



Office for Standards
in Education

COMBINED INSPECTION REPORT

URN EY260056

DfES Number:

INSPECTION DETAILS

Inspection Date 17/09/2003
Inspector Name Virginia Cooper

SETTING DETAILS

Day Care Type Full Day Care
Setting Name Hemsley House Day Nursery
Setting Address 137 Tonbridge Road
Maidstone
Kent
ME16 8JS

REGISTERED PROVIDER DETAILS

Name Hemsley House Childcare Ltd

ORGANISATION DETAILS

Name Hemsley House Childcare Ltd
Address 45 Oxenden Wood Road
Orpington
Kent
BR6 6HP

ABOUT THE INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality and standard of day care in accordance with the National Standards for Under Eights Day Care and Childminding; and that the nursery education for funded three and four year old children is of an acceptable quality. Inspection of nursery education also identifies strengths and weaknesses so that providers can improve the quality of educational provision and help children to achieve the early learning goals (elgs) by the end of the Foundation Stage. This inspection report must be made available to all parents.

If the setting has been inspected previously, an action plan will have been drawn up to tackle issues identified. This inspection, therefore, must also assess what progress has been made in the implementation of this plan.

Information about the setting

Martin Walker is the new proprietor of Hemsley House Day Nursery, which is an established nursery first registered in 1984. Martin took control of the nursery in 2003.

The nursery operates from a large house located near Maidstone town centre. There are currently forty children attending the nursery, generally these are between the age of two and five years old. This includes three funded four-year-olds and 10 funded three year olds. There are currently no children attending with special needs, or who speak English as an additional language.

Two floors of the house are used to care for children. Generally the younger children are looked after upstairs, and the older children are cared for downstairs.

There are rooms available on both floors for messy activities and carpeted, comfortable playrooms. The rooms are furnished with nursery-sized furniture.

All children use the garden regularly. The garden is fully enclosed with a paved and grassed area.

Most children attend on a full time basis. Some children attend on a part time basis but for full days.

The staff are well qualified and regularly update their training.

How good is the Day Care?

Hemsley House Day Nursery provides satisfactory care for the children.

The two to three year olds are currently cared for upstairs and the three to five year olds are cared for downstairs. Several rooms on each floor are used. Children are grouped appropriately.

Staff are currently evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of how they use the premises, the activities provided and how they deploy staff; some positive changes are detectable. Children are often seated for lunch some time before it is available, they become restless and this time can be better organised. Most children tend to sleep after lunch, some for as long as two hours.

There is a large garden and all the children use this regularly.

The staff are safety conscious and all safety equipment is in place.

Staff consider children's emotional development and ensure that children are settled and happy. They operate a key worker system and children relate well to them.

The toys and equipment are presently stored in a way that does not allow children to easily choose for themselves activities they wish to undertake, however the intention is to change this soon.

The children particularly enjoy the role-play and art and craft activities. The staff are starting to increase the activities where children can use their creativity and are able to investigate and explore with minimal adult intervention.

Parents are provided with lots of information about the nursery. Staff frequently exchange information with parents verbally. They record children's developmental milestones and achievements, and make regular observations. Parents are able to access these records at any time.

The new proprietor arranges open evenings for parents where they are able to express what is important to them. He is exploring with the staff new ways to ensure parents are able to meet one another and take an active role in their child's care and learning. A website is being developed as part of this initiative.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

What is being done well?

- Children are settled and happy, they relate well to the staff and ask them lots of questions.
- Parents are provided with lots of information about the nursery and their children's development and achievements.
- The proprietor and staff are exploring new ways of ensuring parents are able to take an active role in their child's care and learning.
- Staff are safety conscious and all safety equipment is in place.
- The staff have the ability to identify their own strengths and weaknesses. They are willing to change what they do to enhance the quality of the service they provide.

What needs to be improved?

- the organisation of the environment, daily routines and the deployment of staff, particularly at lunchtimes;
- the activities provided for the children that encourage their independent learning and creativity.

Outcome of the inspection

Satisfactory

CONDITIONS OF REGISTRATION

All registered persons must comply with all conditions of registration included on his/her certificate of registration.

As a result of this inspection conditions of registration have been imposed / varied / removed and a new certificate of registration will be issued.

WHAT NEEDS TO BE DONE NEXT?**The Registered Person should have regard to the following recommendations by the time of the next inspection**

Std	Recommendation
2	consider how best to organise the use of the rooms, daily routines and staff deployment, especially over the lunchtime period. Ensure that the children only wait a short time before their lunch is served.
3	provide children with more opportunities to undertake activities that are not so adult led and that they choose for themselves, where staff facilitate their learning in a supporting role.
3	encourage children to undertake more activities that allow them to explore and investigate.

INSPECTION OF THE NURSERY EDUCATION PROVISION FOR FUNDED THREE AND FOUR YEAR OLDS.

How effective is the nursery education?

Hemsley House Day Nursery provides children with opportunities to make generally good progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are happy and secure at the nursery, they respond well to staff and are keen to share their news and achievements with them. The children's ability however, to become independent thinkers and learners is not always pro-actively encouraged, and some children are insufficiently challenged. Staff undertake some activities for the children that they can easily manage alone. These are the weak areas of teaching.

It is detectable however, that staff are beginning to change how they teach. They are moving away from almost all adult-led activities and worksheet type activities. Staff have started to offer children more choice in what they do, and are becoming familiar with encouraging learning through experimentation and experiential role-play activities. The children enjoy these activities.

Staff are familiar with the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and plans cover all six areas of learning, they do not however relate directly to the children's individual assessment records.

The nursery was established in 1984 but a new proprietor has very recently taken over. Staff reported that they feel supported by the new owner and attribute some of their changes in practice to his encouragement. They are enthusiastic to try out new ideas and are becoming accustomed to being able to develop new ways of working. The proprietor is keen that staff have the opportunity to update their training and progress in their career.

The proprietor met with parents as soon as possible after taking over the nursery.

He welcomes their feedback to aid his continual evaluation and monitoring of the provision. Parents are provided with lots of information and they are encouraged to visit at any time. A parent committee is being formed, to enable greater consultation and a forum to express their views about the service provided.

What is being done well?

- Staff ensure that children are settled and familiar with the routine to aid their confidence.
- Children relate well to the staff and often ask questions, the staff listen carefully, are attentive and provide them with answers. Children are regularly observed.

- Staff seize opportunities to explain things to children, especially relating to nature. Staff have begun to introduce more activities where children are able to use their natural curiosity and investigate and explore.
- The owner is continually looking for ways to improve the quality of the service provided. He is keen to involve the parents in this process.
- Parents are provided with lots of information about the nursery and their child's development. More information is being made available to them via a website.

What needs to be improved?

- the opportunities for children to practice skills independently without too much adult intervention.
- role play activities where children can use their imagination and regularly practice their emerging writing skills.
- creative activities that allow children to discover for themselves the properties of a wide range of materials and tools, enabling them to make an appropriate choice of resources required for art and craft projects of their choice.
- the way books for enjoyment and for locating information are presented to children.
- the curriculum planning, in particular using children's individual assessment records to plan their next step in learning and ensuring that all children are sufficiently challenged.

What has improved since the last inspection?

Not applicable.

SUMMARY OF JUDGEMENTS

PERSONAL, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children are interested and excited by new activities. They relate well to the staff, asking lots of questions. Staff spend time explaining things to them when they make enquiries. Children are familiar with the routine and what is expected of them. Most children independently use the toilet facilities. The nursery celebrate lots of different festivals and are introducing children to other cultures and beliefs successfully. Staff undertake some tasks for children they can easily manage alone.

COMMUNICATION, LANGUAGE AND LITERACY

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Children communicate successfully with staff and each other. They can express ideas and their feelings. Staff do listen carefully to them. Most children recognise some letters, particularly those in their name. Children enjoy stories but the book corner is uninspiring and rarely visited by children. The selection is not attractive and current learning themes are not supported by appropriate information books. The opportunity to practice emergent writing in play situations is very limited.

MATHEMATICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children's counting skills are very well developed, most can count past 10 and some can even count backwards! They can relate numbers to objects and are becoming familiar with the names of shapes. They play matching games, undertake jigsaws and can re-create patterns. Staff undertake some simple calculations with the children but miss many opportunities to practice these skills. Some children are insufficiently challenged and capable of more interesting mathematical play.

KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

Judgement: Significant Weaknesses

Staff do seize opportunities to explain things, especially about nature, for example they explained the life cycle of the butterfly after a child found a caterpillar in the garden. Most children competently use scissors and other tools. Few activities are planned for children to investigate and familiarise themselves with a varied range of materials enabling them to choose for themselves the appropriate resources they require for a self chosen project. Information technology play is limited.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT

Judgement: Generally Good

Children move around confidently with control and co-ordination. Staff remind them how to move safely when necessary. The garden area is used regularly each day and the children clearly enjoy their outdoor activities. Children use a variety of tools when they are playing with dough and most are able to use scissors competently. Children are able to use the toilet facilities independently and staff help them to understand good health and hygiene practices.

CREATIVE DEVELOPMENT

Judgement:	Significant Weaknesses
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Displays around the nursery evidence that until recently most creative activities have been very adult-led. Activities for children to use their imagination and be independently creative are limited although the nursery does have the resources. Children are inventive with play dough. Peripheral activities rarely support the main learning theme and are seen as a separate entity. Many worksheets are used, but the same learning objectives can be achieved in a more creative, interesting way.

Children's spiritual, moral, social, and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

OUTCOME OF THE INSPECTION

The provision is acceptable and is of good quality overall. Children are making generally good progress towards the early learning goals. The next inspection will take place in three to four years time.

WHAT THE SETTING NEEDS TO DO NEXT: THE KEY ISSUES

- ensure that the curriculum planning relates to the stepping stones and that activities are extended sufficiently to challenge and stimulate children's interest. Take into account what children already know and what they might learn next;
- ensure that children's assessment records cover all six areas of learning and are used effectively when planning activities;
- provide children with an inviting book area, that will introduce children to a variety of age appropriate books for pleasure and information;
- provide children with more play opportunities to use their imagination and creativity where adults facilitate their learning in a supporting role rather than an adult-led role;
- provide children with role play activities where children can practice their writing skills.

The provider must draw up an action plan within 40 working days of receipt of this report showing how the key issues detailed above will be addressed. The action plan must be made available to all parents and to the Local Authority if required. An evaluation of the action taken will form part of the next inspection of funded nursery education.

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL STANDARDS

STANDARD 1 - SUITABLE PERSON

Adults providing day care, looking after children or having unsupervised access to them are suitable to do so.

STANDARD 2 - ORGANISATION

The registered person meets required adult: child ratios, ensures that training and qualifications requirements are met and organises space and resources to meet the children's needs effectively.

STANDARD 3 - CARE, LEARNING AND PLAY

The registered person meets children's individual needs and promotes their welfare. They plan and provide activities and play opportunities to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities.

STANDARD 4 - PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

The premises are safe, secure and suitable for their purpose. They provide adequate space in an appropriate location, are welcoming to children and offer access to the necessary facilities for a range of activities which promote their development.

STANDARD 5 - EQUIPMENT

Furniture, equipment and toys are provided which are appropriate for their purpose and help to create an accessible and stimulating environment. They are of suitable design and condition, well maintained and conform to safety standards.

STANDARD 6 - SAFETY

The registered person takes positive steps to promote safety within the setting and on outings and ensures proper precautions are taken to prevent accidents.

STANDARD 7 - HEALTH

The registered person promotes the good health of children and takes positive steps to prevent the spread of infection and appropriate measures when they are ill.

STANDARD 8 - FOOD AND DRINK

Children are provided with regular drinks and food in adequate quantities for their needs. Food and drink is properly prepared, nutritious and complies with dietary and religious requirements.

STANDARD 9 - EQUAL OPPORTUNITIES

The registered person and staff actively promote equality of opportunity and anti-discriminatory practice for all children.

STANDARD 10 - SPECIAL NEEDS (INCLUDING SPECIAL EDUCATIONAL NEEDS AND DISABILITIES)

The registered person is aware that some children may have special needs and is

proactive in ensuring that appropriate action can be taken when such a child is identified or admitted to the provision. Steps are taken to promote the welfare and development of the child within the setting in partnership with the parents and other relevant parties.

STANDARD 11 - BEHAVIOUR

Adults caring for children in the provision are able to manage a wide range of children's behaviour in a way which promotes their welfare and development.

STANDARD 12 - WORKING IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS AND CARERS

The registered person and staff work in partnership with parents and to meet the needs of the children, both individually and as a group. Information is shared.

STANDARD 13 - CHILD PROTECTION

The registered person complies with local child protection procedures approved by the Area Child Protection Committee and ensures that all adults working and looking after children in the provision are able to put the procedures into practice.

STANDARD 14 - DOCUMENTATION

Records, policies and procedures which are required for the efficient and safe management of the provision, or to promote the welfare, care and learning of children are maintained. Records about individual children are shared with the child's parent.