



New House Nursery School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	127403
Inspection date	18 May 2006
Inspector	Mary Van De Peer
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Registered person	Jane Lesley Hicks
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?

New House Nursery School is a privately owned nursery. It opened in 1986 and operates from three rooms on the ground floor of a house in Canterbury, Kent. A maximum of 48 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 120 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Of these,

65 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery is able to support a number of children with special educational needs and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 12 staff. There are nine staff, including the manager, who hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are three staff who are working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are offered a good selection of food which is healthy, nutritious as well as traditional. They are able to choose from a selection of fruit and drinks, such as milk and juice, during snack time. They use individual cups and plates to help avoid cross-contamination. Children are able to help themselves to water, which is readily available, throughout each session. Children's individual dietary needs are catered for. They are beginning to have an awareness of healthy eating issues. Children participate in effective personal hygiene procedures. They wash their hands before meals, after using the toilet or playing with messy play activities. Children are aware of personal hygiene issues. Almost every member of staff has attended first aid training. Accident and medical records are kept and if children sustain any minor injuries, they are dealt with effectively.

Physical development is good. Children use a good range of energetic, physical activities that contribute to a healthy lifestyle. They develop self-confidence in all their physical skills as they use a wide range of indoor and outdoor toys and equipment, from climbing frames, play tunnels and skipping to using musical instruments and building tracks and doing puzzles. The outdoor garden area is superb. It provides a wonderful range of experiences for all the children, for example, planting seeds and small plants, an obstacle course, a play house and shady areas when the sun is out. Children are becoming aware of safety issues surrounding the use of large equipment, for example they know they need to wait their turn to avoid hurting each other. Children greatly enjoy their physical play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a bright, clean and well maintained environment. The layout of the nursery's play areas is very child-friendly. For example, every room has its own child-sized toilet and washbasins. Also, the good organisation of well maintained toys and equipment means children can move around safely and freely. They can independently access suitable activities from tables, trays and boxes at child-height. The resources that the children use are appropriate to their ages, safe, checked regularly for hygiene and cleaned when necessary. The outside play area is

excellent. Children have everything they need to make outdoor play a stimulating and happy experience.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are vigilant and use effective risk assessments to reduce potential hazards. For example, solid fences with bolted gates surround the garden area and high internal door handles. Staff have developed a good understanding of how to achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits. This allows children to learn some sense of danger and knowledge about how to protect themselves from harm. Children are very well protected by staff who have a clear understanding of child protection policies and procedures and give top priority to children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children really enjoy their time in the nursery. They achieve well because staff are skilled and use their sound understanding of early years guidance, such as Birth to three matters and the Curriculum guidance for the Foundation Stage, to provide good quality care and education. All children arrive happy and eager to participate. Those who are new to the nursery are helped to settle by staff who are sensitive towards their individual needs. Two-year-olds are confident in the setting and in their relationships with each other and the staff. They play happily with each other and are learning to take turns and respond to others as they use puzzles, games, and books. Staff awareness and close, caring relationships, increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. Good quality adult-child interactions are very supportive of early communication skills. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in a wide range of exploratory and sensory experiences. For example, preparing their plant pots for growing sunflowers and vegetables. Nonetheless, there are times when children have limited choices in their play, as an adult-led activity means they all have to stop and clear away to participate.

The After School Care facility is very new. Children are beginning to benefit from their joint participation in planning what activities and resources they want made available to them. As most of them once attended the nursery, they are comfortable and at home in the setting. They enjoy the freedom of playing outside with balls and climbing equipment.

Nursery education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are often captivated by a range of stimulating activities related to their needs. They have access to appropriate resources, which support them in all areas of learning. The children are eager to learn, self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. They listen intently to stories and can recount what they remember from before. Children are able to mark-make to represent their ideas, for example in paintings and on whiteboards. Older children are becoming competent at writing their own names. Staff make good use of visual symbols, allowing children with additional needs to participate fully in the activities and make progress. Children are learning to use their

imagination. They make sense of the world around them in the stimulating outdoor area and create exciting, individual art work. Children make connections in their learning as they freely explore sand and other textures. They are fascinated by the changes in nature, which they observe in the nursery's garden.

Children work well together, for example, learning how to operate computer equipment following the guidance of the older children. They are also gaining confidence in using numbers in their play and respond to challenges to extend their mathematical vocabulary and skills in planned activities and daily routines. Their physical skills develop and improve through a wide variety of experiences. Right from the start, staff find out about children's skills, interests and needs and build on this information effectively to help children achieve as much as they can. A flexible approach to planning helps children to learn at their own pace. They use effective systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements and to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are welcomed and play a full part in the nursery. Staff ensure they have good knowledge of each child's needs. Children's behaviour is very good. Staff support younger children in sharing and in taking turns. They have appropriate expectations and set consistent boundaries for all the children. This helps them learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Staff increase children's understanding of right and wrong. They respond to gentle reminders to care for their environment, the nursery's resources and each other. Children are developing a positive attitude to others and gain a good understanding about the wider world and community through celebrating festivals, such as Japan's Hanamatsuri. They have access to a good range of play resources which show positive images of culture, ethnicity, gender and disability. The setting has effective arrangements to care for children with special educational needs although none currently attend. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Staff have built up good relationships with parents. This contributes significantly to children's well-being in the nursery. Staff actively seek parents' views about their children's needs and interests, before the child starts at the setting and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Staff ensure that all parents know how their children are progressing and developing. Partnership with parents and carers is good. Children benefit from parents' involvement in their learning. Information on the Foundation Stage curriculum and effective communication through newsletters, daily chats and detailed notice boards helps staff and parents work together to help children make progress.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The nursery has their registration certificate clearly displayed. The provider ensures that the staff are suitable to work with the children through an effective recruitment and vetting procedure. Staff are regularly monitored and supervised. Annual appraisals help ensure their professional and personal development and training needs are met. The setting's operational plan is constantly adjusted and reviewed to meet the needs of the children and staff. All senior staff supervisors are qualified to Level three. Almost all other staff have relevant childcare qualifications to Level two or three. Most of the staff have a current paediatric first aid course certificate. Children's and staff's individual records are stored confidentially in a lockable filing cabinet. All Children Act regulations are met and the required record-keeping is in place. However, the current registration system for children lacks consistency. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management is good. The aims and objectives of the nursery are clearly stated in the operational plan. The owner has lots of experience, enthusiasm and commitment, which in turn motivates staff. She is continually looking for effective ways to develop and improve the nursery in all areas, especially in the delivery of the Foundation Stage, which subsequently improves the learning experiences for children. All staff are also committed to continuous improvement and development. They regularly reflect, monitor and improve the quality of their care and education as they participate in an accredited quality assurance scheme.

Improvements since the last inspection

The provider has followed the two previous recommendations to improve the provision:

A previous recommendation was to develop staff knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. Several members of staff have now attended child protection training and cascaded the information to their colleagues. The child protection procedure has been updated. This helps to ensure children's ongoing welfare is protected.

The remaining recommendation was for staff to plan a range of activities and play opportunities for children's overall development for the After School Club and children under three years. The staff have now developed play plans and appropriate activities for the younger children. For example, using pictures of different animals, they enjoy singing action rhymes as if they are that animal. The children are having great fun pretending they are a monkey or an elephant. The After School Club is in its infancy. A newly appointed member of staff is working with the school age children. He is discussing and planning activities with the children. They are pleased to be involved in the process.

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):

- review registration system to ensure children's times of arrival and departure are recorded appropriately

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):

- consider extending the opportunities for children's free play

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