



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY279901

DfES Number:

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date	11/01/2005
Inspector Name	Christine Lynn Williams

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type	Full Day Care
Setting Name	Heathfield Pre-school and North Lodge Baby unit
Setting Address	Heathfield School Wolverley Road, Wolverley Kidderminster Worcestershire DY10 3QE

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name	Heathfield Educational Trust 4595454 4595454 1098940
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ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name	Heathfield Educational Trust 4595454
Address	Heathfield School Wolverley Road, Wolverley Kidderminster Worcestershire DY10 3QE

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Heathfield Pre-School and North Lodge baby unit is the early years section of Heathfield School, an independent co-educational day school for children from 3 months to 16 years. The school centres around a large house set in its own grounds in the Wolverly area of Kidderminster, with the pre-school and baby units operating from separate buildings within the school grounds. The pre-school and baby unit registered in 2004 and provides full day care, out of school facilities and a holiday play scheme. A maximum of 55 children may attend at any one time. The baby unit is open each weekday from 08:00 to 17:50 for 50 weeks of the year. The pre-school nursery is open term time only. Children may attend a variety of sessions. The holiday play scheme facility is open during the school summer holiday period only from 09:00 to 15:30. All children have access to secure outdoor play areas.

There are currently 54 children from 3 months to 8 years on roll within the early years section. Thirty eight children receive funding for nursery education within the pre-school and reception classes. Children generally attend from the local area and surrounding districts.

The pre-school and baby unit employs a total of 10 staff to work directly with the children, all of whom have early years qualifications to NVQ level 2 or 3. The setting receives the support of a mentor teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP).

How good is the Day Care?

Heathfield Pre-School and North Lodge baby unit provide good quality care for children. Staff are well qualified and experienced, while practice reflects the setting's detailed policies and procedures. Staffing levels and deployment are well considered, while space is used effectively with children being cared for in separate age groups. The setting is well resourced with a wide variety of interesting and stimulating equipment, and all required records, policies and procedures are in place, regularly reviewed and stored appropriately.

There are very good arrangements for maintaining high standards of health and safety. Fire precautions are good, however there is no method of ensuring sleeping and carried babies can be cared for appropriately at the fire evacuation collection point. Arrangements for first aid and medication are effective and staff are pro-active in promoting good health, with a wide variety of different hygiene and cleaning routines carefully followed to a high standard. Meal times are sociable occasions with children grouped together by age and sitting with staff to enjoy their food. Effective arrangements are in place to support and promote equality of opportunity and the development of children with special education needs and there are coherent systems for dealing with child protection issues.

A stimulating and carefully balanced range of activities are offered to ensure children of all ages learn and develop through a wide mixture of different experiences, although babies do not frequently go outside during the winter months. Strategies for dealing with behaviour are good, with staff talking quietly and affectionately to children. They model care and consideration through example and praise, and encourage them to help with simple tasks such as tidying away their toys.

A friendly and homely atmosphere is created, while a variety of effective measures ensure there is a constant two-way flow of communication between staff and parents.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- A developmental framework, toy rota and daily time table is used effectively to ensure babies and toddlers receive constant attention and stimulation.
- Baby unit staff are attentive, building close relationships with the children in their care. They provide cuddles, talk to children constantly and join in with their play.
- Security arrangements have been well organised to protect children from unauthorised visitors.
- Staff gain detailed information about the health of the children in their care to ensure their individual needs are met.
- Positive attitudes are encouraged and developed through an effective equal opportunities policy, staff attitudes and ensuring all children are included in all activities and can choose resources freely.

What needs to be improved?

- outdoor sessions for babies
- arrangements for caring for carried and sleeping babies at emergency evacuation collection points.

PREVIOUS COMPLAINTS (This section applies only to inspections carried out from September 2004. The complaint record relates to complaints from the last inspection or 1st April 2004 whichever is later.)

There are no complaints to report.

Outcome of the inspection

Good

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?

The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection

Std	Recommendation
3	Further extend the opportunities for babies to have regular outdoor sessions.
6	Further develop the fire evacuation procedure to ensure sleeping and carried babies can be cared for appropriately at the emergency collection point.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Heathfield Pre-School provides generally good nursery education. Children are making generally good progress towards the six early learning goals, with children's learning in the areas of personal, social and emotional development, mathematics and physical development being particularly strong.

Teaching is generally good with staff showing a clear understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and supporting children's mathematical and personal, social and emotional development very well. They work directly with children using well-judged interventions and questions to extend knowledge and understanding, although do not offer some activities with sufficient frequency or make the best use of role play resources to enrich the learning experience. They use very good strategies to promote good behaviour and a feeling of self-worth and set high expectations for social rules. Planning and assessment is very good, showing clear progression from nursery to reception and used carefully to ensure each child moves forward with their learning.

Leadership and management are generally good. The headteacher has developed a committed pre-school staff team who work closely together to evaluate the learning and educational programme and ensure there are clear lines of communication and dedication to the ethos of the school. Staff are actively encouraged to up-date their knowledge and work closely with other early years professionals, while the pre-school head works directly with the children and monitors practice through regular visits to other classes. However, there is no clear method of ensuring resources are used to best effect and activities are offered with sufficient frequency.

Partnerships with parents are very good, with a variety of effective measures ensuring they receive a wealth of useful information and develop close relationships with their child's keyworker. They are well informed about their children's progress and contribute to the learning at home.

What is being done well?

- Strong, positive and caring relationships are developed within the pre-school unit with children having wide opportunities to discuss and express their home lives, experiences and ideas. They benefit from learning in small groups with close adult support.
- Very imaginative and appropriate methods are used to help children link sounds to letters, with clear progression being developed for children in the nursery and reception classes. They enjoy songs, games and hand signals as part of their phonic work, while older children are beginning to recognise simple words through use of a reading scheme.
- Children are keen to participate in number games and dot-to-dot work. They

enjoy estimating and working out how many pictures to stamp in an irregular-shaped box and show good concentration and perseverance when learning through specialist maths and puzzle resources.

- Children broaden their experiences through well developed themes that help them to look at and investigate their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people. They have many opportunities to talk about their families and to discuss differences and similarities such as when talking about their birthdays, how they celebrate them and what their friends do.
- Children show a keen sense of personal space as they play alongside each other, carefully making space for their friends to join them as they play in the sand pit or when crawling inside a large cardboard box with their friends.
- Staff support children's mathematical and personal social and emotional development exceptionally well, providing a wealth of activities that encourage children to be confident, enthusiastic and motivated learners.

What needs to be improved?

- frequency of role play for younger children
- further opportunities for children to question why things happen and how things work
- best use of available resources to extend and enrich children's experience of role play and opportunities for children to write freely for a variety of purposes during their imaginary play.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Generally good progress has been made on the two points raised at the last inspection.

Children are now able to use programmable toys as part of their learning and use a tape recorder for listening to music and stories. They play purposefully with the telephone, play till and keyboard during role play and there is planned use of a television, video and language centre. The school has a policy of not introducing the use of computers to children under seven years which has limited the range of technological resources available to children within the pre-school unit.

Written information about the educational programme is now provided to parents through the pre-school handbook while details of what their children are learning and their next steps for progression under the Foundation Stage curriculum is shared with them through the Nursery Profile assessment records and daily discussions with keyworkers and staff.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident, self assured and often show real pleasure as they play and learn. They are motivated learners who show curiosity and are quick to take the initiative. Reception children are confident in tackling new situations, while nursery children show a growing sense of belonging and self-esteem. They behave very well, benefit from learning in small groups and have many opportunities to discuss and describe their home lives, experiences and ideas.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are expressive and confident speakers who listen carefully to instructions and join in enthusiastically in discussions. Four year-olds show advanced communication skills, develop good pen control and take part in a structured reading scheme. Younger children recognise their own names and take pleasure in looking at and pretending to read their favourite books to their friends. However, they do not frequently pretend to write for a purpose, particularly during role play.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Very Good

Children are confident mathematicians who develop strong counting and number skills through a wide variety of practical activities. Four-year-olds are able to count and recognise numbers reliably, while three-year-olds match, sort and group colourful resources and work out how many children are present in their class. They show excellent mathematical skills when solving simple problems and use a wide range of mathematical language to describe shape, size and position.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Generally Good

Children learn to observe and explore as they enjoy cooking, sand, water and nature walks. They watch squirrels in the school grounds and record seasonal changes on a weather board and calendar. They broaden their experiences through well developed topics and themes, and have good opportunities to build and construct using a wide range of building materials and joining equipment. They have some opportunities to question why things happen and how things work, although these are infrequent.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Very Good
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Children are physically very confident and enjoy a variety of active times throughout the day. They learn to climb, slide, kick balls and run freely during outside play, while weekly PE and music and movement sessions further enhance their experiences and body control. They show a keen sense of personal space and increasing skill and dexterity when using tools and other equipment. They use knives and forks correctly, while paint, threading and drawing tools help develop good finger control.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Generally Good
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Children explore a wide variety of colours and materials, benefiting from a careful balance of adult-led and child initiated craft activities. They mix colours, experiment with different paint techniques and explore textures as they make collage pictures. They enjoy and use music creatively during their learning and develop their sensory experiences through sand, water and cooking. Younger children's experience of imaginary play is limited by infrequency and the choice of resources.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- Place more emphasis on developing and enriching children's experience of imaginary and creative play through increasing the variety of resources and frequency of role play activities.
- Develop strategies to ensure children have increased opportunities to write freely for a variety of purposes and to question why things happen and how things work.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.