

Haven Children's Centre

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	115830
Local Authority	Hampshire
Inspection number	338662
Inspection dates	7–8 October 2009
Reporting inspector	Diane Wilkinson

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Nursery
School category	Maintained
Age range of pupils	3–5
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	140
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Susan Turle
Headteacher	June Smith
Date of previous school inspection	1 September 2006
School address	Harris Road Bridgemary, Gosport PO13 0UY
Telephone number	01329 232095
Fax number	01329 823977
Email address	adminoffice@haven.hants.sch.uk

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Royal Exchange Buildings
St Ann's Square
Manchester M2 7LA

T: 08456 404045

Textphone: 0161 618 8524

E: enquiries@ofsted.gov.uk

W: www.ofsted.gov.uk

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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by two additional inspectors. The inspectors made 11 observations of children's activities and held meetings with governors and staff as well as talking to the children. Parents bringing their children to the centre were spoken to. Inspectors observed the centre's work and looked at analyses of children's progress, governors' and senior leadership team records, development planning and monitoring, local authority reports, a range of policies and procedures including those associated with safeguarding, and curriculum planning documents. They scrutinised 29 questionnaires returned by parents and carers, and 20 returned by staff.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the centre's work. It looked in detail at the following.

- Whether there are any differences in the rate of children's progress across the six areas of learning.
- How well staff and governors have worked to improve nursery provision in the light of their increasing responsibilities for the centre's expanding work. In particular, inspectors looked at the new procedures for collecting and analysing data on children's progress.

Information about the school

Haven Children's Centre opened in 1997 and was designated a children's centre in 2004. Its nursery provides 140 part-time places for children aged three to five, including ten full-time equivalent places for children who have complex learning needs and/or disabilities. The centre is also registered to provide full day care for children under eight years of age. This provision is inspected separately. However, Nursery children can attend the breakfast, lunch, after school and holiday clubs within this provision. From the age of three, children in day care are integrated into the Nursery allowing both groups to play and learn together. The centre provides a variety of courses and drop-in support groups for parents, carers, their families and others living in the community. Other professionals and specialists including those related to family support, healthcare and portage provision are based at the centre.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

1

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

1

Main findings

The nursery provision at Haven Children's Centre is outstanding. The nursery is a magical place for children to be and in its stimulating, caring and supportive environment they thrive and develop a thirst for learning. This is the view of children and their parents. The nursery fully deserves the excellent reputation that it has in the locality. Staff provide a very valuable service to other Early Years Foundation Stage settings through sharing their expertise.

Staff have been exceptionally successful in implementing the requirements of the current Early Years Foundation Stage framework so that the emphasis on developing 'the unique child' is fully realised. They work extremely hard to ensure that activities are firmly based on children's interests and needs so that children love coming to the nursery, work very hard and make excellent progress. As a result, although standards on entry are below those expected for children of this age, by the time they leave, standards are above expectations and children are well on the way to exceeding the goals set for the end of the Early Years Foundation Stage. Progress is excellent in all areas of learning, but that made in the development of early language and literacy skills and in children's personal, social and emotional development is exceptionally good. This is due to the excellent programmes put in place to help children develop valuable skills in these areas, which support their future economic well-being especially well.

Children's welfare is exceptionally well provided for so that they feel safe and secure at all times and develop in confidence and self-esteem. The excellent support and guidance for children's development is evident in the way information in learning journey books and in the outstanding assessment and tracking systems is used to help promote children's progress. Plans are now in hand for staff to develop the skills needed for entering and analysing data on the new electronic tracking program. The nursery's outstanding relationship with parents and excellent liaison with other agencies, especially those in the centre, help support children's well-being and development especially well. The centre's highly inclusive ethos means children who have specific learning, language, physical or social needs, many of whom attend the special unit, are exceptionally well provided for and their progress is excellent. Staff go to great lengths to ensure all children participate in activities, with children fully accepting that there are some things where they can help others join in. Many parents of children who have specific needs went out of their way to ensure inspectors knew of their delight at the way the centre provides for their children.

Learning activities are outstanding because staff have an exceptionally good understanding of how children learn. Throughout all activities, children are encouraged and supported to investigate and discover new things for themselves. Staff intuitively

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intervene when necessary to move children on to the next stage of learning, for example through making an observation that engages children's interest and sets them off on a new trail to explore. This was evident when a member of staff who was sitting on the edge of the sandpit with a small group of children remarked, 'Look, my boot has made a pattern in the sand'. This led to a very enjoyable investigation into what other patterns children could make.

The nursery's success is firmly rooted in the outstanding leadership of its headteacher and the excellent support provided by the senior leadership team. They have been instrumental in helping staff and governors develop the skills and commitment to maintain the high-quality provision, as well as incorporate developments in the centre's work. Self-evaluation is extremely good because of the ongoing focus on refining and adjusting provision to meet children's changing needs. This, together with the outstanding improvement made since its last inspection, means the nursery is exceptionally well placed to maintain the excellent quality of education and care.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Develop staff skills in collating and monitoring electronic information on children's progress in order to further support evaluation of the nursery's work.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of children**1**

Children get on very well together, cooperating very effectively on tasks, such as 'washing the autumn leaves to see if they change colour'. They are capable of concentrating for a long time, being especially good at working independently. Despite the other artwork going on around them, children were, for example, completely engrossed in mixing different shades and colours, then adding a small amount of water at a time to find different textures. Children's respect and empathy for those who are different from themselves is exemplary as the result of the nursery's determination to provide an inclusive ethos in which all children can succeed. The way in which children include others with language, physical or learning needs by helping them, for example, to join in the dance and music activities, is impressive and demonstrates children's excellent contribution to nursery life. As a result, these children make the same excellent progress as their peers. Older children exhibit a maturity far beyond their years, constantly looking out for the younger ones and recognising their own rights and responsibility towards others.

A wealth of opportunities, exemplified by the thoughtful discussions they have with each other and with adults, help children develop effective communication skills. Children thoroughly enjoy learning the Makaton signs they use to communicate with children who find speech difficult. Excellent activities for teaching children the sounds in words and skilled storytelling help children enjoy books very much. At the very popular writing table, even the youngest children love pretending to write real words, carefully explaining which letters their marks stand for. Every opportunity is taken to help children count, recognise shapes and compare sizes. Even younger children easily select

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the large triangles, matching their shape in a pile, and are absorbed in finding the right object to balance the scales. Older children's number skills develop really well, with one thoughtfully putting the numbers on the magnetic board the correct way up for a child who was placing them there. Snack and meal times are excellent social occasions with children very aware of which foods help keep them healthy. They love riding the many wheeled toys around the garden, doing so safely and with good awareness of others. Such opportunities help children make very good progress in their physical development and awareness of health and safety issues. Children's excellent creative and cultural development is promoted through the wealth of opportunities for role play, music, art and drama. The art and 'theatre' areas are very popular, with inspectors enjoying a number of music and dance performances. Children's knowledge of other cultures, customs and festivals, such as Diwali, help them develop a very good awareness of cultural and religious differences.

These are the grades for children's outcomes

Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
Children's achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	1
Taking into account: Children's attainment ¹	2
The quality of children's learning and their progress	1
The quality of learning for children with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	1
The extent to which children feel safe	1
Children's behaviour	1
The extent to which children adopt healthy lifestyles	1
The extent to which children contribute to the school and wider community	1
The extent to which children develop skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	1
Taking into account: Children's attendance ¹	2
The extent of children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	1

How effective is the provision?

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low.

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Without exception, all who work with the nursery children are highly skilled practitioners, very successfully planning activities that meet each child's needs exceptionally well. Assessment gives an excellent picture of individual children's progress and is used especially well to adapt future planning. Current framework requirements for providing activities that capitalise on children's interests and promote independence are exceptionally well met. Areas that children have shown great delight in are used to learn new skills so children develop excellent attitudes to learning. For example, the role play area was set up as a hospital ward because children wanted to know what happened if you hurt yourself really badly, ensuring they were very keen to develop safety awareness. Excellent resources help children make progress in several learning areas at the same time. For example, thoughtfully chosen puzzles help children match numbers or shapes and identify different animals. Adults' skilled questioning ensures children find out things for themselves. For example, how to choose the correct resources for 'building a swing' on the computer program they were using. The excellent culture of focusing on the positive ensures errors are effectively used to help children correct misconceptions through being asked, 'Can we try to do this another way?' rather than 'That's not the way to do it'. As a result, children develop confidence and are very excited to try new things, with no fear of failure.

Excellent attention is given to ensuring that children are safe and free from harm at all times. For example, procedures for child protection and risk assessments fully meet government requirements. Outstanding induction arrangements and the excellent relationships between staff and parents help ensure pastoral care is of the highest quality. In this, the placing of both toddlers and nursery children in the same family group has considerable benefits as well as providing a coherent approach to learning. The key family workers support children exceptionally well, often remaining friends with children long after they have moved on to primary school. The support for children with particular needs and their families is of exceptionally high quality and is one reason why these children are very happy in the nursery and make excellent progress.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The quality of teaching	1
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	1
The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	1
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	1

How effective are leadership and management?

Staff and governors are exceptionally effective in ensuring that the work of the nursery is of high quality. Their ambition is very successfully driven by a shared vision of the

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experiences children should have during their time at Haven. They are especially reflective about their practice, continually seeking ways in which to adapt and extend what is already of outstanding quality. This is clearly evident in the centre's success in developing provision to meet the requirements of the new Early Years Foundation Stage framework for both nursery and day-care children. All staff and governors spoken to during the inspection demonstrate an enthusiasm and commitment that is translated into the exceptionally positive ethos evident throughout the centre. Children and their families greatly benefit from this because of the way the centre engages with them and ensures that different agencies work especially closely together. For example, the centre regularly hosts case conferences on behalf of vulnerable children and runs very successful courses to help parents support their children's education and welfare. Children's enthusiasm for learning and confidence in their safety is significantly supported by the way in which the centre has worked to provide a fully cohesive community for all who work and learn there. The steps which the nursery and other settings and agencies that use the centre take to support the needs of each child and their family means the equality of opportunity the nursery provides is excellent. Governors are extremely hardworking and very well informed. They use their expertise exceptionally well to support the nursery's work, for example in helping to provide the outstanding policies and procedures for safeguarding children. In this aspect of their work, both staff and governors are extremely vigilant with regard to children's safety and welfare.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in the Early Years Foundation Stage	1
The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	1
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	1
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	1
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	1
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	1
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	1
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	1
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	1

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Views of parents and carers

Although only a small number of parents and carers returned the questionnaire, a similar number were spoken to when they brought their children to the breakfast club or the nursery. Virtually all are positive about every aspect of the nursery's work and are full of praise for how much their children enjoy their time there. For example one parent told the inspectors, 'He'd rather be here than at home!', with another whose child has special educational needs commenting, 'It's fantastic'. Parents are very appreciative of the way in which staff take the trouble to provide for their child's individual needs and the way in which they are helped to learn new things. Parents use words like 'caring' and 'dedicated' to describe the staff. Although one parent raised a concern with regard to children's welfare, the vast majority of parents and inspectors consider this to be exceptionally well provided for. As one parent wrote, 'I can happily leave my child and know she is totally safe here'.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of children registered at Haven Early Years Centre Nursery to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 12 statements about the school.

The inspector received 29 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 140 children registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	23	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	23	79	6	21	0	0	0	0
The school informs me about my child's progress	18	62	11	38	0	0	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	18	62	9	31	0	0	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	21	72	7	24	0	0	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	14	48	13	45	0	0	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	22	76	7	24	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	14	48	12	41	0	0	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	18	62	9	31	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	18	62	8	28	1	1	0	0
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	16	55	10	34	0	0	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	17	59	11	38	0	0	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	24	83	5	17	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for its children's needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its children well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its children.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its children. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves

Overall effectiveness of schools inspected between September 2007 and July 2008

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	39	58	3	0
Primary schools	13	50	33	4
Secondary schools	17	40	34	9
Sixth forms	18	43	37	2
Special schools	26	54	18	2
Pupil referral units	7	55	30	7
All schools	15	49	32	5

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above were reported in The Annual Report of Her Majesty's Chief Inspector of Education, Children's Services and Skills 2007/08.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a child in their learning and development.
Attainment:	in other phases of school, for example primary schools, attainment is the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons. However, there is no national average for three- and four-year-olds. Therefore, in inspections of nursery schools, inspectors take account of expectations in the age-related bands of the Early Years Foundation Stage.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well children acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of children.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets children's needs, including where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which children are learning in nursery sessions and over longer periods of time.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



9 October 2009

Dear Children

Inspection of Haven Early Years Centre Nursery, Gosport, PO13 0UY

Both Mr Curtis and I very much enjoyed the time we spent in your nursery and loved watching all the exciting things you do. We think your nursery is excellent and are very pleased that you and your parents think so too.

Here are some of the things we found out that were especially good about the nursery.

- You love coming, have lots of fun and spend the whole time finding out about new things because all the activities help you to do really well.
- You are all very kind to each other and those of you who have been in the nursery a long time are especially good at looking after the younger ones and helping to get things out or tidy away.
- All the staff are especially good at helping you to do your best.
- They are excellent at looking after you as well and we are very impressed that you all know who you can ask for help at any time.
- Your parents and carers told us that nursery staff are very good at telling them how well you are doing and how they can help you at home. We agree with them.

Here is what we have asked your nursery to improve.

- Staff are very good at keeping a check on how well you are doing and they have a new computer program for doing this. We have asked them to make sure that all staff are trained to use this.

Thank you again for showing us all the lovely things you enjoy at nursery.

Di Wilkinson

Lead inspector

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