



Knutsford Day Nursery Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number EY315231
Inspection date 25 April 2006
Inspector Chris Scully

Setting Address The Old Library, King Street, Knutsford, WA16 6DN

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Registered person Joanne Jane Brewer

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?

Knutsford Day Nursery Ltd was registered in 2005 and is managed by a private provider. It operates from a converted library in Knutsford. A maximum of 62 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.30 until 19.00 all year round. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 75 children aged from 0 to 5 years on roll. Of these, 15 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area.

The nursery supports children with special educational needs, and for whom English is an additional language.

The nursery employs 16 staff. Of these, 11 including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications. There are 2 staff who are working towards a qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for within a clean healthy environment. Staff make appropriate arrangements for the consideration of children's health and hygiene. Staff talk to children about washing their hands before lunch and give clear explanations that enable them to make an informed choice. For example, one child explained that her hands were clean, staff reminded them about the hidden germs that could make them ill. The child decided to wash her hands and returned announcing they are all 'sprinkly' clean now. Older children confidently see to their own personal needs. Staff provide good support to younger children. They discreetly monitor them as they see to their own toileting needs, providing gentle reminders where necessary.

Most staff are trained in first aid, which means they are able to respond quickly to accidents and incidents. Children's health is promoted as staff quickly identify when a child becomes unwell and take appropriate action, although the policy regarding this is not formalised. The use of some non-prescribed medication should a child suffer from an allergic reaction is not appropriate and may hinder their future treatment.

Children have opportunities to develop their physical motor skills. They manipulate dough well using their hands and a range of tools, such as cutters and rolling pins with increasing control. Children have weekly opportunities to take part in 'wobblers' and 'stretch and grow' activities provided by an outside agency. This enables children to explore their physical control and learn that exercise is fun. Children's large physical skills are not effectively challenged as they have little opportunity to practise their climbing or balancing skills. Children are developing an understanding of the changes within their bodies after exercise. They confidently explain why they need extra drinks as they are very thirsty after running around outdoors.

Children enjoy a healthy range of meals and snacks, which are freshly prepared by the experienced cook. Children's individual needs and preferences are known and acted upon by staff. Older children have individual placemats, which record their specific needs, for example no beef. Babies' needs are met well. Staff are well informed of their individual needs and update their records accordingly when their needs change, for example moving from blended food to more substantial meals. Meal and snack times are organised well for older children who sit together and converse freely with their peers and staff. However, this conversation does not always happen in the baby room. All children have access to fresh drinking water, although they cannot access this independently.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm welcoming environment. They move safely and freely around the setting where hazards are minimised. Appropriate cleaning procedures means children's health and well-being are safeguarded. Although, the current practice of entering play rooms wearing aprons used during nappy changes is not conducive to children's health. Children understand the need to keep themselves and others safe. Children recently explained to the fire officer that he was not allowed to touch the fire extinguisher during his visit, as this was one of the rules within their room. All external doors are locked and CCTV is in place to enable staff to identify callers to the setting. This is further enhanced by the effective collection procedures in place. Clear procedures are in place for keeping children safe on outings and when playing outdoors.

Children have access to a range of age appropriate toys and resources in all areas. However, at times access is limited due to not all areas being used for part of the day, such as the quiet room and the book area. Resources in the baby room do not include domestic style furniture to aid children's mobility and restricts staff's ability to feed younger babies in comfort. There are some resources depicting diversity, however these are limited in the younger children's room. Appropriate arrangements are in place to enable children to sleep or rest in line with their individual needs. Babies are often rocked to sleep before being placed in their cot. Effective systems are in place for ensuring children are safe while they sleep. This includes the use of monitors and staff completing checks every 10 minutes.

Staff have a sound understanding of child protection issues. Some staff have attended child protection training and use information, such as the Area Child Protection Committee flowchart to inform their practice. There is a named person responsible for overseeing any concerns. Other senior staff are well informed of their roles in the absence of the coordinator, which enables them to protect children from harm. This is supported by the child protection policy, however this does not include the steps to be taken should an allegation be made against staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy and enjoy their time at the setting. Older children play well with their peers and enjoy the company of the staff. This is supported by the positive relationships staff build with children. Children are confident to choose and their resources and where to play. Children are generally interested in the activities provided and are keen to converse with visitors. Younger children particularly enjoyed playing with dried pasta. They confidently talked about what they felt and heard as they manipulated the pasta. Staff effectively supported their play and asked open-ended questions, which enabled the children to think and suggest new ideas. Children identified the differences between the dried pasta and the pasta bake they had for lunch. Staff use descriptive phrases well to enhance the children's understanding and vocabulary. For example, they describe the sound of the pasta in

the tray as sounding like heavy rain and the texture being wiggly, hard, soft and squidgy.

Care of babies is satisfactory. Babies have a selection of resources they can access to promote their learning and development, although this is limited with regards to real or natural resources. Staff are aware of the babies needs, however some staff do not readily converse with them, which hinders their language, social and communication skills. Babies are generally contented and seek out staff when they are distressed or unhappy. More mobile Babies enjoyed helping to sort the clean washing in the laundry basket and held up their items to staff to be folded.

Staff have recently adopted the Birth to three matters framework and are currently devising systems to enable them to plan activities to effectively promote children's learning in all areas. Children are interested in new activities and to explore resources. Younger children were keen to look at the inspectors lap top and where amazed when it made various sounds. One child talked about daddy having a computer, but it was a big one. Children 's imagination is developing appropriately. They confidently use the rubber discs as hats, placing them on their heads and those of staff.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff have a growing understanding of the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and plan a range of activities, which mainly encompass the early learning goals. Staff have a sound understanding of how children learn. However, due to an insufficient knowledge on the foundation stage, planning and assessment they miss opportunities to enhance children's learning. For example, when conducting experiments on sinking and floating, staff asked many open-ended questions, which successfully enable children to predict whether objects would sink or float. Children enthusiastically put forward their view and watched in anticipation as the objects were placed in the water. Unfortunately, insufficient time was left at the end of the session for children to independently explore their findings and to consolidate their learning. Assessment systems do not yet give a clear picture of children's progress. Consequently, full use is not made of assessments records to identify what children need to do next. Children are able to participate in a range of activities throughout the day. However, the organisation of some large group activities and the groupings of children hinders their ability to become fully engaged and resist distractions from younger children.

Children are becoming confident learners and are keen to look at new activities, such as sinking and floating. They are developing effective independence skills as they dress themselves after music time. Children confidently see to their personal needs. They enjoy the opportunity to be helper of the day as they help serve snacks and meals to their friends and take on other jobs within the room. Older children are supportive of younger children and eagerly help them to find lost belongings. They respond well to new ideas, for example when painting shells for an underwater theme it was suggested that they used glitter to make them shine. Staff explained how to apply the glitter by tapping the end of the pot so that it went of a specific area. The children displayed good levels of concentration as they applied the glitter and were visibly proud of their achievements and the praise from staff.

Children's language skills are developing well. They are keen to discuss their favourite topics with staff and visitors. They give clear explanations as to their subject and how things work. They talk eagerly about various trains and how 'steam trains go on water heated by the fire and diesel trains go on diesel like daddy's car.' Children currently have limited opportunities to write for a purpose within the setting and to practise their mark-making skills. A letter line is available but is placed outside the children's reach, which means they can not use this to recognise letters. Older children enjoy looking at books independently. Children's mathematical skills is hindered by a lack of spontaneous opportunities to count and to solve simple problems. Planned activities enable children to explore mathematical terms, as they look at weight and shape when looking at objects that sink and float. Children are developing sorting skills as they help to tidy away, by placing objects in the correct boxes. There are insufficient opportunities for children to recognise numerals within their environment.

Children are developing good computer skills as they confidently manoeuvre the mouse to access various activities. They particularly enjoy finding the monkeys jumping on the bed. Children enjoy looking at real objects and excitedly tell visitors about the tadpoles. They explain that they are to release them into the pond when they turn in to frogs, as one member of staff does not like frogs 'because they may jump on her head,' which causes the children to fall about giggling. Children are becoming more imaginative in their play and create scenarios to act out with their friends. These include going on a picnic and pretending to care for sick children. One child informs staff that she is unwell but will be better soon as the nurse has put two needles in her head. Children enjoy their weekly music session, they are becoming more confident in using various instruments and listen well to the different types of music.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed and have equal access to the activities and opportunities offered. Children's individual needs and circumstances are known and catered for by staff. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Older children develop an understanding of the wider world and their own environment through planned activities and experiences, such as Chinese New Year and St George's Day. They have access to a range of resources depicting diversity. This enables them to develop a positive attitude to others, although, there are limited resources available for younger children.

The nursery provides appropriate care for children with special needs. Children are well supported by the special educational needs coordinator (Senco) who ensures children's individual needs are known and catered for by staff. Play plans are in place, which support the children's specific learning objectives. These are compiled following consultation with parents and other professionals involved in the child's care. Children are generally well behaved and respond well to staff's requests. They are developing an understanding of the need for safe boundaries in order to keep themselves safe, for example to line up when going outdoors and not to run in their

room. Older children receive appropriate levels of praise from staff for their achievements and are proud of their work. They are keen to show others their drawings and tell friends they have written their name.

The partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff obtain useful information from the parents about children's individual needs, requirements and preferences. All consents are in place, which means children are cared for in line with their parents wishes. Informal daily discussions keep parents informed of their child's day and progress. This is effectively supported by the use of daily diaries for babies and regular parents evenings. Parents of children in receipt of funded education are informed of current topics and themes through discussions, newsletters and weekly plans. Informal discussions enable parents to comment upon their child's progress, however there are limited opportunities for them to comment upon their progress within the assessment records. Parents have stated they are happy with the care and education their children receive and are complimentary about the staff.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children arrive happy and are quickly off to play. Rooms are generally well organised to meet the needs of the children. However, the grouping of some children impacts upon the older children's ability to become fully engaged in their activities. Children have a good sense of belonging. They greet each other warmly and actively seek out their friends to play. There is a good ratio of qualified staff within the staff team. Staff have regular opportunities to access training to further enhance their existing skills and knowledge.

The leadership and managements is satisfactory. The leadership has identified weaknesses within the education provision and has taken positive steps to rectify these. This includes training for staff on the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and seeking support from SureStart. Management and staff have a commitment to build upon the quality of the provision and extend the learning opportunities for all children. Time is provided for all staff teams to meet on a regular basis to discuss future learning objectives for the children and to devise their activity plans.

Policies and procedures are in place and are shared effectively with the staff and parents. However, there are some omissions within the child protection policy, the missing child policy, uncollected child policy and sick children policy. Registers are in place, although these are not always completed as children arrive, which hinders children's safety. Effective recruitment and vetting procedures are in place. These are supported by effective induction systems, which enable staff to be fully aware of their roles and responsibilities. Overall, the needs of all the children are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there has been one complaint relating to National Standard 4: Physical environment.

The concern related to the heating of the nursery. The provider was asked to carry out investigation. Following their report to Ofsted no further action was required.

The provider 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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- seek advice and revise the use of non-prescribed medication for allergic reactions
- provide domestic style furniture to assist children in developing their mobility and to enable them to be fed in comfort
- improve the opportunities for younger children to develop their language skills using a frame work, such as Birth to three matters
- ensure all policies and procedures are in place and registers are accurately maintained

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):

- Evaluate the planning systems and methods for charting children's progress to ensure they are used effectively to identify the next steps in children's

learning and inform future plans

- improve upon the organisation of time, resources and groupings of children to enable them to become fully engaged in their play and to practice what they have learnt
- improve the opportunities for children to count, recognise numerals, and develop their mathematical skills
- improve upon the opportunities for children to identify letters, practise mark-making and develop an understanding that print carries meaning.

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