

Highwood Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	110350
Inspection date	15 May 2007
Inspector	Clare Moore
Setting Address	Highwood Road, Brockenhurst, Hampshire, SO42 7RY
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Registered person	Brockenhurst College
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Highwood Day Nursery is managed by Brockenhurst College and opened in 1991. The nursery is situated in the village of Brockenhurst in Hampshire. It operates from a large detached property, including a separate annex and has an enclosed outside play area.

A maximum of 74 children under eight years may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 141 children from three months to eight years and 20 children from eight to 11 years on roll. An After School and Holiday Club are included as part of the provision. There are 49 children receiving funding for nursery education. The nursery is open each weekday all year round from 08.00 to 18.00. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are three children attending who speak English as an additional language and the nursery welcomes children who have learning difficulties and disabilities. The nursery employs 22 staff most of whom, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are protected very well from becoming ill. Older children help to wipe down the tables before snacks and meals using anti-bacterial spray. They are helped to understand that washing their hands before handling food keeps them healthy. Most of the time they wash their hands using fresh water which helps to prevent the spread of infection. There are also effective policies that ensure sick children do not attend the setting. Toys and equipment are kept spotlessly clean through regular maintenance. Baby feeds are made up as required which further reduces the risk of contamination.

Children are very well nourished. They are offered healthy snacks of, for example, raisins and fresh fruit. High quality home cooked meals are prepared daily on the premises by the cook using fresh ingredients. A menu is posted up showing a varied diet so that parents and staff know what is on offer. Good systems are in place to ensure children who have food allergies or adverse re-actions are not exposed to foods that may cause harm. Children are offered a choice of milk or water to drink and water is available at all times to ensure children do not become thirsty.

The opportunities for children to take part in vigorous outdoor activities and to develop their motor skills and physical abilities are very good. They enjoy exercise and are able to use the outdoor area on most days including experiencing wet weather. They have frequent opportunities to climb, balance and practise ball skills in games and play when they throw, catch and use bats and rackets. They ride tricycles and use one leg to push themselves along as they ride the scooter. They balance on tyres and control how their body moves when they fit their hands and feet on to the hand and foot patterns that are placed in different directions on the ground. They develop arm strength as they slide down the fireman's pole. Indoors they take part in dance and action rhymes. This promotes well-being, stimulates thinking and helps to keep them fit and healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are safe as the setting is secure and only those authorised to do so can gain entry. Very good safety practices are in place, for example during collection from school a high ratio is maintained and children are escorted safely. They wear luminous jackets and staff carry emergency contact details and mobile phones. Thorough risk assessments are carried out daily indoors and on the outside area which includes the toys and equipment. Babies are checked regularly when they are asleep and monitors are used to back this up. Older children's awareness of safety is raised very effectively through visitors to the setting. For example a policeman helps them to understand road safety and who to go to for help if they are parted from those they know and a fireman tells them about fire safety. Children take part in regular fire practices, and the safe evacuation of babies is assured through the use of a specially designed wheeled trolley which enables a number of babies to leave the building at once.

Children learn about what is dangerous and how to keep themselves safe, for example they walk carefully with the scissors they have fetched from storage holding them firmly closed and walking to the table. A fully enclosed safety-surfaced outdoor area is equipped with sturdy

outdoor apparatus that children can use all the year round. The new surface helps to prevent and minimise injury if children slip or trip.

Children are safeguarded as staff are well informed about child protection. There are clear confidential reporting and recording systems in place which helps to ensure children are protected.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled. They are secure with the staff and have good self esteem. They are warmly greeted by the staff as they arrive and are supported as they separate from their parents.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is used very well to plan and monitor younger children's progress. Children enjoy books, stories and rhymes which helps them to develop language skills. They are warmly praised and encouraged, for example celebrating when taking their first uncertain steps and using the Makaton sign to say good morning at registration. Staff provide opportunities for them to snuggle in and to develop a sense of self through the provision of mirrors and playing games such as peek-a-boo. As they develop they have opportunities to use their imagination using paints in a variety of ways and re-cycled materials for sticking and making collage. They all enjoy being a 'special helper' and take turns to set the tables and serve meals. The rooms are very well equipped with a broad variety of resources many of which children can select for themselves as they are stored at child height and clearly marked. For example in the 'Squirrels' room there is a fixed wall activity and sensory board which includes a toy telephone, mirrors, coloured banded wheel, cogs, wheels. It makes a variety of different sounds, has colour and light effects and is much enjoyed by the children.

Children are supported well when they make transitions from one room to another. They are eased through with introductions and visits to the new group with the key worker, staff liaise with parents and this helps them to settle in smoothly and happily. Children with siblings at the nursery have regular opportunities to interact with them when they meet up with different age groups outside.

At the after school club children are fully involved in planning their activities. They enjoy using play station, singing and computer games. Outside they play energetic games such as rounders, tennis and using the parachute. They enthusiastically take part in Chinese New Year festivities designing and making a colourful dragon with cardboard and paper then acting out the ceremony.

Nursery Education

Children develop language skills as they take part in conversations with staff. They learn new vocabulary through topics, for example 'planet' , 'astronaut' and 'gravity', as they share a book about space and take part in group discussions. Children start to recognise their names as staff have made up name cards that the children use to put on a board when they go outside. They also have names on their mugs and children have frequent opportunities to develop pencil skills during mark making activities. They start to link sounds to letters when they are asked whose name begins with a specific sound or consider the sound of the first letter of the month and make links thinking about what other words start with the same sound. They use chalks to draw

and write their names on the play surface outside and they trace astronauts during the current topic on space.

Children explore counting backwards as they work with the space topic and count down for take off with the rockets they have made. They count up to the date of the month each day proudly showing their skill with the more able children showing their enthusiasm by counting well beyond the date. They count out how many knives and forks they need to set the table. Children further explore maths in practical activities, weighing the flour for the bread and cake making. They explore shape when they observe the ice cubes melting into different shapes, and when they fit together interlocking plastic bricks and cardboard tubes to cones to make rockets.

Children are captivated as they observe the effect of the breeze created by the electric fan on the paper aeroplanes they have made with help from the staff. They are fascinated and excited as they see the aeroplanes come to life and propelled upwards and in different directions in the air flow.

They find out about growth and plants as they sow seeds and bring on pansies which make a colourful display in the outdoor area, enhancing the environment. They explore change as they see the ice melt and take part in bread making when a practitioner brings in her bread machine.

They become familiar with technology as they use the robotic dome, programming it to make sounds and travel in the direction they have set. They also use a computer and explore a tape recorder and headphones.

Children explore cultures and beliefs as they consider weddings in a topic and find out about the variety of ceremonies in different cultures. They share books about different cultures and celebrate their own birthdays with singing and sometimes sharing a cake. They build up a picture of the past, sharing photographs that staff take and sharing memories of, for example, when they sowed the grass seed, when a practitioner brought in some puppies and when the fence was built.

Children develop hand-eye co-ordination and small muscle skills through a variety of activities. For example they help to clear away when the sand gets spilt, using the dustpan and brush, they use knives and forks skilfully to eat their lunch. They pour their own drinks from jugs, and in the water tray they pour between plastic bottles. Children use a variety of shapes and tools as they manipulate the play dough, for example rolling pins, cutters and extruders. This helps them to develop the fine control that they need to use to write, draw, colour and paint.

Children have frequent opportunities to explore a variety of media and materials. They use re-cycled materials to make rockets and collage, they paint in different ways, for example making foot prints using their Wellington boots. They explore malleable materials such as coloured play dough and plasticine, sometimes with glitter or with different smells. They enjoy expressing themselves to music, joining in with favourite songs, playing musical instruments and moving to the music using props such as scarves to swirl and create special effects as in the planets in space.

The role play area is set up, decorated and furnished in a variety of imaginative ways to work with current topics, for example a space station, post office, restaurant and surgery. Children and staff work together using ideas, for example in the space station children do splatter painting and use shiny paper to make shooting stars to create an effective scene. However

children are not always effectively supported by staff to develop a narrative or introduce a story line to extend the role play.

The quality of the teaching and learning is good. Staff work together to make plans and these are clearly linked to the areas of learning in the Foundation Stage. They make observations of the children and all the children have individual targets based on what they already know and can do. Each child has a 'Personal Development Record' where their progress is documented and this is supported with examples of work. Most staff have a good understanding of the way children learn and the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Staff ensure older children are sufficiently challenged by adapting activities, for example encouraging older children to write names on work, do more difficult tracings, be more independent when folding and joining as they make their paper aeroplanes and rockets.

Staff explain the activities clearly to the children and encourage them with praise for their achievements. Children show pride in their work and carefully place it in their own labelled boxes to take home.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are included as staff are committed. For example they use Makaton sign language which helps younger children and also children with additional languages to communicate and to be included. Children with special needs are identified at an early stage which enables support to be put into action when it is most effective. Staff liaise sensitively with parents and work together with professionals to help children to develop their potential.

Children are co-operative. They take responsibility by helping to tidy up at the end of play sessions. They are supported in turn taking, sometimes using the giant sand timers to time themselves when resources are limited. They are praised for remembering to be polite. Older children help the younger ones, for example when they go out they sometimes help with coats and boots, as 'helper of the day', and taking charge to ask children to go and wash their hands before lunch following on from the group activity. Also new children are paired up with older ones who can be on hand to act as guides and find things. Children find out about re-cycling and use separate bins for materials that can be re-cycled.

Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is good. Staff work closely with parents and relationships are open, trusting, friendly and professional. This helps to ensure children are secure and settled. Parents are well informed about the setting through the prospectus, notice board, newsletters, daily and weekly diaries. There is a clear complaints procedure and the Ofsted poster inviting comments from parents is displayed. Parents are consulted about their views and are invited in during the year to discuss their children's welfare and development. A key worker photograph board helps parents and children to identify their key worker. Parents are given opportunities to contribute to their children's records and ideas to help their children to make progress. They are highly involved through a flourishing parent committee and are very supportive in fund raising and practical help.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom they provide. The rigorous recruitment system includes the taking up of references to ensure that the staff who work with the children are suitable to do so. Staff are very well motivated and supported. Induction procedures are established and staff have time set aside through the year to attend training, much of which is in-house. They share knowledge with each other, cascading training to their colleagues. They have an appraisal system which explores their development, achievements, training needs and involves them in the process. Staffing levels are good and the majority of staff hold early years qualifications.

Space is well organised so that children can reach their toys and resources. The pre-school is divided into two groups and these are flexible so that children can use the space and resources in both areas.

There are very good contingencies in place so that when staff are absent at short notice the ratios are maintained. All the documentation that underpins the setting is very well organised and all elements are covered. Attendance registers for children and staff, accident, incident and administration of medicines are in each room and record all the necessary information.

The leadership and management are good. Activities are carefully evaluated and records kept for future reference. The staff team meets every six weeks to plan topics, evaluate and discuss the success of previous topics. Staff liaise with other agencies to develop their knowledge and expertise, for example the National Day Nurseries Association, the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership and the Pre-School Learning Alliance. Staff monitor children's activities so that they can help children to participate in the full curriculum.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was asked to encourage children's independence at snack and meal times and develop documentation regarding medicines and the event of a child not being collected. As soon as they are able babies are now encouraged to feed themselves and older children acting as helpers serve their peers at meal times. This helps children to be independent. The policies have now been updated which helps to ensure children are well cared for and unexpected events are covered.

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.

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 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 explore ways to facilitate children cleaning their hands so that they can use water of a comfortable temperature or use other methods that avoid any risk of cross infection

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):

- build on the imaginative role play sets by developing the staff interaction in role play to enhance the learning experiences of the children.

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