garden beforehand. This may mean that children receive mixed messages about the importance of washing their hands to maintain good health. Staff do not adopt a consistent approach in following good hygiene practices. Those children who stay for lunch eat at tables that are cleaned before they sit down to eat. At snack time, however, staff clean the table on which they place drinks, but they do not clean the tables where children sit. Staff respond well to provide support and reassurance for a child who is sick during the session but do not take any additional precautions to limit the possibility of the spread of infection for all children, nor do they contact the parent to explain what has happened.

Children have a choice of milk or water at snack time although they do not have free access to water at all times. All children attempt to pour their drinks independently and they cope with this well. Snack time food items vary from day to day. Children have a variety of items including some healthy options such as fruit and carrot sticks, which helps them begin to gain awareness of healthy eating. However, a scrutiny of food records maintained by the nursery shows that there are some weeks where

children have nothing healthy to eat at all. This devalues its efforts to promote good nutrition and again, means that children receive mixed messages. Children staying for lunch bring a packed lunch from home. Children's lunch boxes are not refrigerated and it is left to parents whether they choose to include an ice pack or send food in an insulated bag. There are no monitoring procedures in place to ensure that the storage of food is safe.

Staff make sure that they seek written information from parents about children's dietary needs.

Children chatter amongst themselves as they eat snacks and meals together at the table. Staff do not, however, sit with children during these times to further enhance their communication and social skills or, in the case of lunch time, to encourage the eating of healthier items first and ensure that children do not share food.

Children like being outside in the fresh air and many children opt to play in the garden. They dig in the sandpit, filling moulds with sand and turning them out, and competently use the trikes and cars available to them. They enjoy being active especially in the nearby play park which offers them good opportunities to explore an interesting and appealing range of outdoor play equipment. They have lots of fun and freely investigate everything it has to offer.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel confident and secure in premises where staff undertake risk assessments and make use of appropriate safety measures to keep them safe. The environment is made welcoming by means of posters and wall displays of children's work. The organisation of space and the placement of furniture and other equipment enables children to move around safely and independently. They have sufficient space to sit and play in comfort and they move freely and unhindered from the nursery room to the outside play area. Suitable security and fire safety precautions contribute to children's overall safety. Staff control access to the premises and children regularly practice fire drills to develop their awareness of the procedure to follow should it be necessary to evacuate the premises.

Children practice crossing the road outside the community centre on their way to the park and staff encourage them to stop and look to see it is safe to cross. However, some staff do not always ensure that they practice road safety in the most appropriate places. For example, crossing in front of a parked vehicle means that children cannot see if there are any cars coming. Staff remind them not to run indoors and they suggest that they do not wear cloaks from the dressing up box whilst riding the trikes in case these get caught in the pedals. Children therefore begin to develop some awareness of potential dangers and how to keep themselves safe. Staff miss some opportunities though to reinforce children's understanding of safety issues. They ask children not to climb on the gate at the park but do not explain the reasons why this is not a good idea and they do not outline the rules for staying safe before they leave the building, despite the presence of new children.

Children use a variety of appropriate furniture, equipment and play materials which are of good condition. Staff regularly check items to ensure they are safe and ready for children to use.

Most staff are aware of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and neglect and the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child. Three members of the staff team have attended child protection training and another member of staff is due to attend this in the near future. The setting informs parents of its responsibility to safeguard children and displays relevant child protection information on the noticeboard.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, and display confidence, both within the nursery environment, with their peers and with the adults caring for them. Most children enter the nursery well and separate from their parents without difficulty. They are self-motivated, and make their own decisions about what they do from the range of resources and activities provided for them. They remain occupied during the free play part of the session and enjoy themselves, in particular when they are outside in the garden and as they engage in imaginative play. They have the confidence to express their needs and know the names of the adults caring for them. Staff are kind and caring. They are keen to ensure that children settle well and have an enjoyable time at the nursery. They form good relationships with children which means that children are happy and secure. Children are becoming independent in self-care skills. They help themselves to tissues, wipe their noses and dispose of the soiled tissues in the bin. Staff are not yet using the Birth to Three framework of good practice to support their planning of appropriate activities for children under three years of age.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is inadequate. Staff lack sufficient understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and their role in supporting children's learning across all areas of the curriculum. They supervise children but consistently miss opportunities to challenge children effectively. Written plans are in place but these contain no information about the purpose of activities or the learning outcome and thus, lack sufficient detail to help staff. Children are developing independence, for example as they pour out their own drinks at snacktime and put on their coats ready for going to the park. They are aware of their own needs and have the confidence to express these. They concentrate well on self chosen activities, such as when they engage in imaginative play with others. They mostly behave well although some children become restless when they have to sit for long periods and when they are unable to see, for example at "Show and Tell" time. Staff fail to address these situations. Children are familiar with the daily routine and are able to talk about what is going to happen next, for example after they have tidied up. They chat freely amongst themselves. Children recognise their written names easily when they are shown their name cards at Registration time, but they are not challenged further. They have access to pencils and paper for mark making although there are

no other easily accessible resources to stimulate their interest. They do not explore writing for a purpose and staff consistently miss opportunities to encourage this, for example, during the course of children's imaginative play or to encourage them to attempt to name their own work. All children select a book to look at over snack time. They handle books carefully but receive no adult support during this time to foster their interest. Children have a repertoire of songs. Most children have the confidence to stand up in front of the group and independently sing a song of their own choice.

Children help count the number of children present at each session with the assistance of a member of staff but they have insufficient opportunity at other times to engage in problem solving activities or consolidate their developing mathematical skills as staff do not use the opportunities that arise during the session to encourage this. Children enjoy imaginative play. They freely explore the content of the dressing up boxes in the role play area, make their own selections of items, dress up as different characters and act out stories with others. Children like looking at themselves in the mirror once they are dressed up. Staff provide help for those children who need assistance in putting things on and they acknowledge children's comments as they talk about who they are pretending to be. However, they do nothing further to enhance their play or to extend their thinking, for example through the provision of additional resources or effective questioning techniques. Children demonstrate a good sense of spatial awareness as they move around the nursery premises and when they are in the park. They are physically adventurous and display good skills as they independently climb, slide, bounce, and jump with confidence. They build with bricks and put the train track together. Children explore the properties of damp sand as they fill sand moulds and tip these out. They have good opportunities to explore their local environment and gain a sense of place as they regularly go out for walks, and visit different places in the village. Children show interest in the world around them, for example, as they collect leaves and twigs from the outside play area and bring them indoors to show staff. However, a lack of adult input means that they miss opportunities to build on children's curiosity and exploit the learning potential. Children use the computer on occasions and participate in cold cookery activities such as making sandwiches. They have insufficient opportunity to express their own ideas through free creativity. Their access to a range of craft resources is restricted to those provided by staff and planned art and craft activities can be very directed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have a positive attitude and display good levels of confidence, both within the environment and with their carers. They handle resources with care and help to tidy up. They are familiar with the setting's use of a timer and understand that when the sand runs through, it is time to clear away. They behave generally very well, sharing and taking turns, for example, as they wait patiently for their turn to jump on the trampoline at the park. The behaviour of some children, however, does deteriorate at snacktime when they sit for long periods of time and they become restless and bored. Staff support children's self-esteem by means of praise and encouragement. However, on occasions, children's sense of achievement, for

example, when they stand up and sing by themselves in front of the group, is not as well nurtured as it could be. Children get on well together. They play co-operatively and form friendships with one another.

The setting's open door policy benefits all children and their parents in ensuring that children settle well and develop a sense of security. Children who are due to start at the nursery may visit with their parents or carers as and when they wish without prior notice. Parents or carers of new children are welcome to stay to help them settle. Staff encourage children who have been at the nursery for some time to help new children and their parents "enjoy themselves." Parents can help during sessions, share their skills and interests or join the management committee and share in the running of the nursery if they so wish. The nursery also organises several family events throughout the year which further builds the links between children, their families and the nursery. Staff and parents enjoy warm and friendly relationships. Parents receive relevant information about the nursery and its provision. They are invited to complete a profile on their children when they first start at the nursery to help staff get to know the children and ensure that they are aware of their individual needs. Staff and parents exchange information informally.

The partnership with parents of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents have access to information about the Foundation Stage Curriculum and they are informed about the assessment records staff keep on their children. They can view these when they wish although, as most staff keep their keyworker files at home, they may not always be immediately available. The display of plans ensures that they know what topics their children are learning about and any special events, such as outings. Plans do not however include learning outcomes to ensure that they know what the purpose of activities is and thus, enable them to further support their children's learning at home.

Children enjoy good opportunities to explore their local community as they regularly go out for walks and visit different places in the village such as the school and the church. The setting has a selection of different resources that reflect different aspects of diversity to help children gain understanding of the wider world in which we live. Children access those items that staff set out for them each day. They learn about different festivals as staff introduce a range of celebrations to them throughout the year. There are procedures in place to support children with special needs although currently, there is no named member of staff who has taken on the role of Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator.

The setting fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Required documentation and other records which relate to children's safety and well-being and which contribute to the overall organisation of the provision are in place. However, procedures for ensuring good hygiene, reducing the potential for the spread of infection for all children and the promotion of healthy eating are not sufficiently robust. Some policies and procedures do not work in practice to promote

children's good health.

All staff working at the nursery are vetted and they take advantage of training opportunities. They have attended different workshops and two members of staff are due to commence NVQ Level 2 training. However, deployment of staff is inefficient as is their use of time. Children spend too long sitting, for example at snack time, and, as a result, some become frustrated and their behaviour deteriorates.

A new committee was elected at the end of the summer term following the nursery's annual general meeting and the setting was successful in its application for re-accreditation with the Pre-school Learning Alliance in October 2004.

Leadership and management are inadequate. The nursery is ineffective in monitoring its provision for nursery education to ensure that it meets the needs of the children present. Missed opportunities to extend children's thinking through involvement and questioning techniques and a lack of a variety of teaching methods limits children's potential to develop. Staff receive inadequate direction to support them and there is a lack of monitoring to ensure that the needs of children are met.

The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection three recommendations were made. These related to some aspects of documentation with regard to the setting's day care activities and the development of comprehensive activity plans for all areas of the Foundation Stage curriculum. The nursery was also requested to conduct risk assessments of outside areas prior to allowing children to access these.

A scrutiny of documentation shows that parents give their prior written consent for staff to seek emergency medical advice or treatment and they now also sign the medication record to acknowledge the entry. Children regularly visit the nearby park. Staff undertake a safety check of the area before children go outside. They are aware of potential hazards and what to look for and they keep a written record of checks undertaken. Staff remain generally observant and make a point of picking up and disposing of things they notice whilst children are in the park. These actions further consolidate the children's health care records within the setting and contribute to children's safety.

Insufficient progress has been made with regard to the development of activity plans for all areas of the Foundation Stage. It is not clear from available documentation what the learning outcome of adult planned activities is and there is no extension planned for, in particular to meet the needs of more able children. A lack of knowledge and understanding of the foundation stage curriculum impacts adversely on children's learning and restricts their potential to progress.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- improve existing procedures to ensure good hygiene and minimise the potential for the spread of infection for all children
- develop and instigate procedures to monitor the provision of snacktime foods to ensure greater balance of healthy options
- implement monitoring procedures to ensure the effective deployment of staff at all times and improve the organisation of some aspects of the session to meet children's needs

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- develop staff's understanding of the Early Learning Goals and their role in supporting children's learning across all areas of the curriculum
- continue the development and use of planning, observation and assessment procedures
- implement a monitoring system to evaluate the quality of teaching and children's learning.

These actions are set out in a **notice of action to improve** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website:
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