



# Happy Days Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY101088
<b>Inspection date</b>	27 March 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Lorraine Wardlaw

<b>Setting Address</b>	Shorts Road, Fair Oak, Eastleigh, Hampshire, SO50 7EJ
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<b>Registered person</b>	Happy Days Pre-School
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<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
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<b>Type of care</b>	Full day care, Sessional care
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## 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 good.

### WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Happy Days Pre-School is privately owned and opened in 2001. It operates from the village hall in Fair Oak, Hampshire. The pre-school has use of the main hall, two smaller rooms and outdoor play space. It provides care mainly for children from the local community.

Registration is for a maximum of 26 children aged from 2 years to 5 years. It is the policy of the group to accept children from 2 years, 9 months. There are currently 59

children on roll, including 53 funded three- and four-year-olds. The group are able to support children with special needs.

The pre-school is open five days a week during term times. Sessions are Monday to Friday 09:30 - 12:00 and Thursday to Friday 12:45 - 15:15. Additional 12:45 - 15:15 sessions run during spring and summer terms on Tuesday and Wednesday for rising five-year-olds. There is an opportunity for children to attend an all day session.

There are eight members of staff and the owner/manager who work with the children, part-time. The majority of the practitioners have 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 are enthusiastic participants during regular physical activities such as when they climb the wooden frame or use the good range of equipment to develop their skills. For example, they confidently throw and catch bean bags and balls to adults or into the basket ball net and successfully walk on stepping cups around the room. They freely use a good variety of different tools and materials; children independently punch shapes into paper, cut with scissors and use tools with the play dough to create models or manipulate it with their fingers. For example, one child makes a plate of tadpoles and eggs after observing them in the pre-school. Children learn about healthy food as they sit at the snack table, eating and discussing with the adult how to keep teeth healthy and during hands on activities such as choosing fillings while sandwich making. Children's nutritional needs are met well by staff; children enjoy drinking water or milk and have a choice of snack which is a variety of fruit, plain and cheese biscuits. Water is freely available to children throughout the session. Children are learning good personal hygiene practices because staff gently remind them to wash their hands after visiting the toilet and before eating their snack. Children who stay for midday lunch know the importance of washing the germs off their hands before they eat. Staff store children's lunches well to ensure children's good health is maintained and have a sound awareness of children's allergies. Children who become unwell in the setting are sympathetically comforted by staff and parents are promptly informed by telephone. Appropriate recording of accidents and medication by staff means that children's health is sufficiently protected.

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

The provision is satisfactory.

Children explore and play in a safe environment where suitable measures have been put in place by staff. For example, a special gate is put up each session in the doorway to ensure children do not easily leave the room unsupervised. Annual risk assessments take place and staff respond to identified hazards promptly, such as purchasing a small ladder to stop children climbing on chairs during woodworking

activities. Children themselves learn about staying safe and can recall some of the safety rules when playing on the climbing frame. For example, a four-year-old confidently stands up and states 'no taking toys', when asked by the adult what the rules are during whole group time. Fire drills are appropriately recorded but are not always regularly carried out with children. Although the setting has not recently employed new staff, the recruitment and vetting procedure has flaws. This means that unsuitable people may inadvertently be employed, which is a breach of regulation. As a consequence children's safety is undermined. Children are suitably protected from non-accidental injury because staff are confident about the child protection procedure and the keeping of records. Children safely play with a suitable range of age appropriate toys and resources which are well rotated by staff and are clean and well maintained.

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

The provision is good.

Children come into the pre-school happily and settle quickly at activities of their choosing. Under three-year-olds enjoy the same stimulating experiences as the older children but are given extra, sympathetic support from the caring adults. An example is when a two-year-old is gently lifted up by a practitioner so they can successfully put the ball in the basketball net. Although children are offered a good range of play opportunities, staff are not using the Birth to three matters framework to enhance their play and tailor it to the specific developmental needs of the younger child. Children enjoy their time at the pre-school; they join in the fun and laughter as they excitedly explore porridge oats, pouring from one pot to another, spilling it on the table letting it run through their fingers. They regularly paint at the easel; older children enjoy mixing the colours with paint brushes or their hands and can confidently predict what colour they will make.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals because staff are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage curriculum; they know how to facilitate learning. Each session, staff set up an inviting environment where children enthusiastically take part in worthwhile, practical play activities. Some staff are skilled at extending children's learning during child led activities, such as when a child makes jelly with her play doh, the practitioner shares a baking/recipe book with the children to see if it explains how to make jelly. Another child recalls when she made jelly at pre-school. Good teaching takes place during whole group times when children enjoy songs and stories with props and visual aids; these successfully capture the children's interest and encourages their participation. Overall, planning is inconsistent between the rising fives group and the pre-school group. Children in the rising fives group take part in focus activities which link to specific stepping stones and learning intentions. But planning in the pre-school group is more basic without the links to specific learning objectives or to accommodate different ability children. However, despite these discrepancies, staff are able in their practice to move children on in their learning, by their knowledge of how children learn and their skill.

Staff loosely track children's progress along the stepping stones and the majority of staff know children well, but there are inconsistencies in keeping up to date with recording children's capabilities. This means that there is not always a clear picture of progress and not all staff can fully plan the next stage in children's learning.

Children converse with adults and one another readily and are attentive listeners, especially during whole group times. They enjoy favourite stories and can recall elements of a story such as the 'Three little pigs'. Staff ask children questions which encourages them to think and use their memory. For example, the children remembered from last week whose turn it was to lead the Dusty Bluebells song. Four-year-olds are learning to link sounds of the alphabet to the letter names by good adult support, when completing puzzles. Children can recognise familiar words such as their names or the day of the week; they enjoy looking at books and recalling stories to their friends. There are lots of daily opportunities for children to develop their emergent writing skills. For example, children write their names on their pictures and practise at the writing table or on a wipe board which was introduced by staff to encourage boys in particular to write. Children are developing good mathematical skills. They can count confidently and can recognise numerals up to ten. Staff pose simple number problems to children during adult directed activities in the rising five session and when children sing number songs. For example, a four-year-old was able to tell the practitioner what one more than three was during the cake activity and during the 'Five little ducks' song children were encouraged to hold up two fingers, take one away, leaving one. Children often use mathematical language when talking to one another, such 'next to', 'we need a little one'.

Children are developing a good knowledge and understanding of the world through a balanced range of activities. They regularly use the computer, observe living things and enjoy model making during woodworking activities or with construction sets. For example, a four-year-old makes an elaborate speed boat out of Lego. Children often use language to describe the past or present because staff are good role models and initiate conversation. They enjoy regular musical activities with instruments, learning about the names and the different sounds they make. Children engage in a good variety of role play either initiating it themselves or when it is set up by the staff. For example, children 'pretend' to be doctors in a surgery looking in each other's ears and another child role plays a fireman by asking the adults "Who called 999? Quick, there's a fire on the house."

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

The provision is good.

Good positive images of diversity means that children have opportunities to appreciate all people in society and use a range of play resources which reflect equal opportunities. Staff respect children's individuality well and meet their needs effectively, particularly children with Special Educational Needs. Children with additional needs are very well supported at the setting because staff liaise successfully with other professionals, agencies and the child's parents. They work together to enable children to make good progress in their development. Children are keen and motivated to learn. They develop good self esteem, because staff provide

them with opportunities to feel good about themselves such as when they stand up in front of the group to talk or put their name against a face during self registration. Children build good relationships with adults and their peers with whom they often work harmoniously with. For example, two girls paint at the same easel and three boys build a model together with a construction set. Children behave well because staff are consistent in their management techniques, regularly give examples of children as good role models and are firm and direct about the expectations within the group. They positively encourage and praise children such as when the adult stated, 'I like the way you bang your drum to the beat of the song'. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is being fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. There is a high involvement by parents such as when they help during the session or prepare for the local carnival which contributes positively to the continuity of care and education. Parents are openly positive about the setting, build very good relationships with staff, who are approachable and friendly. The setting responds swiftly to suggestions and improvements made by parents after consulting them through a questionnaire at the end of the year. Parents receive regular newsletters about the setting and know about the curriculum, through good written information in the operational plan, open evenings for the rising five group and a video about the Foundation Stage. Children's developmental progress is regularly discussed informally and at formal yearly meetings; parents also receive a written report of children's progress. Staff involve parents in linking the learning to home by the themed interest table and inviting parents in to talk about their jobs and wear their uniform. Planning the next steps in children's learning is very informal with parents and not documented. Parents are aware of the complaints log and the complaints procedure.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children at the pre-school are secure and happy; they benefit from the organised environment which is set up each session. Staff have a clear sense of purpose and their sound deployment means that children are well cared for. High ratios are kept, which ensures children have good supervision and space within the hall is used well. However, not all documentation and records which underpin practice are in line with regulations, such as the recruitment and vetting procedure for newly appointed staff, which impacts on the outcome for children's safety. Staff and volunteers follow a code of practice and a suitable staff induction system is in place. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management is good. The owner and manager works effectively with her staff, is a good role model and is well supported by the supervisor and 'friends of Happy Days'. She leads a consistent, stable staff team who work well together; they have regular staff meetings, informally evaluate the overall curriculum and set yearly targets for improvements such as developing the outside area. However, planning of the curriculum is not monitored and evaluated formally to see if the children's learning objectives are achieved and all aspects within the areas of learning are covered. Staff take part in, regular in service training and attend workshops to update their

knowledge. Staff performance is informally monitored and there are systems in place for staff development. The setting has very good links within the community such as the church and the school, which impacts positively on the children and their families.

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

At the last inspection, the pre-school were required to respond to four care recommendations and two key issues relating to nursery education. The setting was required to update the complaints procedure to include contact details of the regulating authority, which is now in place. They have improved the security of the premises so that children are not able to leave them unsupervised by making and installing a special gate which children cannot open. Written parental permission to seek emergency medical advice or treatment is now in place, which contributes positively to maintaining children's health. The setting increased their resources which reflect positive images of disability; children can play with a varied range of small worlds people with the dolls house.

The group reviewed the way in which the session was structured and introduced a whole group time in the morning session to focus children on the activities on offer and to set them challenges during their free play. This was successful because the more able child would pick up on these challenges, such as writing a shopping list when in the home corner, and proudly show staff their achievements. The second issue was to find ways of displaying children's art and ways of displaying alphabet letters and numbers in appropriate positions around the room to aid teaching and learning. The setting partly responded by introducing numeral cards during singing times and a number line on the activity table. Although staff have not increased resources to display children's art work, this is not carried forward as a recommendation because it does not impact greatly on children's overall progress.

### **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.
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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.
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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):

- ensure that there are effective procedures in place for checking that new staff are suitable to work with children and that they continue to be suitable
- improve record keeping regarding, medication, accidents and the register and ensure that fire drills are regularly carried out
- enhance the outcomes for under three's by taking guidance from Birth to three matters framework

### **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):

- ensure children's assessment records are up to date and are used by the key worker and parents to plan and implement the next steps in children's learning
- monitor and evaluate the planning system regularly to ensure that children's different learning objectives are met and that all aspects within the areas of learning are successfully covered within the Foundation Stage

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