



## Headstart Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	253674
<b>Inspection date</b>	12 December 2005
<b>Inspector</b>	Katherine Powell / Janice Broddle
<b>Setting Address</b>	The Old School, Dudley Road, Grantham, Lincolnshire, NG31 9AB
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<b>Registered person</b>	Sue Jenkins & Diane Smith
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Head Start Day Nursery has been open since 1991 and is registered to care for 145 children from the ages of birth to eight years at any one time. The nursery also offers care for children over the age of eight years in the Clubhouse. The nursery is divided into smaller family rooms equipped for the various ages of the children, with a separate play area for school age children. There is an enclosed outdoor play area as well as a large room which can be used for active play or for large group activities.

The nursery is situated close to the centre of town with parking available in the adjoining streets. The provision is part of a chain of four nurseries within Lincolnshire.

The nursery is open from 07:30 until 18:00 daily, except bank holidays and Christmas week. There are currently 170 children on the register, including 49 children in receipt of nursery funding for three and four-year-olds.

Staff support children who have been identified with special needs. There are no children currently attending who speak English as an additional language.

The setting has developed close links with a number of local schools and receives support from the curriculum advisor at the Lincolnshire Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

The nursery employs 25 members of staff. Of these, 23 have completed recognised childcare qualifications. There is also a bank of relief staff.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an environment which is maintained in a mainly warm, clean and hygienic condition. However, cleaning routines of sleeping equipment are not fully comprehensive, and this, along with the lack of a written sick child policy, exposes children to possible risk of cross infection. Staff practice good personal hygiene and have up to date knowledge of first aid practices which promotes children's well-being. Good systems for recording accidents and medication records, and well stocked first aid boxes contribute to children's immediate safety and welfare. Children are beginning to learn the importance of good personal hygiene through daily routines and effective adult support; they know to wash their hands after engaging in messy activities and after using the toilet.

Staff have a sound knowledge of food hygiene issues which ensures that meals are served at the correct temperature to minimise the risk of contamination. Children have regular snacks and meals and can access drinks at all times. However, the current arrangements for meals mean that there are inconsistencies for children regarding their nutritional intake during the day, with some children on some days having food with limited nutritional value. This compromises their healthy growth and development and limits their understanding of healthy living.

Children under the age of two years have adequate space to move around and crawl which promotes their physical development. They are able to rest and sleep according to their individual needs. Children have regular access to fresh air and exercise and enjoy the physical challenges provided by the range of outdoor equipment. Pre-school children join in enthusiastically during team games and are developing good small hand skills through regular use of tools and resources such as construction toys, jigsaws and peg boards. Children benefit from regular opportunities to engage in physical exercise both indoors and outdoors, however, staff do not

sufficiently plan outdoor activities to ensure identified skills are promoted and that activities help to build on children's previous skills and achievements.

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

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a safe environment. The facility is secure so that children are not able to leave unsupervised and staff closely and effectively monitor access. Children are protected from the risk of accidental injury because staff supervise them extremely vigilantly, and there are comprehensive risk assessments in place to reduce potential hazards. Younger children have a separate outdoor play space, so that play is organised specifically to meet their needs. Good systems are in place to ensure that children who are asleep remain closely monitored.

Children use good quality equipment and play materials and there are sound systems in place to check that they remain safe for them to use. Staff pay good attention to safety issues when presenting toys and activities, ensuring that they are appropriate for the ages of children using them and allowing adequate space between activities to minimise the risk of trips and falls. Children are kept safe on outings because staff vigilantly supervise the children and implement carefully considered safety procedures. They raise pertinent issues with the children who are learning to keep themselves safe when outside of the nursery environment. For example, they know that they must wear reflective bibs, hold hands, look and listen carefully for traffic and only cross the road when told by staff. There are good, clear procedures in place to ensure that school age children are safe when dropping at, and collecting from, school.

Children's welfare is effectively promoted because staff have a clear understanding of their responsibilities regarding child protection. They are fully familiar with the setting's policies and procedures and the roles and responsibilities of all staff within this. Staff work in cooperation with other agencies to protect children.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and confident. School age children enjoy their time at the nursery and play cooperatively with one another. They freely select games and activities of interest, for example they enthusiastically engage in role play in the home corner area and enjoy making Christmas decorations. Children settle well at the nursery due to the kind and caring staff team. Staff's high level of individual attention and reassurance supports them to separate from their parents. This is a particular strength in the baby room where staff work with each family individually and parents are able to stay until their child is secure. Babies continue to have their individual needs met through provision for them to eat and sleep according to their own routines. These children freely move around and access a good range of appropriate, stimulating toys.

Staff are beginning to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework when planning some activities for younger children, however, this is still in the early stages and is not yet positively impacting on all the learning opportunities for these children. Children enjoy some well planned activities, such as a visit to the local church. However, the organisation of space and resources for children aged from eighteen months to four years provides minimal opportunities for children to select and make choices in their play. This limits children's ability to build on their growing independence along with their learning.

#### Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals in all areas of the curriculum. They are happy in their environment and have formed good relationships with each other and staff. Planning systems are in place which show how all aspects of learning will be covered, however, staff do not consistently identify clear learning objectives for adult led activities and activities are not always differentiated effectively to meet children's individual needs and abilities. Consequently, older and more able children are often not sufficiently challenged, particularly in mathematical development. Staff provide a suitable range of activities to cover the six areas of learning and make very good use of indoor and outdoor space to promote children's physical skills. Staff know children well and generally provide appropriate support. A system is in place to assess children's attainment along the stepping stones, however, as this has only recently been implemented it is not fully effective in informing future planning to identify the next steps in children's learning.

Children show a strong sense of belonging as they greet each other and staff upon arrival. They work well together and are aware of the need to take turns and share resources during group activities. Children behave well in response to high expectations from staff. They talk confidently to adults, asking questions and seeking support when necessary. Children's ability to initiate their own games and independently select activities and play resources is restricted due to the organisation of the session and play areas. Children listen with interest during group story times and enjoy discussing characters and events. However, children do not have access to a stimulating range of books to encourage independent reading. Children use a range of tools and resources to mark make, such as paint brushes, pencils, chalk and crayons and some children are able to write their name and individual letters independently. They are developing an awareness of letter sounds and shapes and benefit from seeing a range of print displayed within the setting, such as their name cards. However, children do not have easy access to letters of the alphabet to support their learning. Children confidently use numbers during practical activities and daily routines and can count in sequence to ten and beyond. Children are developing their awareness of addition and subtraction through number rhymes and songs, however, more able children are not given sufficient challenge to solve simple number problems or extend their mathematical skills. Children enjoy devising their own patterns using peg boards and use a wide range of mathematical language to describe shape and position. Children enjoy exploring and finding out about the natural world. They learn to care for plants and flowers and have opportunities to plant seeds and watch their changes as they grow. They are gaining an awareness and understanding of technology through the use of equipment such as calculators

and battery toys, although children do not have free access to the computer to further develop their skills. Children talk with interest about past and present events in their own lives and are developing a sound awareness of the local community through regular trips. They have opportunities to find out about the work of people in the community through visits from the fire brigade, police and a local vicar. They are developing an awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others through planned activities. Children are developing good spatial awareness through regular use of the outdoor area. Their whole body movements are promoted through mediums such as dance and games, which help children to practise, and develop, their running, hopping, skipping and jumping skills. Children benefit from having access to large equipment to develop their climbing and balancing skills. Children's creative skills are promoted through activities such as painting, music, role play and art. However, children have limited opportunities to freely access role play resources or to select their own tools, materials and resources during art and craft activities. Consequently, children are not encouraged to use their imaginations or to freely express their own ideas. Children join in enthusiastically during group singing times and enjoy playing a wide range of instruments and exploring different sounds.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and settled in the nursery as staff have a good understanding of their individual needs. Their sense of belonging is encouraged through planned large group activities where, for example, they learn about each other's favourite things. They are developing their awareness of the local community through visits to local places of interest and their involvement with local businesses. Some children are also beginning to develop an awareness of the wider world through the curriculum, however, the limited range of resources reflecting positive images of race, gender and disability does not fully promote this. There are generally effective systems in place to support children with special needs. Children enjoy positive relationships with staff, which enables them to feel confident to voice their needs. Staff demonstrate genuine care and affection for the children and are very good role models. Children's behaviour is consequently very good. 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. Children benefit from the mainly good communication systems between staff and parents regarding their daily needs and parents of younger children receive daily written information about their child's day. Parents are welcomed into the nursery as they bring and collect their children and staff make time to exchange information directly. This ensures consistent care and enables the children to feel secure. Parents whose children are in receipt of nursery education funding receive detailed information about the Foundation Stage curriculum and how this is promoted and delivered at the nursery. There are some effective systems in place to involve parents in children's learning, such as holding parent's evenings throughout the year and providing written reports on children's attainment. However, systems do not ensure that progress records have been shared with all parents and staff do not gather appropriate information from parents about their child's learning at home to

enable them to build on children's previous knowledge and skills.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's safety and well-being is promoted through sound recruitment procedures, which ensure that staff are appropriately qualified and vetted. Staff have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities due to good induction procedures and through ongoing support and training. Effective organisation of staff offers stability to all children, particularly the very young ones and ensures that there is a good proportion of qualified and experienced staff working within each area. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's welfare, is in place and maintained to a satisfactory standard. Children access a suitable range of activities and particularly good use is made of outdoor space. However, the organisation of daily routines, space and resources minimises opportunities for children to initiate their own activities and use their imagination.

The leadership and management of nursery education are satisfactory. The manager and staff in the pre-school rooms work well as a team and there is a happy and harmonious atmosphere throughout the setting. Staff working with the pre-school children are fully encouraged to take an active role in the planning and delivery of the Foundation Stage and they have developed a sound understanding of the curriculum through further training. However, systems for monitoring the nursery education provision are not fully effective in ensuring that the organisation of funded sessions and the planning of activities enable all children to reach their full potential and gain the most from the learning experiences. Staff have regular opportunities to meet as a team and share good practice. In addition, they access support from the advisory teacher from the local authority to further develop the provision.

Overall, the nursery meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

## **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last care inspection, the provider agreed to ensure that all children and staff are made fully aware of emergency evacuation procedures. Drills now take place on a regular basis, procedures are clearly displayed and exits clearly signed, therefore improving children's safety.

At the last nursery education inspection two key issues were raised with regard to further developing opportunities for children to use their information technology skills and for staff to use written evaluations to further develop planned activities. The provision has made some progress in addressing these issues. Children have access to a range of play resources to develop their awareness of how to operate simple equipment, such as calculators and battery toys. A computer is provided in the pre-school room, however, this is not freely available to children during each session which limits opportunities for children to further develop their skills independently. The activity planning sheets which have been implemented provide staff with an opportunity to evaluate planned activities. However, these are not consistently

completed by staff so are not fully effective in identifying how activities and learning opportunities can be further developed and improved.

### **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**

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 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 systems to prevent the risk of cross infection by: devising and implementing a written policy about the exclusion of children who are ill or infectious and make sure parents are made aware of it; and ensuring that the sleeping arrangements for children take hygiene issues into consideration, with regards to sharing sleeping bags and the cleaning of cots
- improve the arrangements for meals to ensure that all children are provided with nutritious meals
- review the organisation of daily routines, space and resources so that children are able to freely select from a wide variety of activities and play materials, initiate their own activities and use their imagination (also applies to nursery education)
- develop the range of toys and resources which raise children's awareness of race, culture and disability.

### **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 ensure staff deliver a broad and balanced curriculum, clear learning objectives are identified and activities are adapted to meet children's individual needs particularly with regard to more able children
- gather appropriate information from parents to identify starting points for children's learning and which enables staff to build on children's previous learning and skills. Improve systems for sharing children's assessment records with parents
- develop further the systems for monitoring and evaluating the nursery education provision.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)