



Brooklyn Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY257355
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Inspector Diana Pidgeon

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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 satisfactory. 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?

Brooklyn Day Nursery has been registered under the current ownership since 2002. It operates from a detached house situated in woodland on the outskirts of Annesley, Nottinghamshire. There has been a nursery established on these premises for over 40 years. Children are accommodated in three rooms on the ground floor of the house and in a separate pre-school unit across the courtyard. There is a securely enclosed outdoor play area that is fenced off to cater for different age groups. The

nursery operates on weekdays throughout the year, apart from public holidays, and is open from 07:45 until 18:00. Children attend from the local and wider community.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 50 children at any one time. There are currently 61 children from five months to four years on roll. Of these, 27 children receive funding for nursery education. Most of the 13 staff who work with the children hold recognised early years qualifications and several are working towards a higher award. Additional domestic staff, such as a cook and a cleaner, are also employed. The nursery receives the support and advice of specialist teachers and advisors from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children develop positive attitudes towards exercise as they enjoy the many opportunities provided for them to be active and to be outdoors. For example, children enjoy walking in the woods and they do this in all weathers because they are appropriately dressed. Older children's physical skills are developed through the use of small and large equipment that helps them to balance and gain control of their bodies. Younger children's physical development is promoted both indoors and outside through the use of small climbing and balancing equipment. Babies receive appropriate support to help them sit, crawl and stand according to their developmental needs.

Most arrangements for promoting hygiene within the nursery are satisfactory. For example, babies' and young children's health is safeguarded because staff follow suitable procedures when changing nappies. Children are beginning to learn about the importance of personal hygiene through daily routines such as washing their hands after using the toilet and before most meals. Whilst all children wash their hands before lunch and tea this is sometimes missed before breakfast. Current arrangements for pre-school children to dry their hands do not protect them from the risk of cross-infection. Therefore children's continued good health is not fully promoted. Suitable arrangements are in place to deal with any minor accidents to children and appropriate records are shared with parents to ensure they are fully informed. Procedures followed when children require medication are less secure, as the format used to record this does not make parental instructions explicit or always include their signature. This means information is not clearly exchanged and may adversely affect the children's well-being.

Children generally receive a nutritious and balanced diet that includes portions of fresh fruit and vegetables. Individual dietary needs are met to ensure children remain healthy. Effective arrangements are used to ensure all children have drinks available to them throughout the day so that they are not thirsty. Pre-school children competently serve themselves with drinks that they pour into their labelled cups from a covered jug. Babies are fed according to their own routines and requirements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Satisfactory systems are in place to safeguard children. There is good security on the main door and entrance to the courtyard to ensure all visitors are checked and admitted by staff. However, the record of visitors is not used effectively. Children are supervised appropriately throughout all areas of the nursery and staff are careful about ensuring safety gates are closed behind them as they move around. Clear thought is given to keeping children safe according to their age and ability. For example, staff use harnesses with small chairs when young children are eating and stay close by as children learn to climb. Basic risk assessments are in place and staff undertake some daily checks to ensure the toys and environment remain safe for children's use. Older children learn to keep themselves safe, for example by picking up toys, sweeping spilled sand and practising road safety. Their awareness of the fire evacuation procedures is raised through regular practices, which are logged and evaluated so that any problems are identified.

The use of suitable equipment allows children to play, rest and eat in comfort. They use a satisfactory range of toys and play materials, which promotes all areas of their development. Items are presented within children's reach allowing them to make choices and decisions and so promote their independence.

Children's welfare is suitably safeguarded as staff have an appropriate knowledge and understanding of their responsibilities towards protecting children from abuse and neglect.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children throughout the nursery are happy and settled. They form positive relationships with the staff, which helps them to feel secure and become confident. Children are generally interested and enthusiastic, whether they are playing in shaving foam or mixing cornflour and water. They access a sound range of age appropriate activities that are set out for them, allowing them to make choices and decisions. Young children enjoy many sensory experiences. For example, babies listen to music, see lights and touch many different textures within their play. Toddlers and young children explore dough, pasta and create pictures with a variety of materials. Their language is supported effectively as staff listen to them and talk to them. Children are developing a love of books as they play, often choosing to look at a book quietly alone. They enjoy story times and group singing times. Children's overall learning is extended through activities such as baking jam tarts, exploring in the woods and sessions where small animals are brought into the nursery for the children to see and handle. Staff have begun to use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan appropriate activities for the younger children but have yet to link this with their assessments of children's progress.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. This ensures children make steady progress towards the early learning goals. Staff demonstrate a sound knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage and plan a balanced curriculum that covers all areas of learning. Children's achievements are assessed to show the progress they make along the stepping stones. Some use is made of observations of children but this is not yet fully developed to monitor whether children access all areas of provision and to ensure activities provide sufficient challenge. Daily routines provide opportunities for some whole group activities and long periods of free play when children can become really absorbed in what they do. Resources are generally well organised so that children can choose what they wish to do and readily help themselves to items they require. Staff use their time effectively to work closely with the children, extending their learning through some basic questioning and explanations.

Children are generally interested in the activities provided for them and some children are beginning to concentrate well. They play purposefully in small friendship groups and move confidently around the setting choosing what to do. They demonstrate independence as they select and replace additional resources, dress themselves in their coats and boots before going outside and pouring their own drinks. Most children are responsible and begin to understand the expectations of the group, for example helping to tidy away resources and sweeping spilled sand. They sit in a circle at group times and listen when staff speak. Children are very talkative and most have good language skills. They are eager to make appropriate responses in story sessions and circle time, although sometimes the same children always answer. While children enjoy listening to stories their individual use of books is limited because the presentation of this area is not particularly inviting and they have few opportunities to use reference materials within their play. Children make good use of the mark making area to write and design for their own purposes. They readily attempt to label their own work and to register their turn on the computer.

Children begin to count and recognise numerals within their play. Older children accurately count spots on the dominoes and match the cards to complete the game. They begin to use some comparative language in practical situations as they fill buckets with sand and bottles with water. Children have many opportunities to explore and investigate materials and the environment. They enjoy a broad range of sensory experiences indoors such as handling jelly, sand and water. They learn about the natural world through observing the life cycle of a frog, planting and caring for seeds and handling a range of small animals and insects. Good use is made of the outdoor environment to help children appreciate the seasons of the year and the small wildlife around the nursery. Consequently children handle small insects, such as ladybirds, with care. Their understanding of technology is promoted through regular access to the computer and a number of battery operated toys. Through the use of appropriate resources, visual images and activities children learn about the wider world and develop respect for their own and other cultures.

Many children like to sing and attempt to play tunes on musical instruments. They enjoy the role play area and their learning is helped when an adult supports this aspect of play. Although children draw from observation and imagination, some of their craft work is more about acquiring skills than being creative. For example, the use of two pre-shaped sponges to make a picture offers little scope for individuality,

especially for older children. They competently use a range of small tools such as scissors, pencils and spreaders and show co-ordination and control of their bodies as they move indoors and outside.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual care needs are met because staff communicate with parents to ensure appropriate information is sought and recorded. This enables children to be cared for according to their parents' wishes and in line with their home routines. Arrangements to identify and support children with special needs are satisfactory, with the lead staff currently increasing their awareness through training and the support of the local authority. Children are beginning to be introduced to diversity within the wider world through access to appropriate resources and activities. Appropriate strategies are used to promote children's good behaviour according to their age and level of understanding. Staff praise children for their efforts and achievements and consequently most children have a clear understanding of what is expected of them. Where children's behaviour causes concern staff try to work closely with parents so that they provide a unified response. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents is friendly and open. They receive suitable information about the nursery and are kept up to date through newsletters and use of notice boards. Information is regularly exchanged verbally with staff and younger children take home daily diaries to show what their routine has been. Some significant policies and information are displayed for parents. This includes a complaint policy, although this does not reflect the recent changes in the requirements. Parents currently do not have easy access to a full set of policies, meaning that they are not well informed about the documentation that underpins the running of the setting. The partnership with parents and carers of children receiving funded nursery education is satisfactory. Through some clear written information and access to planning parents are suitably informed about what their child is expected to learn and how they will achieve it. Regular informal exchanges with staff and written reports help to inform parents about the progress their child is making. There are some ways in which parents can share in their child's learning at home, such as caring for Brooklyn the toy dog over a weekend and writing or photographing their adventures to be shared with the group.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The nursery uses appropriate recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure children are cared for by suitable staff. The induction process is sufficient to ensure they have a sound understanding of the policies and procedures of the nursery and most staff are able to implement these to promote children's health and well-being. Appropriate arrangements are not in place to deputise when the manager is not present. Children are mostly grouped, according to their age and ability, with familiar staff and this enables them to feel secure and settled. Staff are thoughtfully deployed so that

children are well cared for and supported. Essential records are in place and are mostly appropriate. Some policies have been reviewed, but this is not done on a regular basis to ensure they reflect current requirements or practice. Although registers are maintained these are not completed immediately on children's arrival, which may have an adverse impact on their safety.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Staff are highly committed to improving the care and education for the children and take on board advice from relevant professionals, such as teachers and advisors from the local authority, which enhances their practice. There is limited internal monitoring to identify the quality of the overall provision, to identify and support staff training needs or to plan for future improvements. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection in September 2004 two recommendations were made to enhance practice. Following the visit the provider installed additional security on the main door and entrance to the courtyard, meaning that staff monitor any parents or visitors arriving. This improves the overall safety for children. Some positive steps were also taken to improve the way parental consent was gained prior to administering medication, although some weaknesses in the overall recording and suitability of this remains and it is brought forward again as a recommendation from this inspection.

At the last nursery education inspection, also in September 2004, two key issues were raised. An action plan was drawn up to address these and has been effectively implemented into practice. Children are now purposefully occupied throughout the day, enjoying long periods of freely chosen activities. This enables them to think for themselves, to make choices and to remain busy, thereby avoiding periods of inactivity. This has also led to more child-led activities where they can freely select what they wish to do from the available resources. Writing and workshop areas means children can write and construct for their own pleasure and purpose, so promoting this aspect of their creativity.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection in September 2004 Ofsted has received four complaints. In February 2005 a complaint was made regarding Standard 1: Suitable Person, Standard 2: Organisation, Standard 3: Care, Learning and Play, Standard 4: Physical Environment, Standard 6: Safety and Standard 7: Health. We wrote to the provider asking for a response. The reply did not address all the issues raised and an inspector visited the nursery to investigate. There was no breach of Standards 3, 4 and 7. The provider was asked to take actions to meet Standards 1, 2, 6 and 14. These were completed satisfactorily. In May 2005 a complaint was made relating to a dog being on the premises while children were eating. Ofsted wrote to the provider asking them to investigate the complaint and provide information in response to it under Standard 7: Health. Ofsted are satisfied with the response. In July 2005 a

complaint was made relating to Standard 6: Safety, Standard 7: Health and Standard 12: Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers. A senior childcare inspector made an unannounced visit to the setting. As a result the setting was asked to take two actions to meet Standards 7 and 12. Suitable responses to these actions were received within the required timescale. In March 2006 Ofsted received a complaint which raised concerns about the behaviour of staff. Ofsted requested the provider to conduct an internal investigation and report back with reference to Standard 1: Suitable Person and Standard 11: Behaviour. From the information received there was no evidence to suggest the National Standards were not being met and Ofsted took no further action. The registered person 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.

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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):

- improve the arrangements for children to wash and dry their hands, particularly in the pre-school room, to minimise the risk of cross infection
- continue to develop the use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan and provide activities to support children under three
- update the complaints policy and procedure in line with the recent changes in requirements and ensure all policies are reviewed regularly and made available to parents
- improve the record keeping with respect to ensuring prior written parental consent is always recorded before giving medication, that the visitor log is always used and that registers are marked promptly when children arrive
- ensure there is an appropriately qualified named deputy who is able to take charge in the absence of the manager.

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):

- continue to develop the use of observations of what children know, understand and can do together with how children use their time and any gaps in their experiences to plan for their next steps in learning
- improve the presentation of the book area to encourage children to read for pleasure and provide accessible non-fiction materials so that they begin to understand how these differ from story books and how they can be used to extend their knowledge
- continue to develop the opportunities for children to express their creativity by drawing on their imagination and originality
- develop further monitoring systems that can be used to evaluate the quality of the nursery education, to identify and support staff development and training needs and to plan for future improvements.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Building better childcare: Compliments and concerns about inspectors' judgements* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk