



Valley Farm Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	254332
Inspection date	29 November 2005
Inspector	Pauline Margaret Todd
Setting Address	Valley Farm, Sharrington, HOLT, Norfolk, NR24 2PE
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Registered person	Claire Elizabeth Rivett
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?

Valley Farm Nursery School is a well established privately owned facility and operates from 2 rooms in a farmhouse. It is situated in the rural village of Sharrington, Norfolk, close to the market town of Holt. A maximum of 13 children may attend the nursery school at any one time. It is open Tuesday to Friday from 9.00 until 15.00 during term time. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 21 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 18

children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area.

The nursery school has 3 staff members and 2 hold appropriate early years qualifications. The other member of staff is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through everyday routines and know why they wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating. Staff remind children to dispose of their tissues in the bin and to cover their mouths when coughing to help prevent the spread of colds. Children show an awareness of how to keep themselves healthy, for example, when discussing how to keep warm in winter they say, 'cuddle up with a blanket on the sofa' 'wear warm clothes' 'go indoors'. Staff keep up to date with hygiene procedures, however, the current bathroom arrangements do not ensure children wash their hands properly and have privacy when using the toilet. Some areas of the premises are not well maintained and the carpet in the main school room is dirty. Children's health details and medical requirements are adequately recorded to maintain their good health, for example, eczema, and discussions are held with parents about infectious diseases such as chickenpox. Staff follow effective systems which enable children who are unwell to be cared for appropriately and have current first aid knowledge to ensure children's well-being should accidents occur.

Children's growth and development are satisfactorily promoted because they eat food in adequate quantities. They have snacks of plain biscuits and fruit and bring packed lunches which encourage them to eat healthily. Children do not access water independently to fulfil their own needs when they are thirsty and staff do not offer them drinks throughout the day to ensure they have sufficient amounts to keep them healthy.

Children benefit immensely from using the garden to encourage them to use their bodies and be active, for example, they run around and climb trees. Children demonstrate good control, coordination and spatial awareness when pedalling bikes, using the slide, and hoops. They develop good manipulative skills through everyday activities, for example, they use scissors to cut out pictures in magazines, spatulas to spread glue and use rolling pins with the playdough.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in premises that are warm and welcoming with colourful displays on the walls which add interest to the surroundings. The layout of the playrooms offers a broad range of activities but areas look cluttered and rest facilities and books are positioned in the corridor which does not make the environment

accessible to meet the children's needs. Children are kept safe because staff give the children good supervision and are vigilant, for example, they remind them how to carry scissors and chairs safely. Risk assessments are undertaken to reduce potential hazards indoors and outside and staff have a satisfactory understanding of their roles to ensure children's safety in an emergency. Effective procedures regarding entry to the premises keep staff and children secure.

Children have access to a range of developmentally appropriate resources from low storage units and containers to encourage choice and self-selection, for example, puzzles, construction and wooden blocks. The toys and play equipment are in a satisfactory condition and there is sufficient furniture for children to be able to play and eat together.

Children's welfare is satisfactorily safeguarded by staff having an awareness of child protection procedures and an understanding of their responsibilities towards the children in their care. They have attended recent training to update their knowledge.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children play happily and thoroughly enjoy themselves at the setting. They have a great deal of fun with the staff and follow an appropriate routine that allows them time to be active and time to play and develop their capabilities independently, for example, puzzles, threading, computer. They undertake activities requiring support from staff such as making Christmas cards and writing letters. Children are building up close relationships with staff who are friendly, very caring and give children lots of support to help develop their confidence. They position themselves at the child's level and maintain good eye contact to raise children's self-esteem.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff constantly talk and listen to the children and ask them questions to encourage children to think and work things out for themselves, for example, 'how can we make it into treasure?' Staff help children make excellent progress towards the early learning goals and provide children with sufficient challenges to help them learn new skills and increase their knowledge and understanding in all areas of learning. Children feel at ease, secure in the setting and develop a positive sense of themselves. They arrive at the setting keen to learn, behave well and play co-operatively, for example, when using the blocks and sand. Some friendships are being formed and children tell each other 'you are my friend'. They talk about their families as they play and say, 'I have a baby brother called Jamie'. They persist with their activities, for example, when completing puzzles and pressing the playdough through a tube. Children have time and opportunity to develop and practise all four elements of speaking, listening, reading and writing. Children communicate very well. They speak clearly and listen to staff and other children, for example, when practising the Nativity play. Children recognise their name cards on arrival, enjoy listening to stories and show an interest in the illustrations. They do not often use books independently. There is good use of rhyming and children enjoy saying words that rhyme with their names. Children show

an interest in print in the environment and sound out the word 'radiator'. They understand the concept of a word and can distinguish sounds, for example, they say please starts with 'p'. They have many opportunities to draw and more-able can write their own names using correctly formed letters. Children use numbers well during their everyday routines, for example, they count eight children present, make two eyes for Father Christmas, and say they need two more chairs for their role play activity. There are good opportunities for children to sort, use space, shape and measure. Children have an interesting environment in which to learn about nature and living things, for example, they watch chicks hatch and plant flowers. Children investigate materials such as sand, shaving foam and dough. Staff explain how things work, for example, ink pens and children competently use the pump action container to help themselves to glue. Children have free use of the computer which they use confidently and independently. Children play freely and express themselves in their own way, explore colour, texture and 3D through use of junk modelling, collage, painting and music. Children use their imagination well in role play and during their activities, for example, dressing up, making treasure by wrapping objects in tin foil which they say they are 'going to bury in the garden'. They wrap their dolls in a blanket and place them on a stool to sleep while they use the computer.

Staff use planning to provide a variety of activities that promote children's learning and understanding but plans do not clearly show how the activity is adapted or extended to suit all children and the open-ended questions to be asked. Children's achievements are identified to help them move to the next stage in their learning by staff undertaking regular observations.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children develop good self-esteem and confidence because the staff treat them with respect and give them regular praise and encouragement, for example, children receive stars on their hands for being kind and helpful. The staff know the children well and details of their specific needs are recorded to make sure children are cared for according to parents' wishes, for example, the use of comforters. Children with special needs are welcomed into the setting and would be given appropriate support to promote their welfare and development. Children are helped to develop a positive attitude to others by using play equipment which reflects positive images of race and culture and by celebrating festivals. This approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Children benefit from staff adopting a consistent and positive approach to the management of their behaviour which means they are well behaved and are aware of what is right and wrong.

The quality of the partnership with parents and carers is good. Children's well-being is promoted by the positive relationships which have developed between staff and their parents and carers. There is a useful exchange of information at the beginning and end of each day. Parents receive sufficient basic details about the setting when they first join and gain good information about the early learning goals through posters, children's work displayed in the play room and having discussions with staff. They feel well informed about their child's progress through attending parents'

evenings and looking at their child's observation record.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery school follows appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure that staff are suitable to provide care for children. The staff work very well together to promote children's welfare and development and undertake regular training to develop their skills. Certificates and posters are displayed in the entrance to give reassurance to parents about the running of the setting. Appropriate documents are available and stored confidentially to ensure the safe running of the provision. There is a satisfactory registration system available to ensure an accurate record of attendance is maintained to keep children safe.

The quality of leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The providers have an effective system to review what they do, identify strengths, weaknesses and the areas for improvement which ensure all children make good progress.

Overall, the needs of the children attending are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the provider was asked to improve children's access to activities and the opportunities for them to use their imagination and build and design, the arrangements for using the bathroom and the positioning of the books. The provider has taken steps to develop children's enjoyment and achievements but is still in the process of improving the layout and the use of the bathroom to promote children's good health.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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

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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):

- improve the cleanliness of the premises and the bathroom arrangements to ensure privacy and good standards of hygiene and encourage children to help themselves to water during the day to ensure they drink sufficient amounts to keep them healthy
- improve the layout of the main playroom and provide children with a quiet, comfortably area where they can rest, play quietly, sleep or look at books.

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):

- develop planning to include questions to be asked and how the activity will be adapted for individual children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk