

Hanslope Pre-School

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	141808
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Inspector	Sarah Fletcher
Setting Address	Village Hall, Newport Road, Hanslope, Milton Keynes, MK19 7NZ
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Registered person	Hanslope Pre-School
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Hanslope Pre-School opened in 2001 and is run by a committee of parents. It operates from the local hall in the village of Hanslope, which is situated between Milton Keynes and Northampton. A maximum of 32 children may attend the pre-school at any one time. The pre-school is open each weekday from 09.30 to 12.00 during term time and occasionally runs a holiday playscheme. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area. There are currently 38 children aged from 2 to under 5 years on roll. Of these 23 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from the local residential areas. The pre-school employs nine staff. Five of the staff, including the play leader, hold appropriate early years qualifications. Three staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines. They show a developing awareness of self care and awareness of hygiene routines, with the youngest children beginning to learn by copying their peers and good staff role models. Older children follow and understand simple good health and hygiene practices, for example, washing their hands before eating, after using the toilet and helping themselves to tissues as required to wipe their own noses. They use the toilet independently; with younger children receiving appropriate levels of supervision. Children understand the need to wear aprons for messy play and wash their hands afterwards with little prompting. The staff protect children from the spread of infection by following a clear sickness policy and using anti-bacterial sprays to clean surfaces and changing mats. Documentation relating to children's individual health is fully complete and shared with parents, for example, records clearly show children's accidents, allergy information and administration of medicines with parental permission appropriately obtained.

Children have their health and dietary needs met because the staff work well with parents. They ensure they meets parents' wishes and children's preferences, together with any religious or dietary requirements to nourish children in their care. For example, any allergy documentation is clear to all staff and is easily available, together with details of procedure to follow if child with serious allergies becomes ill. Children are nourished and receive a variety of fresh fruit and vegetables during their snacks, such as carrot, banana, tomato, apple or cucumber slices, which they choose from independently. Children are encouraged to be hygienic and dispose of their rubbish and utensils appropriately after use. They receive regular drinks of water or milk throughout the session, with water constantly available for children to drink when they are thirsty. Staff offer high levels of interaction with all age groups during snacktime, praising their efforts of developing independence as they choose their food, pour their own drink or successfully manage their own milk carton straw.

Children learn about healthy living with good opportunities for exercise on a daily basis and access to a wide range of outdoor play equipment. They are beginning to be aware of changes in their body temperature and quickly put on coats before going outside. Children are able to take organised walks around the community and visit the local school periodically. They can rest according to their needs on comfortable beanbags and soft sofa chairs, which are in the library and quiet area. Children move confidently and safely outdoors, using tricycles and scooters or pushing several dolls buggies side by side. They move with increasing control and co-ordination, pedalling tricycles successfully and pushing scooters with one foot. Children use balancing equipment, such as the balancing beam and show good spatial awareness when taking turns to negotiate the outdoor area on pedal vehicles. Children handle malleable materials safely with increasing control, developing their skills for moulding, pressing and squeezing with the playdough. They improve their hand and eye co-ordination using glue sticks, balancing measuring bricks and using one handed tools such as scissors, pens and chalks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in warm and welcoming premises, where staff provide a secure and safe indoor and outside environment, which is clean and well maintained. Staff ensure children

remain secure using sound alarms on external doors which are regularly tested to ensure no children can go out of the hall un-noticed. Safety gates separate areas unsafe for children, such as stacked chairs and empty storage boxes, with doors closed to the kitchen and the walk-in storage cupboard. Space is planned to allow safe free movement between activities and equipment; risk assessments are completed in the spacious hall and in the fully enclosed outdoor area. Children use a good range of suitable and safe equipment, toys and resources, which are easily accessible, age appropriate and carefully checked for wear and tear by the staff on a regular basis.

Children are safe and secure in the staff's care, as they reduce risks and hazards and minimise dangers within the pre-school and outdoors. For example, rooms have appropriate safety precautions, such as smoke detectors and socket covers. There are no trailing wires and all dangerous liquids are stored out of children's reach in the kitchen or storage areas. Good security systems are in place for preventing unauthorised adults entering the building and staff keep children under close supervision indoors and outside. Staff maintain close supervision on children at all times with secure collection procedures, using authorised adults and a password system. Children have a growing awareness of their own safety and staff invite them to help tidy toys away to prevent tripping accidents. Outdoors, they ride around on tricycles and scooters in the same direction, carefully stopping if other children are in their way. Children learn about fire safety and evacuating in case of a fire, because the staff use a clear evacuation plan, which they share with children and help them to understand with regular practise. Fire fighting equipment is readily available in the main hall.

Children learn to keep themselves safe and avoid accidental injury by following staff's guidance on road safety when playing or walking outdoors and by not running around inside the premises, in case they slip, trip or fall. For example, there are road markings in outdoor play area to help children become familiar with road safety and children know and understand they must not run indoors, repeating the rule easily at registration time. Staff's knowledge of child protection procedures is secure and children are well protected. They are able to put appropriate procedures into practice when necessary and have a good awareness of their responsibilities, knowing the importance of recording information confidentially. Parents are aware of the staff's role and their responsibilities to protect children because this is included in the pre-school policy. It is clear to parents and they are made aware that staff may have to report any concerns. Senior staff know the procedures to follow if any allegations of abuse are made against staff as this is written in the policy. Children receive appropriate care because the staff are correctly vetted and have relevant experience, knowledge and skills. For example, all staff hold appropriate checks and most hold a qualification in childcare. The staff further protect children by recording pre-existing injuries and asking parents to sign that they happened outside the pre-school's care.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children develop independence and self-esteem, responding to the challenges the staff provide. For example, following group discussions at registration, different children volunteer to take turns to help staff put appropriate labels onto the board for the changing weekday, month and weather. Younger children show their developing confidence through domestic routines, helping staff to sweep up spilled peat from the floor, using a dustpan and brush successfully. Children are beginning to show confidence and interest in what they do and to ask questions. They are confident to bring a large selection of books to staff to read and to ask staff to do so. Together they count the books and start to read them, laughing at the large amount of books chosen

and how long it might take to read them all. Children use initiative and acquire new knowledge and skills. They try to help staff to stick a poster up that keeps falling down, which appears to not be sticky enough. Together they solve the problem by replacing the Blu tack and pressing it harder on to the wall. Staff plan activities to ensure children have a variety of experiences that will challenge their learning with a good range of resources for activities and freeplay. For example, children use construction with Lego or Duplo; educational programmes on the computer; a variety of jigsaw puzzles, a hopscotch mat with beanbags and a large role play area with wide variety of resources.

Children take part in various art and craft activities on a daily basis; accessing the outdoor play area and using a wide range of resources for mark making. They freely access the library area with a wide range of fiction and non-fiction books, soft chairs and bean bags. Children's learning is further enhanced by a good stock of wall posters around the hall, showing colourful images and wording for children to recognise shapes, numbers, colours, fruit and vegetables, transport and the alphabet. Children participate in activities, which develop their existing skills and encourage new ones. For example, staff find out what children know and can do when they first attend by talking to parents, recording their shared information through children's profile sheets, and by observing children when they are playing. They take time to settle children into the pre-school gradually, over a period of several days or weeks, ensuring they are confident in their surroundings and parents start to build trusting relationships. The staff encourage communication with families to develop continuity of care; however staff do not plan or use a range of learning experiences to aid development for children under three years.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making progress across the areas of learning, and they have opportunities to learn through both structured and freeplay activities. Plans for children's learning are in place but do not contain sufficient detail to enable adults to follow the learning intention of the activity to aid children taking part, including those children who are more or less able. Evaluation is sporadic and generalised for groups of children, not to individuals. Senior staff have an understanding of the Foundation Stage but this is mostly based on the stepping stones and making observations. Assessment of children's learning is not yet established to share with parents or link to the curriculum planning. As a result staff are not yet guiding children towards their next steps of learning to aid their development.

Children are beginning to speak in a familiar group, for example, by answering their name at registration by pretending to be animals, such as cat, tiger or dinosaur, or by waving for those less confident. They are beginning to learn to concentrate and sit quietly at group time, which they do with little fuss, showing clear awareness of pre-school routines. Children freely select from a good range of activities and form relationships with their peers. For example, a small group of older children play freely in library area, making it an extension of their home, taking role play resources into the area to enhance their imaginary world. Children are beginning to learn to take turns and share fairly. For example, when small groups of children wish to play on the computer, staff ask their names and complete a list of children who want a turn, checking the time and writing it down clearly to ensure children are given equal periods of time to play. The children wait for their turn easily, without making a fuss or pushing in front of one another, often going off to play for a while. Children are learning to accept the needs of others, for example, when discussing Spring at snacktime, they listen to each other as they describe their own thoughts and experiences, such as when they saw some blossom at Nanny's house. Children are beginning to take pride in achieving personal hygiene and successfully manage self care, developing good levels of self confidence and self esteem.

Children listen and respond with enjoyment and attention to stories, songs, and rhymes. They are starting to link sounds to letters through daily discussions, such as at registration time, when staff reinforce the letter 'W' by asking children the day and the weather, to which they jointly reply, 'It's Wednesday' and the 'Weather' is 'Windy', showing fun in their learning with laughter and smiles. Children are beginning to learn that marks have meaning, as many areas around the room are appropriately labelled, such as the problem solving area and the library and quiet area; with some of the newer cards showing the words in several languages. Some older children are beginning to write their name independently, however, staff write children's names on to their artwork automatically, regardless of the child's age or stage of development. Children are not able to access resources to attempt to write for themselves during freeplay. For example, they do not have access to writing materials in the home corner to encourage them to write for a purpose or to practise their writing skills.

Children count reliably from one to 10; recognise bigger numbers and are beginning to understand language of calculation through freeplay and structure. Staff present children with opportunities to develop their understanding of number order through counting forwards and backwards in songs and practically at registration time, such as when staff encourage children to guess the number of children present and then help them to count to the appropriate number, which is often over 20. Staff also encourage children to develop an understanding of calculation through practical activity, such as when playing outside on the tricycles, asking children to name a number less or more than 10 to buy petrol for their vehicles. Children are starting to compare shapes and sizes of everyday objects. For example, at snacktime, children enjoy biting their carrot slices into shapes, such as smaller circles or semi circles. Staff extend children's learning, asking them about their favourite shapes and helping them to make shapes with their hands or their bodies, counting the sides of the shapes. Older children quickly recognise their favourite shape around them, such as pointing out that the staff member has a necklace with a square pendant.

Children are beginning to look closely at similarities, differences, patterns and change through themes, such as Spring. They recognise pictures of blossom, caterpillars and butterflies, talking with staff about flowers in the garden, such as daffodils, crocuses and tulips, which extends children's vocabulary. Children are beginning to understand the world around them and operate simple technology. They are learning how to operate computer equipment; successfully handling the mouse and keyboard to negotiate educational programmes. Children further develop their understanding of everyday technology within the home corner, using familiar household appliances and have easy access to hole punchers, tape measures and rulers around the room. Children have opportunities to learn about texture, colour and shape and are developing an understanding of mixing colours and recognising the result. They are beginning to explore a variety of craft resources, such as playdough, buttons, tissue, material and pot pourri pieces; together with glitter, pre-drawn shapes, plain paper and various paints to design their own creation. Children are beginning to use their imagination well in role play situations in the home corner. They play in small groups, copying adults in familiar tasks, such as ironing, cooking or shopping. Children are starting to recognise and explore how sounds can be changed through group activities, such as when answering their names at registration, when staff encourage children to make louder and quieter sounds.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are beginning to become aware of diversity in our wider society and understand the wider world through a good range of toys and resources that reflect positive images of culture,

gender and disability. For example, staff provide a selection of fiction and non-fiction books, with stories about different religions and children from around the world; a welcome poster in many languages; gender dolls and those with differing skin colours, and play people from different cultures. Children learn about other cultures through a variety of activities, for example, Diwali, Chinese New Year, Hanukkah, Mother's day, Easter and Christmas. Children learn about their local community through walking around the neighbourhood together and visiting the local school periodically to join in with their activities. Children are encouraged to play and cooperate with each other and to treat others with respect and kindness. The staff remind children to take turns with resources fairly, to which they respond well. Children know and understand the pre-school rules and happily remind staff of them at registration and why the rules are in place. Behaviour is generally good with children well supported across the age groups; consistent systems are in place to manage children's behaviour, which are shared with parents. The staff believe in using positive praise and encouragement for all children and ensure achievements are suitably appreciated. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children feel a sense of belonging in the relaxed and friendly atmosphere. They are content and show confidence in their play by making choices and taking decisions, as toys and equipment are accessible to all children. Children receive appropriate support and all children are valued as individuals. For example, children feel valued as they are encouraged to bring in objects for the show and tell table to share with others. The staff treat children with equal concern, meeting their individual needs. They greet parents with their children on arrival and bring themselves down to children's level to listen and speak to them. The pre-school offers effective systems to support children attending with special educational needs or those with English as an additional language, although none currently attend. For example, children's individual needs are discussed with parents and senior staff are able to identify children who may require additional assistance and take steps to ensure they are supported appropriately, consulting parents and outside groups when necessary. Children benefit from the developing two-way relationship between parents and staff and parents are generally happy with the care their children receive. Staff and committee promote good communication with parents through verbal communication, newsletters, colourful noticeboards and individual letters. Large displays of photographs, children's artwork and posters keep parents informed of the activities children take part in and written consents and records provide confidentiality and continuity of care.

Parents receive a colourful and detailed prospectus and a good supply of quality information. They are aware of Ofsted contact details through the complaints procedure and the parents' poster is on display. A record of complaints is in place, which contains details of previously discussed concerns from parents. Child profiles are completed by parents, including their child's stages of development in self care, language, physical needs and attainments, which the pre-school finds a useful guide when children are starting at the group. The pre-school operates a library system to allow children to borrow a book of their choice and to learn responsibility. Parents are invited to coffee mornings which often precede group events, such as the Easter egg hunt planned for coming weeks. The partnership with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education is satisfactory. Although parents receive verbal information of their child's progress when asked and are invited to an annual consultation at the end of the school year, there is little written assessment of their child's learning. Individual folders contain a variety of photographs and written observation notes, together with dated basic achievement sheets, but this information is not collated to gauge the child's level of development or evaluate their next steps for learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The staff team have a high regard for the welfare and well-being of all children at the pre-school, taking positive steps to maintain good quality care. Clear and effective induction and recruitment procedures are in place, ensuring children are cared for by staff with enhanced security checks. Most staff hold childcare qualifications and have suitable levels of experience to support children in their play. Children generally benefit from good organisation of time, space and resources; however, timing does not always ensure children receive the same levels of learning, particularly towards the end of the session, when small groups of children are still having snacks while the majority are listening to storytime.

The adult: child ratio positively supports children's care, learning and play as effective staff deployment ensures they care appropriately for small groups of children throughout the session, such as at snacktime or when playing outside. Comprehensive policies and procedures are shared with parents and contain all the required details for effective practice. They include clear policies on equal opportunities, child protection, health and safety and children's behaviour management. Documentation is secure and in good order with parents receiving quality information. All the required consents are in place and stored securely in children's individual files; confidentiality is appropriately maintained. Parents are provided with Ofsted contact details in case of complaint and documentation is regularly reviewed and updated as and when required. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are satisfactory and contribute to children's progress towards the early learning goals. The committee is pro-active within the pre-school, providing support to the staff and supplying an effective administrator to manage the finances and paperwork, enabling the play leader and her team to focus on caring for children. Training is assessed through annual appraisals and staff's wishes to meet the needs of the pre-school. Regular meetings between management and staff provide discussion points to move the group forward and improvements since the last inspection have taken place. However, although the management team has previously recognised their knowledge of the weaknesses in planning, evaluation and assessment, they have not addressed this effectively.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous care inspection the pre-school was asked to develop and implement an action plan to ensure 50% of staff hold appropriate qualifications in childcare and to ensure parents are made aware of and understand all policies and procedures. The pre-school now has five staff with appropriate qualifications in childcare and three staff working towards a qualification, which ensures children receive quality care. Parents are given access to copies of policies and procedures through displays, allowing them to develop their understanding and to help staff provide continuity of care.

At the previous nursery education inspection the pre-school was asked to improve plans to clearly identify how the six areas of learning are included and how activities can be adapted to meet all children's abilities. They were also asked to evaluate activities; ensure large group activities are well managed; ensure all equipment is child sized, together with increasing opportunities for children to use maths as part of everyday routines. The pre-school has developed their planning to include some of the areas of learning and has evaluated some activities. Group activities are now well managed, maths has become part of everyday routines

and all equipment children use is child sized. However, not all areas of learning are included in the plans, evaluation is not always taking place and there is insufficient detail within planned activities to include children who are more or less able. Therefore, these areas remain recommendations for this inspection.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 Ofsted received one complaint that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards. The complaint related to National Standard 12 - Working in partnership with parents and carers and National Standard 11 - Behaviour. Concerns were raised regarding settling in procedures and children's behaviour. The provider was asked to investigate the concerns and report back to Ofsted. Ofsted is satisfied that the registered person has taken appropriate steps to address the concerns. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 satisfactory.

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):

- plan and implement a range of learning experiences to aid development for children under three years
- further develop daily routines to ensure all children have sufficient time to receive refreshments and take part in group activities at the end of session

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):

- develop detailed curriculum planning, evaluation and individual assessments to support children's learning, including those who are more or less able, to ensure all children progress appropriately towards the early learning goals
- provide opportunities for children to develop their writing skills in both freeplay and structured activities

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