



Little Horseshoe Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY304032
Inspection date	09 November 2005
Inspector	Sara Bailey
Setting Address	St. Peters First School, Doniford Road, Williton, Taunton, Somerset, TA4 4SF
Telephone number	01984 639182
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Registered person	Pre-School Learning Alliance
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?

Little Horseshoe Nursery registered in 2005. It is run by the Pre-School Learning Alliance within an Elliot building on the site of St Peters First School in Williton, Somerset. A sister nursery operates from the Children's Centre at Williton for babies from 0 - 3 years. This nursery is registered for 26 children from 2 - 5 years but mainly takes them from 3 years as they leave the baby nursery. There are currently 9 children on roll, 7 of whom receive nursery education funding. Children with special

educational needs are supported. There are no children with English as an additional language.

The nursery consists of one large playroom with toilet, kitchen and office facilities directly off the main room. There is a small, fully enclosed, lawned outside play area that is accessible to children from the playroom at all times. Children also have the use of the school playground and school hall for supervised physical play.

The nursery has a pet hamster which children have supervised access to.

The nursery is open throughout the year, Monday to Friday from 08:00 until 18:00 providing full day care or sessional care, including creche facilities.

The staff team consists of 2 full-time members of staff who both have National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) level 4 in Childcare and Education and 2 part-time staff, 1 of which has an NVQ level 3 in Childcare and Education. They are supported by a management team based at the sister nursery and by the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the freedom to access outside physical play as and when they wish. The nursery door is left open for them to move freely from inside to outside with high levels of supervision. Children learn about their bodies and the need for coats in the cold weather. Children are beginning to develop skills such as doing up their own zips and buttons in preparation for outside play. Children develop good balance and climbing skills using the fixed apparatus. They enjoy running around the playground and using scooters and tricycles although the more able child is not challenged with appropriate sized bicycles. Children benefit from using the school hall facilities once a week for Physical Education.

Children learn the importance of good personal hygiene through well-established, daily routines. They eagerly respond to requests to wash their hands before mealtimes and after using the toilet. A 3 year old states 'I need to wash my hands' as she has paint on them. However, there is only cold water available for hand washing which compromises children's health. Children understand simple good health and hygiene practices due to the staff's positive role model with procedures such as: wearing disposable gloves for nappy changing; reminding children to put their hands in front of their mouths when they cough; and wiping tables before snack with antibacterial spray. Children are also reminded of good practices through the use of informative posters in the bathroom, this reinforces their learning.

Children benefit from healthy snacks and drinks provided by the staff at regular intervals. In addition, children freely access drinking water from a dispenser as they wish. They know when they are thirsty and are protected from cross-infection due to the use of disposable cups. Healthy eating is promoted although some children are currently reluctant to eat fruit. Staff encourage appropriately and are positive role

models with their own packed lunches.

Children's health is promoted through appropriate recording systems which are shared with parents. Children benefit from all staff having completed first aid training.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move safely, freely and independently as all identified risks have been minimised through a recently implemented daily risk assessment. Children are well protected as the premises are secure and access is only gained to the nursery through staff operating a keypad system. Children are well supervised in the outside play area, shared with the school. Children benefit from high staff ratios as numbers are currently low. Staff deploy themselves appropriately to give children maximum support and maintain their safety inside and outside.

Children learn about safety issues through daily activities linked to themes. For example, children are exploring road safety. They know how to cross a road. A 4 year old recalls 'stop, look and listen'. They make traffic lights with craft materials. They know red means stop and green means go. They play on the apparatus, following instructions from staff. When they shout 'green' children run around and they stop when they hear 'red'.

Children benefit from good quality, child sized, wooden furniture. They safely and independently access a range of toys and resources from low units. Children are safe from the hazards of the adjoining kitchen area due to the effective use of a gate to prevent access.

Children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted through the staff's good knowledge of child protection issues and links with other agencies.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are very happy and enjoy their time at the nursery. They are settled and know the routines well. They benefit from the structured yet flexible routine which promotes outside, physical play and child led activities. Children learn through their play as they are well supported by the staff.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making progress in all areas of learning. Their individual needs are met effectively through key workers identifying possible lines of development (Plods) through general observations. Children enjoy a range of experiences, although the main focus of planned activities is usually craft related. As children are free to opt out of this, evaluations and assessments are not an accurate record of children's progress along the stepping stones. Planning is understood and completed by all staff who have a sound

knowledge of the Foundation Stage Curriculum although extension activities to further develop the older or more able child have not been considered. For example, 3 to 5 year olds all experience the same tricycles and although children are beginning to count they are not yet introduced to simple calculation.

Children learn through their play as staff are skilled at supporting them. Staff interact with the children and encourage them to think for themselves due to the use of open ended questions. Children with speech problems are developing skills in communication with the use of some signing at routine 'circle times'. All children are gaining confidence in computer skills as they have free access to exciting programs which encourage good mouse control and use of the printer. They learn about mathematical concepts through sequencing and basic counting activities both on the computer and other play. They learn about time with the use of a large sand timer which is used to show when it is someone else's turn. Children listen to direction well and are very proud of their achievements which are praised enthusiastically by staff.

Children benefit from the easy access to all resources. For example, pencils, paper and scissors are readily available on a low unit for self-selection as well as notebooks and pencils in the role play area. Children are beginning to explore other cultures through role playing a Chinese restaurant. They have a wok, chopsticks and dressing up clothes as well as tasting Chinese food at snack time. They also learn about Divali and other festivals through meaningful discussions and activities. Children's learning is linked to everyday experiences to further their knowledge about the world. For example, they make horseshoes as this is where their nursery name originates from and learn about their purpose and importance. They also follow the progress of a letter from writing it and making an envelope to put it in, going for a walk to post it and having it delivered by a postman to their home address. Children develop fine motor skills by using paintbrushes, scissors and knives safely under supervision. They are encouraged to be independent in most of their learning.

Children particularly benefit from outside physical play opportunities which they develop into a variety of learning experiences. For example, children spontaneously load up their diggers with leaves and role play building sites. They also use a variety of tools in the sand and water play which is taken outside for children to benefit from fresh air as they play. Children use their imagination well using soft blocks and boxes to make various forms of transport. They re-enact stories they have been told. For example, they use a large tractor tyre as a rocket, counting down for blast off. They prepare a picnic to take to the moon just like in the 'whatever next' story. Children's social skills are developing well. They work harmoniously together and have good relationships with their peers and staff. For example, one child asks for a member of staff to push him on a tractor, another child runs over to assist when he hears this. Children behave well. They are enthusiastic learners and are gaining in confidence to be independent in their self-care skills due to the staff's encouragement and positive role modelling.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are learning new social skills and developing a positive self-esteem through the staff's constant praise and encouragement. Children are well behaved due to the high staff to child ratios, well supported play and clear boundaries. Staff are consistent in their calm, caring yet firm approach. Children are reminded of good manners at all times but particularly at mealtimes when they are encouraged to say 'please' and 'thank you'. Children with special needs are effectively supported to ensure their individual needs are understood and met well. Staff are booked on a sign language course to further improve communication with those children experiencing difficulty with their verbal skills. Children benefit from links with other agencies. For example, speech therapists who visit the setting.

Children learn about diversity through toys and books that reflect positive images of equal opportunities. Staff use the toy library resources to enhance their own. For example, the props for the Chinese restaurant. Staff are knowledgeable about non-discriminatory practices and are good role models. All children are valued and respected. New children are particularly well introduced to the group and well supported by their key worker. Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is good. Parents are kept well informed about the provision and their child through informal information sharing. Key workers speak to parents at the beginning and end of sessions, they have access to a notice board and a regular newsletter. However, this does not yet include information on their child's progress along the stepping stones as these assessment sheets are still in the process of being completed and parents are unaware of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. Parents evenings are being scheduled to develop this sharing of information. Parents and staff work together to agree possible lines of development (Plods) for their individual child's learning focus. These are linked to the areas of learning.

Parents are particularly well supported by the nursery which results in the whole family gaining in confidence and having new experiences which benefit the children. For example, parents attend classes whilst their children play and they are supported in getting the additional support from other agencies linked to the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. Children benefit from the well-organised environment and daily routine which is supported by appropriate documentation to reinforce the good practice in place. For example, standardised policies and procedures, accident and medication forms. New requirements regarding changes to checking new staff and complaints recording is not yet referred to in the policies but an operational plan is in the process of being developed. However, a rigorous system is in place for the recruitment and vetting procedures of staff which safeguards children.

Children are well supported in their play as staff to children ratios are currently high due to the nursery not running at full capacity. Children are well cared for by experienced and qualified staff who have a clear understanding of their roles and

responsibilities.

Leadership and management is good. A hierarchy management structure is in place that ensures the daily manager is well supported even though they are not based on site with this nursery. Good communication between the different management has ensured good practices are in place even though the daily manager and her team are unaware of the National Standards. However, this and other weaknesses highlighted to the management are acted upon immediately showing good commitment to improving the care and education for all children. For example, between day 1 and day 2 of inspection staff implemented changes, such as staff signing-in sheets and put systems in place for identifying it's own strengths and weaknesses. Staff meetings and individual appraisals identify training needs.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 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.

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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):

- ensure children's hand washing procedures promote good hygiene
- develop staff's knowledge of the National Standards and implement an operational plan

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 planning and assessments to ensure they cover all areas of learning, extension activities challenge the more able child and that children's progress along the stepping stones is monitored
- ensure parents are informed about the Foundation Stage Curriculum and their individual children's progress in line with the stepping stones.

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