



## Headstart Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY217824
<b>Inspection date</b>	24 November 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Christine Bond / Katherine Powell
<b>Setting Address</b>	South Road, Bourne, Lincolnshire, PE10 9LU
<b>Telephone number</b>	01778 393925
<b>E-mail</b>	ssjenkin@aol.com
<b>Registered person</b>	Diane Smith & Susan Jenkins
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Headstart Nursery is a privately run provision which has been operating since 1994. It is one of a group of four nurseries in Lincolnshire. The nursery operates from a two storey building situated within a short walking distance of Bourne town centre. There is an enclosed outdoor play area attached to the premises. The nursery serves the semi-rural community and surrounding villages.

A maximum of 80 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is

open each weekday from 07:30 until 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year, closing for all public holidays and Christmas week. There are currently 114 children from 6 months to 11 years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for nursery education.

The nursery employs twelve members of staff. Ten of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. Two staff are working towards a qualification. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for in a clean and generally hygienic environment. Appropriate health and hygiene procedures are in place, however, cleaning routines of sleeping equipment for toddlers are not rigorously implemented. As a result, children are not fully protected from the possible risk of cross infection. Children are developing an awareness of the need for personal hygiene through daily routines, for example by consistently washing their hands before eating and after using the toilet. Most staff have up to date knowledge of first aid practices which enables them to deal with children's health needs appropriately. Clear systems are in place to support the administration of medicines and the recording of accidents, however, written permission is not obtained from parents to seek emergency medical treatment.

Pre-school children have free access to drinking water throughout the day and younger children are provided with regular drinks according to their needs. Children attending the out of school provision are provided with a drink at snack time but water is not freely accessible at other times. Some children benefit from a cooked mid-day meal which, in the main, is prepared using fresh ingredients and includes a variety of vegetables. Children's preferences and dietary requirements are taken into account. Children's awareness of healthy eating is not always fully promoted at snack time through the provision of healthy options, such as fresh fruit. Good written records are in place ensuring children's health and dietary requirements are met. Good systems are in place to ensure babies and toddlers are able to sleep according to their individual needs and usual routines.

All children enjoy regular opportunities to engage in physical activities both indoors and outdoors. Babies are encouraged to crawl and move around freely and have access to appropriate equipment to support their walking skills. Toddlers confidently use a range of outdoor equipment, such as see-saws and sit-on rides, to develop their whole body movements.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a welcoming and well-maintained setting. Play equipment and toys conform to safety standards and the environment is secure and well organised to enable children to move around freely. Staff carry out regular risk

assessments of the premises which are generally effective in minimising potential hazards to children. However, although children are developing their awareness of fire safety issues through regular practise of emergency evacuation procedures, fire doors are not routinely shut by staff which may adversely affect children's safety in the event of a fire.

Children's safety is maintained on outings as staff effectively implement the clear written procedures. Older children have contributed to safety procedures when walking to the nursery from school and are developing a good awareness of road safety. Access to the building is very carefully monitored and children benefit from being cared for by staff who have completed appropriate vetting procedures. Effective systems are not in place to monitor room temperatures throughout the nursery and consequently temperatures in some areas fluctuate greatly throughout the day. This has a detrimental affect on children's comfort as does the lack of appropriate provision for pre-school children to rest or relax if they wish.

Staff have a sound awareness of child protection procedures and the manager has undertaken appropriate training to develop her knowledge and understanding of issues. Staff are aware of the procedures to follow if they had any concerns and know the relevant agencies to contact. However, the child protection policy does not contain clear procedures to follow if an allegation is made against a member of staff. Overall, children are protected from possible abuse or neglect and their welfare is safeguarded.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled throughout the nursery. Staff have developed warm and effective relationships with the children, enabling them to feel secure and develop a sense of their own self-worth. Those who are new to the setting are helped to settle by staff who are sensitive towards their individual needs. On the whole, babies benefit from good levels of individual attention and are regularly cuddled and comforted. Babies have access to an appropriate range of play equipment which engages their interest and meets their individual needs. They have some opportunities to explore natural materials using their senses, such as fir cones, silk scarves and metal containers. However, planned activities are not always appropriate for the ages and stages of development of the children and do not fully encourage them to explore and express themselves freely. Babies enjoy having opportunities to interact with others; for example, staff often bring younger and older babies together so that they can benefit from socialising and sharing activities and experiences. Staff have not yet started to fully use the 'Birth to three matters' framework when planning and assessing children's progress and consequently the learning outcomes for children are not always effectively promoted.

Children in the toddler room are well cared for and their physical needs, such as eating, sleeping and nappy changing are met appropriately. However, children are not given scope to make their own decisions about play and learning as sessions are often highly structured and adult-led. Staff do not organise the play areas and

resources effectively to encourage children to freely select from a wide range of practical activities and toys. This adversely affects children's ability to develop their independence and use their imaginations. Children are developing good social skills and confidently approach adults to ask for assistance if needed. They join in enthusiastically during group singing times and enjoy opportunities for outdoor play.

School-age children enjoy their time at the club and play co-operatively with one another. They are well behaved and have developed good relationships with staff. They benefit from being able to make their own decisions about play and learning and move freely between different play areas to access a good range of stimulating games and activities.

### Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make progress in all areas as staff understand children's needs and provide a sufficient range of activities and experiences. However staff do not yet have a sound knowledge of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and are insecure in planning and identifying what children are learning from activities.

There are new systems in place to track children's progress which are consistent with the Foundation Stage stepping stones. These have recently been implemented so staff are not yet fully confident in their use. Assessments are not used to guide future planning, in general, or for individual children's next steps in learning.

Children settle quickly and happily join in the activities provided. They sit well in circle time and listen keenly to staff and each other as they talk about the frosty weather and visitors to the nursery. Children enjoy listening to stories read to them but have limited opportunities to choose their own books. They understand that print has meaning and can recognise their own names, for example, when finding their place at snack time. Children's mathematical development is supported through a variety of planned activities and daily routines. Children are interested in the world around them, observing and talking about, for example, the ice and frost in the garden. They have some opportunities to learn about information technology. Children enjoy playing outside, climbing and sliding with increasing confidence. Children can confidently use tools and objects appropriately but these are not made easily accessible. They sing with growing tunefulness and explore the sounds of instruments waiting patiently for their turn.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery which helps them to feel happy and settled. Children develop a positive attitude to others and have developed effective relationships with staff and each other. Effective systems are in place to ensure children with special needs are well supported, have equal access to activities and resources and their individual needs are met. The special needs co-ordinator at the nursery is knowledgeable and has attended appropriate training, she is therefore able to offer support and guidance to other staff members. Some activities are

planned to develop children's awareness of the wider world, such as celebrating the Chinese New Year and Diwali. Children have access to some play resources and equipment which reflect positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability, although books are limited. Children are developing their awareness of the local community through walks around the town and by visits to the nursery from people who help us, such as the police and fire brigade.

Younger children are settled because staff work well with parents to share information about routines, such as sleep and feeding patterns. Written diaries are used effectively to share information on a daily basis. As a result, children benefit from consistency of care. Children are well behaved and respond to the good role models set by the staff. Children are encouraged to share resources and take turns and are learning to take responsibility for their own actions. Children benefit from having consistent boundaries and their self-esteem is well promoted through praise and encouragement. Children learn good table manners and social skills at meal times. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory and contributes to children's well-being. Parents are provided with useful information about the nursery; for example, through on-going newsletters, notice boards, the nursery brochure and informal chats with staff. Parents whose children are in receipt of nursery education funding receive clear written information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and how this is promoted and delivered at the nursery. Although parents are kept informed as to their child's progress and achievements, opportunities for parents to contribute to the assessments are not actively promoted.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children benefit from being cared for by consistent staff who are well qualified and have a range of experiences. Appropriate systems for managing staff are in place, such as regular staff meetings and appraisal, and staff have access to further training to develop their knowledge and skills. All legally required documentation is in place, although some written procedures do not contain sufficient detail. Records, such as daily staff attendance, are not consistently completed by staff. Appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures are in place which ensures that all staff are suitable to work with children.

Staff work well as a team and appropriate staffing ratios are maintained throughout the nursery. However, staff are not always deployed effectively and consequently, on occasion, children are not sufficiently supported during activities. Staff make good use of the outdoor area to provide children with regular opportunities to engage in physical games. Age appropriate play materials and equipment are provided in each room, although space and resources are not organised effectively. For example, in the baby room children are not always able to interact with others during creative activities and play equipment is not freely accessible.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Clear aims are shared with parents in the nursery leaflet about the Foundation Stage. Some

systems are in place to assess aspects of the nursery provision. However, these do not fully evaluate the nursery education or identify areas for improvement.

Overall, children's needs are met.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection one recommendation was raised with regard to ensuring that the designated person for child protection had attended appropriate training and all staff were made aware of child protection issues.

The manager, who is the designated person for child protection, has attended an appropriate training course which has increased her knowledge and awareness of relevant issues. Consequently, she is able to support staff effectively and ensure they all develop a sound understanding of child protection issues. This has had a beneficial impact on ensuring children's safety.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection one concern has been raised with Ofsted about the nursery regarding alleged safety risks whilst painting and redecorating was taking place at the nursery. Concern was also raised that parents were not informed of this. The nursery were to formally respond to these concerns. This response was considered by Ofsted against National Standards 4 (Physical Environment), 6 (Health) and 12 (Working In Partnership With Parents And Carers). There was no evidence to suggest the provider did not continue to meet the standards and Ofsted took no further action.

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 physical environment for children by ensuring room temperatures are carefully monitored, health and safety procedures are consistently implemented and children are able to rest and relax in comfort. Improve the organisation of space and play equipment to meet the needs of the children.
- improve the planning of activities for children under the age of three years to promote the outcomes for children using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Ensure children are able to make their own choices about play and learning and activities are well matched to their ages and stages of development
- improve documentation and record keeping with regard to child protection procedures, the daily attendance record for staff and written permission from parents to seek emergency medical treatment
- ensure staff deployment fully promotes the welfare and development of children.

### **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 staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage to enable the effective planning of a broad and balanced range of activities and experiences across the six areas which encourage children to make independent choices in their learning. Improve assessments to ensure the next steps for children are identified and activities are adapted to meet individual needs.
- develop opportunities for parents to contribute to children's learning and gather appropriate information from parents to ensure starting points for children are identified and built on.
- improve systems for monitoring and evaluating the effectiveness of the nursery education

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