



Inspection Report For Early Years Provision

Unique Reference Number	BFG02DC150
Inspection Date	20 June 2011
Childcare Inspector	Laurie Ferris
Registered Provision -Setting Name <i>Suppressed if childminder</i>	Happy Hippos Nursery
Registered Provision -Setting Address <i>Suppressed if childminder</i>	Artillerie Strasse, 28/1&2 33104 Sennelager
Type of Care	Full Day Care

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

British Forces Early Years Service is granted with accreditation by the Secretary of State for Defence for regulating childcare provision for Crown Servants overseas, in accordance with the criteria set out in the Tax Credit (New Category of Child Care Provider) Regulations 2002.

The purpose of this inspection is to assure the Ministry of Defence (MOD), parents and the public of the quality of child care.

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 and the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

The report includes information on any complaints about childcare provision which British Forces Early Years Service (BFEYS) has received since 1st January 2006.

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 booklet "Are you ready for your inspection" which is available from BFEYS.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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 daycare and childminding.
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WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Happy Hippos Nursery is a large setting occupying two adjoining flats located within a military estate. A Foundation Stage unit managed by Service Children's Education (SCE) occupies the upper floor of the building. The setting is within walking distance of the local barracks. There are twelve rooms in use which include activity rooms, a soft play room, toilet facilities, sleep areas, two kitchens, parents' room, an office, a sensory room and an art and craft room. Children also have access to a large enclosed outdoor play area.

The setting serves the needs of British Service families and civilian employees attached to the military community. It is open Monday to Friday from 9.00 to 14.00 term time only. Happy Hippos Nursery is registered to provide full day care for 53 children under five years; of these, no more than 19 may be under 2 years at any one time. Children are grouped according to age; children aged under two years occupy one side of the premises and children aged over two years the other side. The setting has 31 children on roll.

The manager and deputy are supernumerary and both qualified to level three. There are currently eight practitioners working directly with children; three of whom are suitably qualified.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is **good**. Children stay healthy because an appropriate sick child policy is implemented and shared with parents. Children receive adequate attention if there is an emergency or a minor accident; most staff hold a current first aid certificate and the first aid box in each room is fully stocked. Furthermore, systems are in place to record medicines administered or any accidents that occur. Children benefit from sound daily routines and therefore learn from an early age about personal care and hygiene. For example, children understand to wash their hands before eating or after visiting the toilet and staff watch over the children to ensure toilets are flushed and kept clean. However, unclear arrangements during mealtimes resulted in some practitioners using flannels and water containing anti-bacterial detergent or washing up liquid to clean children's faces. This may expose children to allergic reactions.

Children's dietary needs are promoted through the provision of healthy and nutritious snacks from a selection of mainly fruit and vegetables. Lunch is provided by parents and safely stored in the fridge. Children have access to drinking water throughout the session. Their special dietary requirements, preferences and food allergies are taken into consideration and details including photographs listed in each room to alert staff.

Children enjoy a range of physical activities which contribute to maintaining a healthy lifestyle. They have opportunities to enjoy the fresh air as they play in the attractively designed garden. Children were observed exploring enthusiastically the large sandpit to uncover the hidden shells or find pleasure in vigorous play, but time allocated to outside play is often rigid, which could inhibit children's physical development.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them to stay safe

The provision is **good**. Children are cared for in safe and secure premises. Visitors to the setting are requested to sign in and out and there is a buzzer system for entry to the premises. Children are unable to enter or leave the premises unaccompanied. There is a record of risk assessments in place and daily safety checks are conducted before children arrive. Children's awareness of fire safety is actively promoted through sporadic fire drills. These are recorded and assessed. Additionally fire detection and fighting equipment are regularly checked.

Space within the setting is generally well organised; children have room to move around and play comfortably; areas have been allocated for children who wish to enjoy more relaxing activities both indoors and outdoors. Furniture and equipment used are appropriate for their purpose and of suitable design.

Staff demonstrate a good understanding of child protection issues and the procedures to follow if they have any concerns about a child in their care. All adults working with children have attended a safeguarding children course and are aware to refer any concern to the designated person.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is **good**. Children arrive at the setting eager to leave their parents and go into the play rooms. Staff welcome them with a smile and they confidently wave goodbye to their parents. Children select the activities and play materials they wish to play with and

staff engage them in conversations about how they are and ask questions to encourage their thinking skills.

Children choose books for pleasure and ask staff to read them stories. They are encouraged to look at pictures and describe what is happening and name the animals or items they see. This adds to foster their language and communication skills. Most children make progress towards the early learning goals as they benefit from a good balance of adult-led and child initiated activities. Staff interact positively with children and give them time and adequate support to encourage their participation. Children acquire new knowledge and skills; they learn about how to look after plants and whilst playing with wooden blocks, they notice the connection between the height of the tower and it falling. Further challenge is provided as children are skilfully persuaded to attempt to build each time a higher tower, which helps to develop their problem solving skills.

Each child has their own file and staff use observations to record children's progress in the areas of learning and plan for their next steps. Targeted observations are also carried out to attempt to meet each child's specific educational and care needs. Additionally, the setting is building a working partnership with schools through positive exchange of information about children's interests and abilities to create continuity and coherence in the education and care of those moving up to school.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is **good**. Children are treated with equal concern. They are provided with a good range of resources and activities to encourage their understanding of equality and diversity. Children celebrate relevant cultural and religious festivals and are given equal access to activities and play materials. Suitable procedures are in place for children with learning difficulties or disabilities, and the special needs policy is shared with parents. However, partnership with other agencies is not effectively used to support children with additional needs and provide them with the best learning opportunities as other professionals' knowledge and advice is not acted upon.

Children are well-mannered and their behaviour is good because they benefit from staff who adopt a positive approach to the management of behaviour. Staff enthusiastically praise and encourage children throughout the activities for acts of kindness and thoughtfulness. Children are given clear explanations of why certain behaviours are unacceptable.

Parents receive good information about the setting through notice boards, newsletters and daily discussions with staff who keep them informed of their child's achievements. Parental views about the setting are taken into consideration as they are asked to complete questionnaires. Interviews with parents and the comments made on their questionnaires clearly show how satisfied they are with the service provided. They remark on how passionate staff are about their work with the children and how settled children are.

Organisation

The organisation is **good**. Staff are suitably deployed and aware of their roles and responsibilities. Regular staff meetings are used to discuss and evaluate the provision and identify areas for improvement. Appropriate recruitment and selection procedures ensure that adults employed have completed suitable vetting procedures and there is a commitment to provide staff with continuing professional development through regular in-service training. However, outcomes for children could be improved by the provision setting out an action plan to address the current qualification shortfalls.

Personal information held about staff and children is well maintained and ensures staff have knowledge of children's individual needs and routines before they start. Records of attendance for children and staff include times of arrival and departure. Required policies and procedures are in place and reflect mainly practice. However, tentative monitoring of day to day practice created confusion among staff at mealtimes, placing children's well being at risk.

Overall, the setting meets the needs of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

One recommendation was raised at the last inspection. This has been addressed. The outdoor play area is now safe and secure.

Complaints since the last inspection

No complaint has been received by British Forces Early Years Service since the last quality inspection.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are **good**. The registered person **meets** the National Standards for under 8s daycare and childminding.

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 recommendations:

- improve outcomes for children by providing a balance of outdoor and indoor activities and setting out an action plan with timescale detailing how minimum qualification requirements will be met
- promote partnership working by using the knowledge and advice provided by professionals from other agencies to provide the best learning opportunities and environments for all children
- promote children's good health by ensuring health and hygiene procedures are effectively implemented by all staff.

