



Humpty Dumpty Day Nursery (Dartmouth)

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106136
Inspection date	19 October 2005
Inspector	Leoarna Mathias
Setting Address	Milton Lane, Dartmouth, Devon, TQ6 9HW
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Registered person	Humpty Dumpty Childcare Limited
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?

Humpty Dumpty Nursery (Dartmouth) opened in 1991, and occupies premises situated on the campus of Dartmouth Community College. There is enclosed outdoor play space. The nursery is one of a group of three private nurseries running in South Devon and is administered from the Humpty Dumpty Childcare Services head office based in Totnes.

The nursery is open daily from 08.00 hours until 17.30 hours. There are currently 49 children enrolled, 16 of whom are in receipt of nursery education funding. The group supports children with special educational needs and children who have English as an additional language.

Seven staff are employed to work in the nursery, all of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification. There is additional support from senior members of the nursery chain. The nursery receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are developing a good understanding of what it means to be healthy. They can identify nutritious foods, eat fruit at each snack time, and access regular drinks, though lunches do not, as yet, promote healthy alternatives with sufficient regularity. However, staff employ good hygiene routines throughout the nursery, and comprehensive systems are in place to monitor the levels of food hygiene, with many staff trained in this area. As a result, children are cared for in a clean environment and enjoy properly prepared foodstuffs. Staff encourage children to be independent in their personal care, and children readily wash their hands before meals and after toileting, with little prompting. Children's health needs are also supported and monitored through the use of clear documentation systems that keep parents fully informed of accidents, the administration of medicines, or first aid. There is an effective approach to safety in the sun, and all staff are first aid trained, allowing them to meet children's medical needs well.

Children move around the setting in confidence and safety. They have regular access to fresh air and outdoor play and large equipment that encourages climbing and balancing. Younger children have opportunities to play with a thoughtful range of equipment that promotes their development, and older children access tools and resources that promote the development of their manipulative skills at every session. They receive skilful support from staff as they learn to use scissors, pens, stencils, trowels and other equipment.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe environment where hazards are minimised through the use of risk assessments systems that involve all staff. Resources and equipment are also well organised, allowing children to safely access these for themselves. The potential for accidental injury to children is minimal because they are vigilantly supervised. This includes an effective system for monitoring sleeping babies. Fire drills are regular, and are evaluated to ensure children are kept safe in an emergency. Children are secure as a result of sensible arrivals and departure procedures that work well in practice, and clear recording of visitors to the group. The

welfare of children is also fully promoted while at the setting, as staff have a good understanding of the child protection responsibilities, and are aware of the procedure to be followed should they have any concerns.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children settle quickly upon arrival, responding well to the warm welcome they receive. Strong relationships between children and staff are in evidence, as children readily gravitate towards staff when they need help, are upset, or want to share their achievements. Staff are making particularly good use of the Birth to three matters framework in order to provide younger children with an exciting range of activities, such as collage making or water play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good.

Children are quick to become engaged in activities. They concentrate well on tasks, such as playing co-operatively with small world toys, or tracing around letter stencils. They ask questions about why things happen, and are keen to contribute answers during group discussions, for example, when looking at a hyacinth bulb growing in water. Children persevere with new challenges, such as using scissors when making a collage. When taken overall, children behave well, although occasional disputes arise between children, particularly towards the end of the session. However, they are aware of the group's agreed codes for behaviour, and they willingly take part in group tasks, such as tidy up time. Children are also beginning to make friendships, greeting each other upon arrival, and using good manners with increasing frequency.

All children are making good progress towards the early learning goals in all six areas of learning. Children are enthusiastic conversationalists with developing vocabularies. They enjoy story time, as well as using books independently throughout the session. Children receive effective support for the development of their handwriting, although writing materials are not as accessible in free play areas. Children are becoming confident counters, and they are increasingly able to recognise printed numerals. Resources that support their understanding of shape and measure are freely available during the session, and children make good use of them. Children are genuinely curious about the world around them, asking questions about the features of bulbs, for example. They persevere in their attempts to design and make objects, using tessellating shapes for significant periods of time, and enjoying collage making. They regularly access technology, and enjoy daily discussions that promote their understanding of time and place. Children's imaginations are allowed to flourish in well resourced role play areas, and they take part in daily singing activities, and group discussions that encourage children to express their thoughts and ideas.

The lead practitioner and her team have a solid understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Planning documents are clear and allow all staff to be familiar with the learning intentions of each activity. Children are encouraged to participate in a

pleasing range of activities that are on offer at each session, and high ratios of staff to children mean that there are many opportunities for small group and one to one support. At present there are minor weaknesses in the coverage of the curriculum; opportunities to teach children about other cultures and beliefs, sounds and letters, and mathematical problem solving are not always taken up. However, the lead practitioner is very new to the setting, and has the skills to monitor and improve her coverage of the curriculum over time. Similarly, there are occasional moments where the session loses some focus, and children's behaviour deteriorates as a result; nevertheless, the growing confidence of the lead practitioner and her team means that a better balance between structured activities and free play, and in particular physical play that will meet the needs of more active children, can be reached. Assessment systems are beginning to work well so as the information gathered through observation can be used to plan the next steps in children's learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are made to feel included in the setting, as their family lives and individual needs are well known to staff. A pleasing range of resources encourage children to be aware of difference and diversity in society. Children with special educational needs are given meaningful support, as many members of the nursery team have substantial experience of working with children with special educational needs, and partnerships with outside agencies are effective. Children respond well to the agreed codes for behaviour within the nursery, and, when taken overall, behave well towards staff and each other. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

The partnership with parents is good. Relationships between staff and parents are strong, with daily exchanges of information enhancing staff's capacity to meet children's individual needs. Parents access good levels of information about the work of the nursery, as well as being frequently encouraged to access records of their child's progress. There is also a library of information across a broad range of childcare issues which is loaned out to parents. As a result of these numerous information giving measures, children enjoy high levels of continuity of care between home and nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy good levels of care as a result of high staff ratios and well organised deployment. Senior staff have a good understanding of their regularity responsibilities, responding quickly to changes in requirements. For example, recent additions to the regulations that deal with keeping a record of complaints were implemented immediately. All staff hold an appropriate qualification, and efficient systems are in place to ensure that staff are suitably vetted and inducted into nursery procedures. As a result, children are cared for by staff who are confident in their roles. Policies and other documentation are in good order, enabling staff to be up to

date with any issues relating to the care of particular children that arise. The nursery meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. There is a positive team ethos in evidence within the setting, and clear management is provided by the confident and competent nursery manager. All staff have plentiful opportunities to access training and support from the senior management team, and as result staff are beginning to develop the capacity to reflect on their own practice. The senior management team is also able to identify any weakness within the provision. They are then able to effect strategies which bring about positive change, which further improves the quality of provision for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection of the quality of care, the nursery was asked to improve activity planning for younger children, to enlarge the scope of risk assessment systems, to keep information about children with special educational needs on site and to devise an action plan to ensure there are sufficient toilets for adults and children. Impending changes to the building will allow for more toilets within the nursery, and risk assessment systems now work well. Information about children with special educational needs is now fully available. Planning for younger children, which uses the Birth to three matters framework, now ensures that children enjoy an interesting range of activities each day.

At the last inspection of the quality of nursery education, the nursery was asked to ensure that children can initiate and extend their free play opportunities, to monitor access to the Foundation Stage curriculum for part time children, and to develop the confidence of staff whose role it is to support children's learning and progress through the stepping stones. A good range of free play activities are now on offer at each session, and children are encouraged to choose for themselves. The senior management team acknowledge that progress is still being made in ensuring that part time children access the full curriculum. However, staff are increasingly confident in their roles, and new staff are quickly implementing changes to curriculum delivery that will ensure that children are fully supported in progressing towards the early learning goals.

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.

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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):

- further increase children's access to healthy options at main meal times.

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):

- improve the use of time and effective teaching strategies to ensure that all children are fully engaged and sufficiently challenged throughout the session, and that more active children have their physical development needs met.
- increase staff's capacity to monitor the coverage of the curriculum and to evaluate their practice to ensure that all parts of the curriculum receive regular using the most effective teaching methods.

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