



Cedars Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY218828
Inspection date	28 February 2006
Inspector	Shirley Peart

Setting Address	Cherry Tree House, Grainger Park Road, Newcastle Upon Tyne, NE4 8SX
Telephone number	0191 298 3333
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Registered person	Cedars Nursery
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

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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?

The Cedars Nursery Ltd in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, was registered in October 2002. The partner nursery in Sunderland, Tyne and Wear opened in 1996.

The nursery operates from two floors of a three story detached mansion, set within enclosed grounds. It is situated in the residential, west end of Newcastle-upon-Tyne. The nursery serves the surrounding areas, as well as people commuting to the city centre.

There are currently 82 children on roll which includes 26 children who are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The group is open 51 weeks of the year. Sessions are available between the hours of 07.30 until 18.00 and children can attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery offers support to children with special needs and children who speak English as a second language.

There are 14 permanent members of staff at the Newcastle site, who work with the children. All have relevant early years qualifications, apart from one staff member who is working towards one. There are five supply nursery staff available, and further support staff within the company, who have various roles and responsibilities. The setting also receives support from child care consultants based in the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

Children play in an exceptionally well-maintained environment. Staff follow regular cleaning rotas, so that the rooms are very clean and hygienic for the children. Older children follow very good hygiene practices and are reminded when and why they need to wash their hands. They also know that if they eat their lunch they will become 'big and strong' and that when they wear their coats outside they will be warm. They are involved in simple, effective activities that assist them to learn about growth and development, such as when they measure each other and make a height chart.

Staff attend to younger children's hygiene needs very well. They regularly check their nappies, as well as changing children when needed, and documentation is highly effective.

All of the children in the nursery have excellent opportunities for fresh air and outdoor play. Babies are taken out for regular walks in their pushchairs. Toddlers and older children go outside daily and thoroughly enjoy playing in the large enclosed garden area, wearing their wellingtons. Staff check the outdoor temperature during the winter months to ensure that it is suitable for the children. Therefore, their health is well protected.

A varied, healthy menu is offered and displayed for parents. For example, children enjoy their favourite choice of breakfast cereals and milk, fruit or rice cakes for snacks and substantial lunches and teas, which often consist of freshly cooked or raw vegetables. Older children clearly enjoy the social meal times and chat happily to their friends and staff. Babies are fed and sleep as part of their individual routine and staff adhere to parents wishes. Staff label food and babies bottles clearly. Allergies and special diets are very well catered for and relevant information is readily available for staff throughout the nursery rooms. This ensures that children's nutritional needs and safety are very well enhanced.

Any accidents are recorded well and these are closely monitored by the person in charge. She collates regular information and meticulously identifies any hazards so

that future risks are reduced. Parents are given clear information on exclusion and illness and staff monitor any children that appear unwell. This ensures that children's health needs are exceptionally well met.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

A bright, cheerful and safe environment is provided for the children. Generally the rooms are well set up to support children's development. Babies under one-year-old are cared for effectively in a small room that has a homely and serene effect when they are resting, as soft coloured lighting and music is used. Pre-school children move around confidently in the well-defined areas. Children play with a broad range of good quality and age appropriate toys and equipment. There is also an abundance of safe, sensory and real equipment used throughout the nursery rooms, such as small metal pans, empty boxes, oven gloves and tooth brushes. Older children also explore freely with discovery equipment such as magnets, calculators, binoculars and plastic bottles for the water play. Good quality, low-level furniture also ensures that children move around freely and safely.

Children are safe due to a combination of good practices, procedures, effective use of safety equipment, routines and staff vigilance. For example, an intercom, close circuit television camera and visitors log is in place and there are child safety gates at every doorway. Older children know why they need to walk down the stairs in small groups and they talk and participate in activities about staying safe, such as road safety role-play. Each room carries out regular risk assessments and the person in charge is pro-active in ensuring that all areas are covered. For example, by identifying possible hazards in the garden, during the different seasons.

Relevant information and procedures are in place regarding child protection. This is regarded as a high priority and staff have attended further child protection training. This ensures that children's welfare is protected appropriately.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies are given excellent opportunities to explore freely with materials and items. For example, they eagerly investigate the coloured rice pudding using their hands, plastic spatulas and wooden spoons. Staff are fully engaged in their play and are sensitive to their individual needs, when they appear apprehensive.

Younger toddlers are starting to develop their imaginations well, such as when they wrap the doll up and pretend it is going to sleep. They clearly enjoy and participate fully, in moving and singing to action songs. The large space within the environment and staff deployment, within the one to two year age group room, does not always positively support their increasing physical and creative development and exploration needs.

Older toddlers in the two to three year room, are fully supported when they become frustrated or upset. Staff are competent and clearly know when activities need to be changed to meet their development needs. Children are largely settled and leave their parents happily with staff support. They are actively engaged in activities and toys that interest them. For example, they smell and name the colours of the tea-light candles and sing enthusiastically to 'Happy Birthday', demonstrate interest in a favourite musical book or enjoy dusting with the real dusters.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching is good. Staff provide some excellent and very well-planned activities for the children that assists their all round learning very well. They invite interesting visitors into the nursery, such as the Zoo Lab. They provide good general challenges that make children think and respond, such as using children's surnames in a fun way at self-registration time. They provide good labelling throughout the nursery, that reflects the different cultures of the children who attend. Staff are enthusiastic and join in with the children's achievements and they give children lots of positive praise and encouragement. Staff offer lots of open-ended questions and are very skilful in engaging children in conversations that interest them, such as talking about where they have been on holiday.

Planning is good and staff are very clear about using this effectively to benefit the children. For example, they do not extend particular topics for too long. Modification and extension information is sometimes lacking in the planning. Therefore, adult-led activities are not always differentiated and the older, more able children are not sufficiently identified. Assessment is very good and activities are always evaluated. Staff use everyday written observations on the children and children's progress is effectively linked to the stepping stones, so that staff monitor them well. Children's progress files are very good and these are shared with parents regularly.

Children concentrate very well on their activities, for example, when they design and build their complicated tower with the large construction blocks. They have very good relationships with the staff and have also built up strong relationships with their friends. Children demonstrate care towards each other and their behaviour is very good. Children are extremely settled and confident within the setting. They can manage their own self-care tasks well, such as taking their shoes off, putting their boots and coats on for outdoor play, or giving out the snack.

Children are confident speakers. They hold lots of conversations, are highly animated and talk eagerly about past events, such as the visit to the 'Sea Life Centre'. They listen carefully to the instructions on the computer programme and to stories. They are gaining a good understanding that print has meaning, for example when they successfully recognise their own names on their name cards.

Children are fully involved in meaningful activities that help them to gain an understanding of simple mathematics, such as when they count out the scoops of powder paint and mix it up. They use and understand mathematical language, for example when they explain that they have new shoes because their feet have got 'bigger' or explain and compare the size of the snails during the Zoo Lab visit. They are involved in very good planned creative activities that help them to gain a good

understanding of colour, texture and shape. They have participated in bubble printing, making three dimensional models and use natural and found materials, such as leaves, boxes and twigs for their art work.

The programme for knowledge and understanding of the world is a key strength. Children participate in some stimulating activities, such as woodwork with real tools, where they helped to make a bird table for the garden. They eagerly dig freely with the small spades in the garden and thoroughly enjoy putting the soil into the planted wellington boots. They competently and independently use and control the computer programmes and mouse. They move through the programmes exceptionally well and confidently explain what they are doing. Children are in awe during the Zoo Lab visit. Some children calmly let the millipede crawl up their arms and eagerly touch and stroke the other animals and insects. Therefore, children are gaining an excellent understanding of their world and the materials and living things in it, through first-hand experiences.

Children are gaining and developing good physical control as they use the outdoor equipment successfully. For example, they manoeuvre bikes and cars safely without collisions, they throw, kick and catch the balls and clearly enjoy playing and running in the spacious garden area. Their fine motor skills are also developing well. They use small tools appropriately such as, different size paint brushes and rolling pins and cutters in the play-dough. They successfully roll out and cut their dough to achieve their aim.

Overall children are making good progress in all areas of learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Useful information on the registration forms ensures that children are cared for as individuals. They are well cared for by attentive, caring, staff who know them well. Their individual needs are met very well. For example, babies follow their home routine for sleeping and feeding and younger children are made comfortable should they fall asleep unexpectedly. Staff comfort and reassure children whenever necessary and interaction is warm and natural. They take the time to assist children to settle. For example, some key staff caring for the one to two year age group have learnt, and use some key words in the child's first language. In the two to three year group, children keep their comfort items from home close by. Positive images, books, dolls and celebrating different festivals, promotes diversity and enables children to learn about other cultures effectively, through fun activities such as, food tasting and using chop sticks.

Good documentation and procedures are in place regarding children with special needs. A named staff member takes responsibility and keeps up-to-date by attending regular training and meetings. She also maintains close links with parents and an inclusion worker.

Children's behaviour is very good. Older children help to tidy up and they sit quietly and patiently on the carpet when required. Their self-esteem is high as they proudly

show off their achievements, such as their complicated model of blocks. Staff manage younger children's behaviour in a positive way, so that they are learning to cope and develop a sense of responsible behaviour.

Partnership with parents is outstanding

The staff are very friendly and welcoming towards the parents and carers, which helps to develop secure and trusting relationships for the children. Parents receive a high quality, informative prospectus, regular bulletins and daily progress reports. Up-to-date displayed information on the notice boards, all ensures that the parents are very well informed. Parents offered some exceptionally positive, verbal comments and some have contributed to the parents book, with some superb comments. For example, they feel that the nursery is 'excellent' with 'very good' staff and that their children enjoy coming, have their individual needs met and progress very well.

Parents are also very involved with the life of the nursery. For example, they have excellent opportunities to attend open days, and planned parents evenings. They also provide information for the pre-school staff, such as writing labels in different languages for display. They are well aware that their children's progress is monitored, as they have regular opportunities to contribute to their child's files.

The setting fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development well.

Organisation

The organisation is outstanding.

In general the nursery is highly developed and very well-organised. Children are grouped effectively in base rooms according to their ages and abilities. Staff will only move children up to the next room, when they feel that they are ready and involve the parents fully in this process. Children follow a varied, enriched curriculum that enhances their all round development very well.

A suitable recruitment and selection procedure is in place and effective induction procedures are followed for new staff and students. The person in charge has many years experience and expects very high standards from her staff. The staff team are highly dedicated, competent and clearly enjoy their work. Staff are well-qualified and are pro-active in attending regular, ongoing training both individually and in house. Staff also take on various roles and responsibilities within the nursery, such as child protection, special needs, Birth to three matters and green space/developing the outdoor area for example. Regular room meetings and staff reviews are held, so that their development and progress is monitored exceptionally well. The self-evaluation form is used effectively to monitor and evaluate the provision. The nursery has also worked hard to achieve the National Day Nurseries Association Quality Counts II, Investors in Children Award and the Investors in People Award.

The leadership and management of the nursery is good. The person in charge has a clear presence within the nursery and she ensures that the education provision is monitored and evaluated well. Communication is good with the staff in the pre-school room. They maintain close links with external agencies, such as the book club, which

promotes language and literacy and the childcare consultants in the local authority, who carry out regular support visits and assessments. The person in charge and staff act upon any suggestions or results from the room meetings, via action plans, so that the educational provision is continually developing and improving. Overall, the setting meets the needs of the children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was required to; ensure that staff attend professional child protection training and to ensure the safety of the children with regard to the windows.

Very good improvements have been made. Staff training in all areas is very good including child protection. There is a designated person responsible for child protection and all staff attend regular annual training. Windows are protected where necessary, so that children are safe.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- consider revising and developing the environment within the one to two year age group room, so that it positively supports their increasing physical and creative development and exploration needs.

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):

- ensure that staff can identify the older and more able children and include

modification and extension information in the planning, so that activities provide sufficient challenges.

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