

Robin Hill Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	109311
Inspection date	18 April 2007
Inspector	Sue Taylor
Setting Address	23 Fairfield Road, Eastbourne, East Sussex, BN20 7NA
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Registered person	Karen Edgerton
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?

Robin Hill Nursery is privately owned and opened in 1989. It operates from the ground and first floor of a large house in a residential area of Eastbourne. A maximum of 40 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open from 8:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday, throughout the year, with children attending a variety of sessions. The nursery provides out of school care for children aged under eight years, from 15:00 to 18:00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 121 children aged from two to under eight years on roll. Of these, 90 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local area. The nursery currently supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities.

The nursery employs 14 members of staff. Of these, 10 hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in clean premises with good ventilation. There are effective procedures in place for nappy changes that maintain hygienic practices, such as staff using disposable gloves. Generally, children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating, although this is not always happening, particularly with the younger children. Resources are clean and there are regular times throughout the year when staff wipe them down with antibacterial wash. Staff clean tables and named placemats before they are used for meals. However, the practice of placing food directly on the table or placemat is not teaching children good habits.

Most staff have valid first aid training certificates, this ensures that they are aware of current practices in dealing with accidents. There are effective systems in place for the recording of accidents and medication administration. Clear information informs parents of the nursery policy relating to the care of sick children, helping to prevent cross infection.

The older children have easy access to drinking water throughout the day. Downstairs, the younger children are offered regular drinks but they can not access these themselves, which lessens their ability to control their own thirst needs. Children have a healthy snack including fruit and raw vegetables. The lunch menu is displayed, allowing parents to know what their child is eating and is generally a balanced meal. However, the snack tea of a sandwich and biscuit is not nutritious.

Children have good opportunities for play in the fresh air with garden play planned for daily. Staff devise activities that help develop children's abilities and skills. For example, they practise throwing and catching balls or using bats. They learn to climb and slide or balance as they use the ramp. Their hand-eye coordination develops as they use a range of tools and equipment, such as paintbrushes, pencils and scissors. There are less challenges for the more able child through the use of more complex tools.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The nursery has a security system that enables parents to access the building through the use of a fob. This works well in practice, with parents who are very aware they are not to open the door to others. Risk assessments, carried out with hazards minimised, enable children to explore their room safely. The staff are vigilant and supervise children well.

A named member of staff is responsible for health and safety; this ensures issues are dealt with promptly. There is a system in place to ensure toys and resources used by the children are safe and in good condition. Staff place activities on the floor or on tables so that children can make free choices about their play and access resources safely. Other choices are stored in low boxes that children can easily reach. Children learn to keep themselves safe through staff giving clear explanations to them.

The staff have a secure understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse, supported by some good guidance that is easily accessed. This ensures staff quickly recognise when a child is being abused and can act in the child's best interest. The policy is clear about the procedures to follow should there be concerns about a child in their care. This promotes and safeguards children's welfare.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children arrive, happy to be at nursery and settle quickly. They spend good levels of time with their key worker, who gets to know them well. Staff ask good questions of children to get them to think. However, at times there is only one member of staff with a group of children involved in different activities, so interactions are not as positive. The planning for the younger children relates to the Birth to three matters framework. It clearly shows the links between planned activities and proposed learning objectives. Children's achievements are noted in line with the framework. The system is due to change, as currently it does not record the observations that indicate how a child has met a milestone. There is no formal planning for individual children's next steps, with staff relying on their own knowledge of the children during play activities to support or extend.

Children have daily opportunities for messy activities in the art room and garden play. Although, the children had pre-cut templates for a craft activity, they were able to use their own ideas and imagination as they decorate them using a wide range of materials. The varied activities keep children motivated and interested. They are able to explore objects such as shells in the garden discovery room; however, there are very few natural items in the playroom to offer an alternative to plastic toys. The younger children have fun as they wear dressing up clothes that link to a current theme. The children who arrive after school are cared for by consistent staff who informally plan varied activities such as garden play, arts and crafts and games.

The younger children can easily reach the resources and most spend time concentrating well at an activity of their choice. They make up stories with their friends as they use the play materials together. They enjoy singing and listening to stories. There is a wide selection of books available on high shelves, however children's choices are limited to the selection given to them by staff. There is no cosy area where children can share books with staff or friends in comfort.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress in their learning. The staff have a good understanding and knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They plan for a wide range of activities that helps support children's learning. The weekly plans show which stepping stones, under each of the six areas of learning, are the intended learning objectives.

Staff know their key children well and adapt activities to suit their learning needs, although the more able child is not always fully challenged. There is no formal system noting what individual children's next steps are and this limits the ability of other staff to ensure children are suitably supported or challenged throughout the day. Staff regularly record observations as children play. These are used to illustrate how a child met a stepping stone in the Stepping Forward assessment profiles. Not all of the profiles are up to date, meaning that the detail recorded does not always match where children actually are in their learning.

Children are confident and very aware of the nursery routines. They know where their work trays are to put drawings in, to take home. Staff create a child centred environment where children's work is well displayed and labelled. This shows children their work is valued. The older children gain some independence as they pour their own drinks and access the toilet when they need. This is not available to the younger children when they are downstairs.

Children communicate well with the staff and each other. They listen well and enjoy stories. The book area is not inviting and most children show little interest in accessing books themselves. Factual books are used well to support activities. The older children recognise their names easily. Staff introduce letter sounds using name cards and through the letter of the week.

The older children count confidently and most recognise familiar numbers. They show an understanding of simple calculation during action songs. This aspect is not fully explored by staff during everyday routines such as snack time. Children use size language in their play. There is a good range of interesting resources upstairs to support children's learning.

Children have good opportunities for exploring and investigating. A garden room has been turned into a discovery room that supports children's developing knowledge of their environment. For example, they use a range of magnifying resources to explore natural items or minibeasts. They get to help care for plants in the garden. For example, strawberries and carrots, when they can then taste the results. Most children regularly access the computer. They have good mouse control and understanding of how the programmes work. There is limited planning of activities for children to gain an awareness of the wider world.

Children's imagination and creative ideas are promoted. They get very involved in role play, supported by the available resources. Children love the music and singing sessions, joining in with enthusiasm. They get to play a number of instruments including a guitar. As well as accompanying their own singing, they are beginning to learn about rhythms and experiment with sound. The art rooms have a wide range of materials and textures that children freely use in their art activities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed into the nursery and develop positive relationships with the staff. They are valued as individuals and specific needs such as dietary requirements are met. The toilet situation is not ideal, for example there is only a partition between two toilets meaning that children's privacy is not supported. This is a particular issue with maintaining dignity for the older children who attend after school.

There is appropriate support for children with learning difficulties. Individual educational plans are devised with other professionals and parents to help maximise children's learning experiences. The nursery has a good attitude to inclusion but the environment does not reflect this and there are few resources that positively reflect other cultures and disability. This limits children's growing awareness of the wider world.

Children behave well. They respond to staff requests, such as to help tidy up and enjoy getting hand stickers. Staff manage behaviour well. They give descriptive praise to children that helps them learn about acceptable behaviour. During activities, staff talk to children about feelings and emotions. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Positive relationships develop with parents. Information relating to the nursery, such as policies and procedures, are on display in the entrance hall. Parents are able to spend time looking at the range of supporting documentation. They get to know their child's keyworker and can view children's work. Home contact books are available for all children, although these are not always well used.

The partnership with parents of nursery education children is satisfactory. Consultations are held where children's progress towards the early learning goals is discussed with key workers. However, as some of the profiles are not up to date the supporting detail is not always accurate. Suggestions about home activities to support the themes are available. There is, however, little detail shared about how parents can contribute to the assessment profiles or support individual children's learning at home. There is some basic information about the Foundation Stage curriculum that gives parents an awareness of how children learn through play.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The recruitment and induction process is thorough and helps ensure staff are suitable to work with children. Staff are very aware of who can be left alone with children and detail about criminal record clearances is clear. The organisation of the day runs smoothly and there is no confusion as children move around the different rooms in the nursery and garden. It is positive that children have a varied day, though the regular room changes does mean that sometimes a child has to finish an activity before they are ready to do so.

All relevant records, consents, policies and written procedures are in place, with the required regulatory detail included. These are shared with staff and parents. There is a complaints record available and parents are aware of the process for making a complaint. There is also a suggestions box.

Leadership and management are good. The staff work well together as a team and relate positively to the children, parents and to each other. Their professional development is well supported with regular appraisals and through access to training. The owner attends the regular staff meetings and is often at the nursery. This gives her the opportunity to get to know the children and parents. She and the manager work together in monitoring the provision. However, there is no effective checking system to ensure assessment profiles are completed. Development plans are devised and reflect a commitment to improving the quality of care and education. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Progress has been made on the recommendations made at the last care inspection. Additional staff time has been arranged to cover staff lunch breaks. This ensures that the correct adult to child ratios are met at all times. Records are kept to note achievements made by the two-year-olds in line with the Birth to three matters framework. Observations are made but currently these are not recorded. There are suitable arrangements in place for the care of children attending with educational learning needs. The toilet facilities have been altered but the arrangement is not effective at ensuring the dignity and privacy of children.

Development plans were devised following the key issues identified at the last nursery education inspection. Progress has been made. Staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation stage has improved. Planning is in place and takes account of children's learning needs although individual needs are not always taken into account in the planning. Observations are recorded and used to complete assessment profiles. However these are not always up to date.

There are opportunities for children to develop hand writing skills throughout the day. However, at times staff are not always proactive in encouraging children to try to write their name on their pictures. There are good opportunities for children to explore and use their imagination.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection 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):

- improve the provision of healthy and nutritional meals, particularly at tea time
- improve accessibility to books and make the book corner more inviting
- develop children's awareness of the wider world through improved activities and resources that positively reflect diversity, including disability
- consider improvements to the use of toilets by children and staff, particularly for the older children in providing dignity and privacy

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 all assessment profiles are kept up to date and are used effectively to plan for children's next steps in their learning, taking into account individual needs for support or challenge (also applies to care)
- continue to develop the partnership with parents in supporting their child's individual learning needs at home and in sharing up to date assessment records

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