



Homeland Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY307051
Inspection date	11 October 2005
Inspector	Chris Scully
Setting Address	Navigation Road, Altrincham, Cheshire, WA14 1LJ
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Registered person	Atherton House Nurseries Ltd
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 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?

Homeland Day Nursery is one of three owned by Atherton House Nurseries Limited and opened in 2005. It operates from a converted house in Altrincham, Cheshire. A maximum of 45 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 till 17.45 all year round. All children share access to a secure outdoor play area.

There are currently 68 children on roll from 0 to 5 years. Of these, 14 children receive

funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs 20 staff. Of these, 11 including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are five staff working towards a qualification. The nursery follows the Montessori teaching methods with children and three staff, including the registered provider, hold the Diploma in Montessori Teaching. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children effectively learn about personal hygiene through topic work and daily routines. Children talk about germs and understand the need to wash their hands before eating. Older children show an understanding of good personal hygiene practices as they visit the toilet independently and wash their hands. This means children's independence in self care is promoted well in practice. However, the position of toilet areas on the first floor does not maintain children's privacy.

Children are kept healthy due to hygienic nappy changing practices, clear recording systems for accidents and medicine administrations, although, consents for medication are not always signed by parents. Children sleep or rest according to their individual needs, all have their own cot or pram and bedding which is appropriately laundered to reduce the risk of cross infection. Good adult support enables children to gain an understanding of staying healthy such as covering their mouths when coughing to prevent the risk of cross infection, this is supported well in practice by the sick children policy.

Children are provided with a range of healthy, nutritious, home cooked meals and snacks which effectively meet their individual dietary needs. The cook and staff are very well informed of their specific needs and meet these well in practice. Older children have free access to drinking water to keep themselves refreshed, however, the opportunities for younger children are limited, though staff offer regular drinks through out the day. The dietary needs of babies are met well by staff who use information gained from the parents effectively to ensure their needs are met. Babies are held whilst being fed their bottle and have good support at meal times to ensure continuity of care.

Children have good opportunities to develop their physical skills. They enjoy a range of activities within the well resourced and interesting outdoor area where they can explore and test their skills. Children are skilled at using wheeled toys and whiz around the paved areas with control. They are able to climb under and through using various climbing frames. Children manipulate play dough well using their hands and a range of tools. They use a range of small resources, such as scissors with increasing control.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a bright, warm and well-maintained environment which means children can play and explore their surroundings in safety and comfort. They have access to a well-equipped library room which is a home from home environment, here they self select books to read or watch a video in comfort. Children have access to a range of age-appropriate resources, however, the organisation of these on the ground floor does not enable children to freely self select additional toys and play equipment. The setting has an extensive range of Montessori equipment for older children which is used effectively to promote their learning, independence and life skills. Children are frequently engaged in a range of purposeful play and leaning experiences. Clear systems and procedures are in place to maintain the resources and equipment to ensure the children's safety.

The risk of accidental injury is minimised in the organised environment which has good safety and security precautions in place, such as the installation of CCTV to prevent unwanted visitors gaining access to the premises and password systems for the collection of children. Effective risk assessments are carried out regularly by the designated health and safety officer which enhances the children's safety both indoors and outside. Children are encouraged to keep themselves safe, for example, not running down the ramp outside and walking carefully down the stairs.

Staff have a secure knowledge of child protection issues, this is supported by most staff attending child protection training which enables them to keep children safe from harm. The child protection policy is detailed and gives clear information on action to be taken if staff have concerns. However, this does not clearly identify the action to be taken if an allegation is made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled, they enter their rooms eagerly and are keen to seek out their friends. Most children are confident to choose where and with whom they wish to play. Staff provide a range of interesting activities to children although, the use of the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage for younger children is inappropriate and means some activities are too structured. Staff have identified this and are in the process of implementing the Birth to three matters framework to enhance the play and learning opportunities provided for children under 3 years.

Care of babies is good. Staff are knowledgeable about the babies in their care and provide appropriate support and learning experiences. Babies are confident to explore their surroundings and to engage the attention of others in their play. For example one baby was keen to share her toys in order to access the laptop. Staff spend considerable amounts of time talking, listening and interacting with all children, which significantly enhances their learning opportunities. Staff regularly introduce new words to children to prompt discussions and extend their vocabulary such as when discussing the weather, asking do we need an umbrella?

Children feel safe and secure in their environment due to the development of warm, caring relationships with staff. Staff provide children with lots of praise and encouragement which effectively fosters their confidence and self-esteem. Older children show good levels of independence as they self select their own resources from accessible child height storage systems. However, this is limited for younger children due to the use of high shelving systems. Children move freely and safely around the setting to access various areas, such as the role play room and library and are often engaged in play and learning experiences.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff use their skills well to link the Curriculum Guidance for the Foundation Stage and Montessori teaching methods to provide an interesting range of activities and learning experiences to children. Plans are created that outline the learning objectives for each topic and activities children will be participating in, these are supported by regular assessments of children's progress. However, the plans and assessments do not effectively identify the next steps in the children's learning or evaluate how well the learning objectives have been met. Subsequently, there are missed opportunities to enhance children's learning.

Staff pitch questions at the right level for each child such as, what sound does the letter make?, this successfully enables the child to sound out the word to identify the correct letter. The effective use of questioning encourages children to think, communicate and helps them to move forward in their learning. Staff use the Montessori teaching methods well to provide a range of learning opportunities for children. Children are engaged in a range of practical learning experiences that actively engage their interest, such as using the sensory globes to identify the land and sea, and knob cylinders to improve hand eye co-ordination, size and shape.

Children are interested and keen learners who enjoy new learning opportunities, such as playing Kim's game and looking at new topics. They are confident to self select their own resources and to choose where to play. Children particularly enjoy growing vegetables in the garden, here they collect apples from the tree, use new tools and skills, bake apple pies and learn the importance of being healthy. Children are supportive of their peers and help them to achieve their goals, for example, one child helps another to complete his jigsaw.

Children develop an understanding of different cultures and beliefs through planned activities, such as Black History Month where they are looking at Africa. Children learn how others live and how they grow their own food. This means children learn to have a positive attitude to others. Children enjoy a range of creative activities, for example making pictures out of wheat. However the excessive use of templates and work sheets hinders children's creativity and free expression. They enjoy listening to an extensive range of music and playing along with musical instruments, for example, when looking at the rainforest they recreate the sounds of the forest.

Children use mathematical language well to describe size and shape, for example, they describe the smallest block as being teeny weenie. They are confident to recognise a range of shapes and numerals within the environment and count

confidently to 10 and beyond. They learn about weight through cooking activities and when using Montessori resources.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled at the nursery. Staff build warm, caring relationships with the children that enable them to feel safe and secure. Children are confident to seek reassurance from staff when feeling insecure, such as when visitors are in their room. Clear systems are in place to support new children, including settling in visits. Transitions to new rooms are handled effectively to help children settle into their new environment and routines. This means they settle quickly and feel secure. Staff obtain valuable information from the parents to ensure children's individual needs are met well.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered. Older children enjoy a range of activities that enable them to learn about the wider world, such as festivals and develop a positive attitude to others. However, younger children have limited access to resources and practical activities that help them to understand diversity and the wider world. Children are consistently well behaved, they share resources well and understand the appropriate rules and boundaries to keep themselves safe. Children have a sense of belonging, they are confident to find their coat pegs and drawers in which to place their work, this is supported by the effective use of picture and name cards. They are familiar with their daily routines and have built significant relationships with their peers and staff.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Parents are kept well informed of their child's progress through regular open evenings and daily discussions with the staff. Clear communication systems keep the parents informed of the setting and the provision. This includes regular newsletters, parents forums and the notice boards outside each room. The partnership with parents is valued by the staff and enhances the care, learning and play opportunities provided to children.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are settled in the organised environment, where they are able to move freely around their rooms and access additional areas, such as the role play and library. Children enter the nursery happily and are keen to meet up with their friends. Good systems are in place to ensure children are cared for by suitable adults who are effectively inducted. All legally required documentation is in place and is well maintained, however parents do not always sign to give consent for medication. All policies and procedures are in place and are effectively shared with the parents although the child protection policy does not include clear information regarding allegations made against staff.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The leadership of the setting

contributes to the ongoing improvement of the children's care, learning and play opportunities. They ensure staff attend appropriate training courses to further enhance the play and learning opportunities provided, such as the introduction of the Birth to three matters framework. Staff are keen to extend their skills and knowledge and frequently attend courses and team meetings out of hours and at weekends. Effective systems ensure all staff are fully aware of their roles and responsibilities for children's health, welfare, safety and learning. Overall, the needs of all the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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):

- improve the resources and range of practical activities to enable children to learn about diversity and the wider world
- review the organisation of rooms and accessibility of resources to younger children to enhance their choice and independence
- ensure parents sign to give consent on each occasion medication is to be administered, and revise the child protection policy to include information on action to be taken if an allegation is made against staff

- enhance children's privacy when using the bathrooms on the first floor

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 assessments clearly identify the next steps for children and are used to evaluate and inform future plans
- improve the opportunities for children to write for a purpose, and revise the use of templates and worksheets.

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