



Treetops Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY221134
Inspection date	04 December 2006
Inspector	Permjit Tanda
Setting Address	7 Manderston Close, Dudley, West Midlands, DY1 2TZ
Telephone number	01384 237222
E-mail	
Registered person	Treetops Nurseries Limited
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?

Treetops Day Nursery opened in July 2002. It operates from a purpose built building in Dudley, West Midlands. There are local shops, a park and a school within walking distance. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas.

Currently there are 123 children on roll. This includes 29 funded three-year-olds and nine funded four-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

Twenty staff including part-time staff work directly with the children of whom most hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are welcomed into a clean environment where they can play, rest, sleep and be active according to their needs. Children stay healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. The good adult support and guidance helps children gain an understanding of hygiene and they become increasingly independent in their personal care. As part of the daily routine children learn about the importance of hand washing before meals and after using the toilet.

Children make effective use of the outdoor play area because it is inviting and available throughout the day through organised outdoor play sessions. The area is organised well to help children be self-sufficient. It offers a range of opportunities for children to develop their physical skills. Children use climbing equipment with increased confidence and increase their control and co-ordination through pedalling tricycles, using the rockers and smaller play equipment such as bats and balls. Children especially enjoy running around chasing each other and adults. This helps increase their fitness and develop a positive attitude towards physical exercise. Children have opportunities to increase their imagination and creativity through using the large stages to develop their play. Children enjoy their time outdoors because staff become involved in children's play well. Babies acquire new physical skills because they have a safe space indoors to lie, roll and crawl. More able babies have use of a crawl through tunnel and staff are supportive and encourage them to take their next steps.

Children are well nourished and hydrated throughout the day. They benefit from nutritious meals, snacks and drinks which appeal to them, for example, at snack time children enjoy a good selection of fresh fruits, milk and water. Children's special dietary requirements and preferences are catered for well. Staff are attentive to the needs of babies who are weaning and they are fed according to their individual needs.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are grouped according to their age and the rooms used are welcoming and inviting. Toys and resources are easily accessible and freely used by the children. Staff carry out written risk assessments to reduce potential hazards in the environment and therefore children can move safely and freely. Children learn the importance of staying safe and understand that certain rules are in place for their own safety. Staff are vigilant about the children's safety and supervise the children well.

Children use toys and equipment which are appropriate and safe because staff regularly check and monitor for safety. All of the required policies and procedures for the safe management of the setting are in place and regularly updated.

Children are protected by staff of whom most have a sound understanding of child protection policies and give priority to children's welfare. However, some staff are unclear of their individual

responsibility to protect children and the procedure to be followed in the event of an allegation against a member of staff. This compromises the children's safety and the efficiency of dealing with child protection issues.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children arrive happy and eager to participate. Those who are new to the nursery are helped to settle by staff that are sensitive towards their individual needs. Babies and toddlers are helped to settle by caring adults. They gain self-assurance through close relationships with staff that are aware of their individual needs. Babies are fed and sleep according to their individual needs and routine throughout the day. Babies are well nourished and staff are attentive to their needs at meal times and support them well accordingly. Toys and resources are easily accessed by the children. Staff are developing their knowledge of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and use it to help support the children's development. Babies and toddlers have access to most of the toys daily such as sound toys, shape sorters and activity walkers. Recently, the sand tray has been made available for children to develop their natural curiosity, however, regular opportunities for children to explore further through a broad range of experiences such as water, paint and natural resources are less well planned. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self.

Children enjoy their time at nursery and make steady progress because staff ensure they provide a varied range of play experiences covering all areas of development. Children from one to two years benefit from their base room. The area is well resourced with opportunities for children to build on their natural curiosity through using the sensory area. Children have many opportunities to use musical instruments and other sound, shape toys and a variety of construction toys. Children also have use of an additional art room to explore and investigate with water, sand and play imaginatively in the role play area. A creative table is also available for children to paint and collage, however, this area does not maximise play opportunities for children. Firstly, because staff do not use it effectively throughout the day and secondly, because the activities are not always well maintained all readily available. Therefore, children's experiences and play is sometimes limited. Children mainly engage in child-initiated play and adults support and build positive relationships with the children by supporting them and talking to them.

Children from two to three years are cared for in a separate area and freely choose what they would like to play with from what is available. They have access to a satisfactory range of resources although some areas within the room lack interest and therefore not regularly used by the children. For example, the sensory area has various sponges, cushions and some texture boards and therefore does not stimulate the children's interests. The writing area is not adequately resourced with writing materials and therefore children can not make use of it. Staff do not always effectively evaluate the success of activities or usage of areas within the room, consequently play opportunities are not always maximised for children. Children show a fondness for books and staff build on this interest well through making books readily available and sharing stories. Children increase their imagination and easily adopt roles in the domestic area.

Children increase their creativity and exploration and investigation skills through the use of sand, water and a varied range of art and craft activities.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children show appropriate levels of concentration and interest whilst self-selecting from a varied range of activities. Children show a sense of belonging and understand the routine well and are familiar with their environment. They easily adapt to changes in the routine such as getting their coats for outdoor play and going to the dining hall for meals. Children enjoy being with adults and often ask to stay with the most familiar adults.

Children respond well to simple instructions and join in well during group activities, for example, a group of children concentrate well and are interested during a game about the use of their senses. Children enjoy painting, drawing and make use of the writing area and use pens and paper whilst playing in the pretend hospital. Children have opportunities to learn to recognise their names through the use of name cards for registration and snack time. They are exposed to written labels on their personal coat pegs, drawers and familiar objects such as the clock, window and furniture is labelled. A group of children freely play with magnetic letters arranging them by colour, however, more able children have few opportunities to link sounds and letters of the alphabet.

Children have daily opportunities to explore colour, texture and shape and be creative through the use of the art room. Children freely paint, draw, mould dough and make collage using a variety of art and craft materials. Children enjoy using the sand and water. A group of children play imaginatively pretending to make drinks and cleaning the water trough. Opportunities for children to explore and investigate and further question why things happen are not always well planned, for example, the sand and water toys include mainly spades sieves and buckets and therefore lack challenge. This limits opportunities for more able children to freely experiment with concepts such as floating and sinking at their own leisure. Children join in their favourite songs and show an interest in musical instruments. Children play imaginatively with the small world toys such as the garage and cars. The role play area is regularly changed to give children real life experiences, for example, children thoroughly enjoy caring for one another in the hospital environment.

Children gain confidence and enjoy counting through play. Many children eagerly count the dots on a dice whilst playing a board game and others spontaneously count whilst playing outdoors. They respond well during number rhymes and learn the concept of subtraction. Children begin to use mathematical vocabulary such as big and small. Children learn to recognise shape in their environment during play. They use three dimensional construction toys to make models and enjoy puzzles.

Children have daily opportunities to increase their physical skills through a varied range of resources. Children handle tools, objects and build and construct assembling and joining materials. Children have been involved in learning about their natural environment through collecting leaves and observing change. They daily look at the weatherboard and are developing a sense of different seasons and show an interest in the natural world.

All staff do not have a secure knowledge of the foundation stage. Therefore the quality of teaching and learning varies according to who delivers the activity. Children make steady progress because they have access to a varied range of experiences promoting all areas of development. During child- initiated play staff spend much of their time interacting with the children and children show appropriate levels of interest. The planning system ensures the six areas of learning are covered consistently, however, activity plans do not always clearly show the learning intention of activities. This means less experienced staff do not always understand what is expected and therefore the children's learning is not always sufficiently challenged. Teaching does not always take account of children's different attainments and therefore more able children are not always sufficiently challenged in some areas of learning. Staff provide an environment which is organised to help children become independent. There is an appropriate system to observe, monitor and record children's achievements.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. All children are welcomed and are given the opportunity to take part in the session. Staff value and respect their individuality and children learn to understand that they can expect others to treat their cultures and beliefs with respect, for example, children have been involved in celebrating the Chinese New Year through dragon dancing. Children have access to a moderate range of positive image resources and play materials which helps them learn about diversity. Children have some opportunities to learn about their local environment through organised visits to the park and local shops. Staff are able to adapt the environment and activities to meet the needs of children with special needs. There are appropriate systems in place to support children who speak English as an additional language.

Children's behaviour is mostly good. Staff support children in sharing and turn taking. Staff adopt a positive approach to help children understand values and codes of behaviour. Children respond well to gentle reminders to care for the environment, the resources and for each other. Staff set consistent boundaries for the children, which helps them learn to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour. Children develop their self-esteem because staff build on their good behaviour through praise and reward.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. Children's needs are met because staff and parents share information about the children daily. Parents are kept well informed of their child's day through daily discussion and daily written report sheets for children under three years. Staff ensure that all parents know how their children are progressing and developing through regular parents meetings and progress reports. Parents are kept up-to-date about nursery routines, policies and events through regular newsletters, the notice board and daily contact. Children benefit from the involvement of their parents in projects, this contributes to their well-being at the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

An acceptable recruitment and selection procedure means that children are cared for by suitably qualified staff. Some staff are more secure in their knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework and therefore the quality of education and enjoying and achieving varies throughout the setting. Staff work well as a team to meet the needs of children. Permanent staff receive an appropriate induction, however, staff on temporary contracts do not receive a formal induction and are therefore unclear of some of the nursery policies and procedures, this compromises the children's welfare.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The person in charge is supported by the area manager through regular meetings and consultation to ensure consistency across all of the nursery settings. The management team are committed to improving the service provided and this is addressed through staff monitoring and training opportunities. The running of the nursery is not always effective this is especially evident in the preschool room. The member of staff delivering the Foundation Stage also has some responsibility for organising the day to day running of the nursery. This impacts on the quality of teaching and learning because she is regularly interrupted whilst working with the children. The organisation of the pre-school room means children are moved between two rooms and the outdoor play area to avoid overcrowding in the base room. Consequently, there are occasions when children are unable to complete activities and tasks they are enjoying. On other occasions the organisation of snack time means some children are left waiting unnecessarily for a long period of time and become impatient. The management team have a commitment to building on the satisfactory practice in care and a vision to improve the education for all children. However, the system in place to monitor and evaluate the provision of nursery education is not always effective and this impacts on the quality of learning and teaching.

All of the required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed. There is a commitment from the whole staff team to continuous improvement and development. The satisfactory quality of the provision means that overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

The setting has made some improvement since the previous inspection. At the last inspection three recommendations were raised to improve the care of children. One of the recommendations has been fully met. The sickness policy has been further developed and includes all the necessary information. All the relevant policies and procedures are made available for parents and therefore they are better informed of the setting. The nursery has made some positive changes to its daily routine to ensure children have the opportunity to learn and develop new skills, for example children have regular opportunities for outdoor play and meal times are better organised to encourage older children to be self-sufficient. However, on occasions in particular rooms the routine of the nursery still heavily influences the children's day. Some staff have increased their knowledge of child protection procedures through additional training, however, there still is inconsistency in staff knowledge and how effectively they can implement the procedure.

Complaints since the last inspection

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by the parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

Three complaints have been received since the previous inspection in relation to the national standards.

On the 3 November 2005 Ofsted received concerns regarding inappropriate staff qualifications and adult to child ratios. These concerns relate to National Standard 2: Organisation. Ofsted made an unannounced visit to the setting to investigate the concerns and raised four actions and three recommendations: ensure correct adult to child ratios are maintained at all times, paying particular attention to the morning from 08:00 to 09:00 and again from 16:30 onwards; introduce an effective system to ensure students caring for children have the appropriate experience and skills; ensure effective contingency plans are in place when the deputy is not available to care for her group of children; ensure staff are deployed effectively throughout the day to ensure children are safe and their individual needs met; ensure staff include surnames when completing the staff attendance register; ensure attendance registers accurately reflect the children attending in each care group and maintain appropriate temperatures in the rooms on the first floor, particularly in the baby room. The provider reported that: additional staff have been employed; students receive a full induction and on-going supervision and appraisal are provided to ensure competency. The provider also provided evidence of effective contingency plans and deployment of staff. Ofsted is satisfied and the registered provider remains qualified for registration.

On the 23 February 2006 Ofsted received a concern regarding staff's knowledge on child protection and what procedure to follow should they have to make a referral. Ofsted investigated this concern by conducting a visit to the premises on the 27 February 2006 to investigate under National Standard 13: Child protection. The visit found that the manager was able to demonstrate knowledge on child protection issues and what to do in the event of a referral being made, the policy and procedure is also available for staff to read. However, Ofsted had not been notified of a referral when it had been made. Two actions were raised one under National Standard 13: forward to the regulator a written procedure to be followed where there are any child protection concerns and ensure this procedure is implemented by all staff. The second under National Standard 14: ensure that Ofsted is kept informed of all significant changes or events. Ofsted received a satisfactory response to these actions on the 23 March 2006 and the provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received a complaint about inadequate staff to child ratios which raised concerns in relation to National Standard 2: Organisation and 6: Safety. Ofsted undertook an unannounced visit on 20 July 2006 to investigate these concerns. Ofsted found no evidence to suggest that National Standard 2 or 6 has been breached. Ofsted did issue the provider with the following recommendations:

National Standard 2: Organisation. Develop a system to indicate an accurate reflection of children present within base rooms and staff caring for them. Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers. Make available to parents a written statement that provides

details of the procedure to be followed if they have a complaint which is in line with current guidance. The provider remains qualified for registration.

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 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 all staff are aware of child protection issues and are able to implement the policies and procedures
- ensure staff make effective use of the areas within the nursery and maintain activities to maximise play opportunities for children
- increase the opportunities children have to explore and investigate with natural resources and increase their creativity through using a varied range of art and craft materials
- ensure all staff receive induction training which includes health and safety and child protection policies and procedures in their first week of employment.

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):

- increase the staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage to improve the quality of teaching and learning
- ensure all staff are aware of the learning intention of activities
- ensure staff plan effectively for the varying learning needs within the group
- ensure there is an effective system in place to monitor and evaluate the teaching and learning
- ensure the running and organisation of the nursery does not adversely impact on the care and education of children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk