



Hemsley House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY260056
Inspection date	26 October 2006
Inspector	Vanessa Wood
Setting Address	137 Tonbridge Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME16 8JS
Telephone number	01622 692977
E-mail	
Registered person	Hemsley House Childcare Ltd
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hemsley House Day Nursery has been registered since 2003 under new ownership. It operates from a large house in Maidstone. There are seven rooms, plus areas for changing nappies and toileting and a kitchen. A maximum of 48 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:30 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 45 children aged from two years to five years on roll. Of these, 17 children receive funding for early years education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently does not support children with special needs or children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs nine members of staff and a cook on a full time basis. All hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children's good health is promoted because the premises are generally maintained to a good standard of hygiene and cleanliness. Effective systems to reduce the risk of infection are implemented. For example, paper towels are provided after hand washing and children are provided with a clean sheet when they take a nap after lunch. Children learn about the importance of a healthy diet because staff provide well balanced snacks, such as a banana milk shake and fruit and vegetables to eat. A cook works on the premises to ensure children have a healthy hot meal at lunchtime. The menu for the week is put on the notice board for parents' information. Children have access to drinking water at all times. Children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise as they enjoy regular opportunities to play outdoors in the large garden. For example, on the hard surface they ride bikes, use hoops and scooters and have access to sand trays. The large grass area has a selection of climbing and balancing apparatus which ensure all aspects of physical development are met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children's safety is promoted because there are clear risk assessments in place including a daily check on rooms and the garden before children arrive. All identified hazards have been made safe and staff are vigilant and supervise children at all times. Organisation of activities and resources enables children to move freely around the rooms where they play. Child height furniture enables children to play in comfort. Staff give much thought to making toys and activities freely available to children but due to the layout of the rooms many toys and activities are still stored on high shelves on the walls which prevents children's ability to self select. Fire evacuation procedures are in place and practised regularly to ensure everyone knows what to do in an emergency and visits from the fire brigade helps to consolidate children's understanding of fire safety. Systems for monitoring access to the premises is in place and consistent procedures for the safe departure of children are implemented to ensure children are only permitted to leave the setting with an authorised adult. Children's welfare is safeguarded because staff have a clear understanding of child protection procedures. Written child protection procedures are in place and staff have a good awareness of how to implement this in practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children settle quickly and are keen to embark on a range of equipment that has been set out for them. Staff know the children well and have a caring, nurturing approach. They work closely with the children and children respond well, trying new ideas and make effective use of the toys and resources. Children's confidence and self-esteem is enhanced because the staff praise

and encourage them for things done well. Staff have undertaken training in the Birth to three matters framework and there has been some planning to incorporate this into the daily plans. However, the framework needs to be fully implemented in order to plan for children's next steps in their development.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Most staff have a knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. A key worker system is in place and children move between rooms for maths, art and craft, and imaginary play in their key worker groups. This restricts their full independence because they can only play with what is available in the room. Some activities available for play do not offer enough challenge for all children in order to extend their learning. Most resources are stored in boxes on shelves high up on the walls of the play rooms. Children are asked what they would like to play with, but again this restricts children's free choice. Curriculum planning is prepared in advance, although staff use the weekly plans flexibly in order to adjust to the needs of the children. Assessments of children's development are recorded and used to inform future planning.

Children settle quickly as they are greeted by the staff and peers. They speak openly and confidently to staff during routines, such as at snack time and circle time, about things that are important to them. They have regular opportunities to sing songs with actions and there is a weekly music session with a professional music teacher when children learn about different instruments and about rhyme. Children listen to stories and are learning phonic sounds as they are reminded of the sounds of letters. Their vocabulary is extended with words, such as chlorophyll, as staff talk about the seasons and why the leaves on the trees change colour. Children are beginning to recognise their name and some older children can write their names, but staff are sometimes too eager to write the child's name for them. Children have a good understanding of numbers and are encouraged to compare them to everyday situations such as counting the days of the week. They show a growing understanding of addition and subtraction through routines such as snack and lunch time when they help to set the tables. New computers have been installed to help children's understanding of information technology. There are good opportunities for children to explore and investigate using magnets to look at insects they have found in the garden. There is a large garden area for physical outdoor play, but there are few opportunities to use this area for other aspects of the curriculum. Children enjoy role play as they act out familiar home scenarios. The room for art and craft is well used and children delight in painting, playing with dough and sand.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are settled and enjoy a consistent and organised routine which enables them opportunities to be active and to relax. Children learn about people in the community who help them, such as the fire brigade. They learn about other cultures and beliefs during topics throughout the year. Good relationships develop between the children, their peers and the staff. All children are respected and valued as individuals and they are treated with equal concern. Staff have a good understanding of how to support children with special needs, although the responsible person for special needs at the nursery has not completed the final

stage of training. Staff work closely to provide a consistent behaviour management approach to support children. Clear boundaries are set and behaviour is managed in a positive way. As a result, children's behaviour is good. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Staff regularly talk to parents to exchange information about what children are learning. Newsletters are regularly sent out and information via the new website helps keep parents informed about their children's care and learning. Parents are given information about the curriculum and ideas for continuing the learning intention at home. They have regular access to children's records and assessments and the manager is available at all times to talk to parents about any concerns. Key workers are in place to support children and their families.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Good deployment of staff contributes to the positive outcomes for children. Children receive a balanced range of opportunities to meet their individual needs. All staff hold a recognised childcare qualification and are encouraged to take regular training to build on their skills and enhance their practice. Clear policies and procedures give parents full information about aims and objectives of the nursery. All mandatory records and documentation are in place and completed correctly.

Leadership and Management is satisfactory. Systems for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the effectiveness of the nursery education with the staff is not comprehensive. The space in the rooms means that most resources are stored on high shelves on the walls and inaccessible to children. As a result, children are not able to independently select activities and play materials. The outdoor play space is not used to promote all areas of learning and some planned activities do not offer sufficient challenge to all children. The staff are deployed well and work together as a team to support one another.

The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the registered person was required to complete three recommendations. These were to effectively organise staff deployment, particularly during the lunch time period; to encourage children to undertake more activities that allow them to explore and investigate and to provide children with more independence in their choice of play.

Staff have made good progress in all areas. Additional staff have been recruited to cover the lunch time period to ensure this runs smoothly. Plans show that children are encouraged to explore the environment, for example, the last project was on 'mini beasts' when children investigate the life cycles of various insects and learn about where they live. Children are now given independence to choose their play activities. However, the nursery environment does not allow for children to have a full choice of resources and this can mean that children are not given enough challenge in their learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since 1 April 2004 there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

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):

- continue to develop staffs knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework to enhance care and education for children under three years
- ensure one member of staff has completed the special needs training

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):

- improve organisation to ensure children have independent access to all resources and that planned activities provide challenge to all children
- ensure children are given opportunities to develop emergent writing skills
- develop the garden to provide a range of activities to promote the early learning goals
- ensure staff appraisals evaluate the quality of teaching

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk