



Happy Days Children Centre

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 322066
Inspection date 19 June 2006
Inspector June Rice

Setting Address Minsthorpe Lane, South Elmsall, Pontefract, West Yorkshire, WF9 2UJ
Telephone number 01977 658766
E-mail happydays@minsthorpe.wakefield.sch.uk
Registered person Regeneration Services
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?

Happy Days Children's Centre has been registered since 2004. It operates from purpose-built building situated in Minsthorpe Community College grounds, South Elmsall. A maximum of 83 children may attend the centre at any one time. The centre is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round, excluding two weeks at Christmas. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently ninety three children aged from five months to under eight years

on roll. Of these seventeen children receive funding for nursery education.

The centre employs sixteen staff. Fifteen of the staff, including the manager hold appropriate early years qualifications. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy through the implementation of effective hygiene practices and procedures, which meet their individual nutritional, physical and health needs well. They are very independent in their personal care and understand the need to wash their hands before eating and after using the toilet. For example, children break off from messy activities and independently go to wash their hands explaining 'going to clean hands they mucky'. They select their own toothbrushes and toothpaste to clean their teeth after lunch and tea. Asked why they should brush their teeth, they answer, 'cos food sticks to them - look' and 'don't want our teeth to fall out'. Staff are proactive in promoting children's understanding and awareness of what a healthy lifestyle is through example, discussion and a good range of equipment. Children benefit from well planned activities to develop their physical skills and enjoyment of exercise. They particularly enjoy the freedom and challenge of using physical equipment, such as a balancing beam and combined moving bridge and slide. They enjoy the use of the outside play area whatever the weather and are learning the importance of using sun creams.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are kept safe in a warm, very welcoming and secure environment, which is clean and well-maintained. Children's understanding of personal safety is well promoted through simple explanation and occasional reminders. They are learning to understand and follow the centre's rules. For example, children help to tidy up toys before snacks, lunch and outside play. They are beginning to understand the need to evacuate quickly in an emergency and regularly practise an emergency evacuation. Children enjoy their visit to the local fire station and swimming baths. Their chats with the fire officers and safeguards help them understand the importance of fire and water safety. Their understanding of people who help us is well promoted through visits from people who help us, such as a police officer and doctor.

Effective deployment of staff, space and resources allows children to move freely and independently and ensures that all areas are well supervised. Children are offered a wide range of resources and equipment that are safe, purposeful and checked regularly for safety. Children benefit from the high priority given to their safety. For example, staff effectively monitor access to the building and this ensures that unauthorised persons are unable to gain entry into the provision. Children are kept

safe from harm because staff demonstrate a very confident approach to child protection. They have a very clear understanding of child protection and the procedures to be followed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are eager and enthusiastic to learn and show good levels of concentration. They are confident, independent learners who enjoy their time in the setting. They show a good level of awareness, are motivated and interested in what they do. However, the grouping of children is not always successful. Children are occasionally joined by others who are attracted by the interesting activities and this sometimes affects children's concentration. Children are encouraged to make decisions, think for themselves and participate in a wide range of well organised activities and hands-on experiences. They approach realistic challenges with enthusiasm and show great persistence to succeed. For example, after many attempts to mount the balancing beam and following lots of encouragement from staff, then go on to shuffle sideways along the beam using their arms to balance. However, the independence of more able children could be promoted further by providing them with the opportunity to become more self-sufficient, for example, during snack and mealtimes.

Nursery education.

Children demonstrate flexibility and adapt behaviour to different events. For example, they calmly walk to the library and recall that they must sit quietly in the library 'cos big ones working'. Children regularly initiate their own activities, such as hide and seek. They squeal with delight and excitement when they are joined by energetic staff. Children freely select from the good variety of activities on offer and enthusiastically join in more focused ones, such as leave printing and dough making. However on occasions children were prevented from freely exploring sound and music. For example, musical instruments and computer programmes of rhyme and song were restricted.

They listen carefully and respond eagerly to the staff's questions, which encourage them to think and extend their learning. For example, while counting spots on a ladybird, children were asked 'how does it feel' and 'what colour is it'. Children listen to others when the conversation interests them. For example, when they find the ladybird, other children are quickly attracted by their exciting chatter and wonderment, run over and join the conversation. Children talk activities through. For example, while making play dough they are asked about the effect of water on the flour. They talk about the dough being 'yuk, sticky', 'cold and wet'. They ascribe meaning to marks. They make lines and circles on paper and in foam saying letters of their name out loud.

Children benefit from the high priority given to providing plenty of fresh air and exercise. They show increasing confidence using equipment for climbing, scrambling and sliding. For example, they climb steps to the swing bridge with alternate feet, walk and run across the moving bridge and go down the slide. They negotiate this equipment successfully, moving with good control and co-ordination. However,

children's understanding of the changes to their bodies after exercise could be encouraged more. Children use mathematical language and size in play and every day events. For example, during computer games they successfully sort 'thick, thin, shortest, fattest, big and little' repeating the words as they identify them. At lunch they cut bread in 'half', making 'two pieces'. They show interest in number problems and are successful at small subtractions and recognise groups of one, two and three objects.

Children show interest in the world in which they live and are gaining an awareness of the cultures and beliefs of others. They are introduced to different celebrations to celebrate cultural differences and enjoy the inclusion of a visiting parent dressed in traditional clothes who introduces them to the festival of Dwali. They show an interest in technology and there are sufficient opportunities for children to operate technology items, such as calculators, mobile phones and cash till. They look at the inspector's laptop and ask "what's that?", they go on to press the keys finding letters of their name.

Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Birth to three matters framework and implement it well. Babies and toddlers are warmly welcomed and settled by friendly staff who are aware of their facial expressions and body language. Babies are able to contribute to secure relationships with adults who actively listen and give them their attention when they try to communicate. For example, adults echo sounds that young babies make and interpret meaning to children's words, which encourages them to be confident and competent language users. Children enjoy attention and being physically close to other children and familiar adults. The doors to the baby room are often open and this allows staff and children to peer through the safety gates to have a look and wave to the babies.

Toddlers and babies are encouraged to develop confidence and to try new things because staff effectively support them by providing a suitable, challenging and interesting environment. The well organised environment enriches toddlers and babies experiences. They are able to explore an interesting environment freely and safely. They make connections through the use of all of their senses because adults follow their lead and allow them to explore their environment, people and resources. For example, less mobile children are placed on the floor amongst heuristic play items. They enjoy freely exploring many items of different textures and shapes often initiating contact with others by rolling items towards them, or by walking over with toys they find interesting. Babies and toddlers enjoy many different experiences, such as foot printing, playing with bubbles and a variety of malleable materials.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and demonstrate a good range of teaching methods. They demonstrate a good understanding of how children learn, providing appropriate challenges to ensure that children make sound progress. There is good interaction from staff to ensure that children's progress continues. For example, children benefit from the interaction of staff that use open questioning techniques to encourage them to talk and think about what they are doing. This helps children to reinforce and consolidate their learning.

Staff interact well with the children. They encourage and support their imagination

and curiosity. Children's individual needs and welfare are well met through a very good system of sharing information and an effective key-worker system. Parents receive written and verbal information on their child's progress and achievements on a daily basis. Staff record good observations on children's achievements and link them very clearly into the long, medium and short term planning. This ensures that all children make good progress and individual needs are met well.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's confidence, independence and self-assurance are fostered and promoted effectively through plenty of encouragement, support, appropriate challenges and praise. They benefit from a well organised learning environment that provides a broad, well-balanced variety of resources, which promotes their independent learning efficiently. Children relate well to each other and often initiate contact with others. For example, children invite the inspector to look at a spider through a magnifying glass and a ladybird crawling on their hands, 'tickling them'. Children's confidence and sense of belonging is nurtured well. For example, toddlers ready for leaving the baby room enjoy regular visits to the toddler room as part of their preparation for moving.

Children are happy and secure in the setting. They are valued as individuals and their personalities are well known. There is an effective key-worker system and good communication between staff and parents. Children confidently express their ideas and listen to those of others. They show a good sense of belonging and are encouraged to make a positive contribution. Children are generally well behaved, are polite and learning to say please and thank you. However staff's management of children's behaviour does not always promote children's understanding of the need to take responsibility for their behaviour.

Children benefit from the effective promotion of equality of opportunity and steps are taken to ensure all children are included in the setting. Children's understanding of similarities and differences is promoted well through a combination of positive discussion, interesting activities and hands-on experiences. There are good resources reflecting positive images, including visual representation, such as posters, photographs and ethnic dressing up clothes.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are provided with good information about the setting and the six areas of learning. They are encouraged to share information and be involved in their children's learning. Sharing this information is effective and parents are regularly updated on their children's progress. Funded children have individual progress files that are kept up to date. Clearly written policies and procedures are readily available for parents.

Overall, the children's spiritual, moral, social and emotional development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children benefit from a well organised environment where they are supported by a good ratio of experienced and qualified staff who work well as a team. Effective implementation of detailed, well written policies and procedures contributes to children's welfare, care, learning and enjoyment. Children benefit from the staff's enthusiasm, motivation and enjoyment, as well as understanding their role and responsibilities in developing children's learning. Children's individual files clearly identify children's progress and their next step. Children's individual needs are clearly linked into long, medium and short term planning. This has a positive effect on the success of planned activities and children's learning.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is very good and enhances all aspects of the provision. They value and respect staff's views and ideas and include these in planning the environment and the provision of education and care. Staff are actively encouraged and provided training opportunities to continue to develop their knowledge and understanding of child development. Staff are very enthusiastic and proactive in their approach to training opportunities.

The setting evaluates the provision that it provides through feedback from parents, regular team meetings, former inspection reports and questionnaires. Staff identified the layout and presentation of the preschool room as an area to improve. They made changes and this had a positive affect, particularly on how children use the home corner.

Overall, the provision meets the individual needs of the range of the children who for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The provision was asked to develop documentation to improve the organisation of care. They were asked to improve staffs knowledge of the early learning goals, the stepping stones, assessment and planning. To assess practice to inform planning and interaction with children. To increase opportunities in maths, writing, technology and improve activities to reflect cultural diversity.

Since the last care and education inspection the setting has taken positive steps to improve children's welfare, care, learning and enjoyment through the implementation of well written policies and procedures. Activities reflect cultural diversity and staff have developed their understanding of the early learning goals and stepping stones. This has a positive impact on planning and interaction with children and ensures that all children continue to make progress.

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 complaint record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- ensure staff are consistent in promoting children's understanding of the need to take responsibility for their behaviour (also applies to Nursery Education).

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):

- evaluate the grouping of children to ensure children's concentration is maintained
- provide more opportunities to enable children to express their creativity through freely exploring sound and music (also applies to Childcare).

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