



Skylark Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY316828
Inspection date	17 May 2006
Inspector	Elizabeth Patricia Edmond
Setting Address	Murray Street, Scarborough, North Yorkshire, YO12 5AB
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Skylark Day 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

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 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?

Skylark Day Nursery has been registered since December 2005. It is privately owned and managed by a partnership. The group operates in a converted chapel within walking distance of the town centre, local amenities and primary school. The premises consist of a large playroom, separated for the different groups of children and specific activities. There is a separate sleep room for the babies. Opening times are from Monday to Friday, from 08.00 until 18.00 throughout the year, except for

bank holidays and the Christmas period.

The nursery is registered for a total of 44 children under five. There are currently 38 children on-roll. They are registered to provide funded nursery education places for those children of eligible age; currently four children are in receipt of such funding. They receive support from the local authority in respect of this.

The two owners have recognised childcare and education qualifications. They currently employ 3 full time staff who also have appropriate qualifications and experience; additional staff are used for cooking, cleaning and to cover staff absences.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where they learn about their own personal hygiene. They are encouraged to find the tissues to wipe their own noses and to use the toilet independently. The carefully followed nappy changing procedures promote a high level of hygiene.

The children enjoy the meals, which are cooked using fresh ingredients; these are also organic whenever possible. They like the sausages in their 'toad of toad hall' and they list the vegetables that they've eaten that day. Menus showing freshly cooked meals are followed carefully. The children develop their self-help skills by serving themselves where sensible to do so and the younger children learn to use proper cups and are learning to use their own spoons very well.

The children develop a positive approach to being active in the outdoors. The free flow arrangement for much of the time means that the children enjoy developing their physical skills on the slide or scooter as they wish. The very young children have fun with their developing mobility. They are inspired by the stimulating environment to explore their surroundings and they learn to pull themselves up on the sturdy furniture and join in with the action rhymes. This is because the adults have a good understanding of the importance of this for the babies' overall development. The programme for the children's physical development is effective in helping the children to move in different ways and develop their skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The children can play safely because the staff identify and minimise immediate risks and carefully risk assess activities, such as baking and walks on the beach. The premises are secure and the staff vigilantly follow the procedures as adults collect their children. The staff are very confident in the clear emergency evacuation procedures in place, but these have not yet been practiced with the children.

The children play freely with a broad range of play equipment and natural materials, which are in good condition. The staff skilfully explain to the very young children about being careful on the small slide and playing carefully with the babies. Planned activities that help the children to use tools, such as for baking, help them to learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

The children are suitably protected and their safety promoted. The staff continue to update their child protection training and the clear policy explains how concerns would be managed. The relevant documentation is in place and knowledge of child protection is discussed with staff at induction.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children arrive happily at nursery, they settle very quickly and enjoy their time there. This is due to the staff's emphasis on providing a happy, relaxed environment for the children. All children confidently help themselves to the various activities indoors and out. When children are occasionally undecided about where to play, staff skilfully interest the children in activities or invite them to snuggle in for a story. This combined with the stimulating environment ensures that children are motivated throughout the session.

The children enjoy exploring the range of natural materials and household items. The babies gurgle purposefully as they investigate the cool stainless steel teapot with their mouths and are fascinated as they see their reflection in the shiny ladle. Older children begin to talk about how the stones and glass beads feel in the wet sand and are interested in the scent once the rosemary is added.

The babies and toddlers join in with their favourite songs in the sensory area. They choose items, such as the 'Incy Wincy Spider' or the 'Two Little Dicky Birds' from the basket and enthusiastically join in with the musical instruments.

The children develop their communication skills to a good level because the staff engage the children fully throughout the session. The staff skilfully encourage the babies to make sound shapes with their faces as they attend to their care needs or peep around the furniture. The babies beam with pride as they are praised for making their own sounds and they have great fun repeating themselves.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. The provision of funded nursery education is a very new venture for the group and the children are in their earliest stages of their nursery education. However, the staff have previous experience of teaching this age group of children and demonstrate great skill in supporting the children's learning through the use of conversational questioning. The children's individual play and development booklets, whilst recently introduced, are already providing clear initial assessments at Foundation Stage level and show the next steps for the children's continued learning. They also show good continuity for the children as they move towards the early learning goals from the Birth to three matters

framework. A further strength is that the staff have high expectations of what the young children can do for themselves. This has a positive impact on the children's learning in all areas. For example, the children are encouraged to attempt to break the eggs for the baking and to make up storylines for the small world toys.

The calm, yet industrious environment created by the staff means that the children are confident to access all the activities. They are very interested in the resources and remain motivated throughout the session. This has a significant impact on the children in all areas of their learning. The children develop good counting skills as they count the spoonfuls of sand or the eggs. The children begin to recognise familiar numbers; for example, more able children proudly point to the number three saying that they are three now. They confidently use simple mathematical language as they talk about the ingredients for baking.

The children enjoy stories and books and handle them very well. They develop their pre-writing skills as they draw and paint, and sometimes make their own marks in the telephone notebook in the role play area. More able children easily find and name their initial letter. They develop their speaking and listening skills to a high level; they listen carefully to the sounds on the lotto game and can name the different musical instruments.

The young children explore using all their senses, they are interested in the stones and the glass shapes in the wet sand and they use their developing language skills to describe their findings. Planned topics and fun activities help children to learn about people in their environment and about the features of their locality. Some children are very confident in using the tape recorder to support their learning; they enjoy the music as they switch it on and off and turn the volume up and down.

Because of the emphasis on self-help skills the children develop good manipulative skills. They use cutlery increasingly well, confidently break the eggs into the bowl and they cut the paper for their pictures. The children become increasingly confident in expressing themselves in all aspects of their artwork. They can sing simple songs from memory and sometimes make up their own songs as they play. They begin to act out familiar experiences in the role play area and some introduce their own simple storylines to their play. The children enjoy action rhymes and sometimes dance freely to the music.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

The children are valued and respected as individuals. This is because the staff get to know the children and their families very well. Children's individual needs are further promoted through the staff's commitment to additional medical training where necessary and sensitive ongoing liaison with parents. The children are beginning to use correct sign language as they join in with action rhymes.

The children develop very positive relationships with the staff and their peers. The older children are excited when the babies join them for snack and the babies enjoy this additional attention. The key-worker system is used effectively to support the

children's emotional development and their confidence. The high importance placed on the children's self-esteem results in a very pleasant, cheerful environment, where the young children learn to behave very well. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. The children develop effective three-way relationships with all their parents and the staff; they are relaxed and happy as they see the adults discuss the day's events and their daily care sheets. Parents receive clear written information about all aspects of the care and education provided by the nursery. They receive a high level of information about their individual children both verbally as they collect their children, and in the daily home-book or assessment booklets. Parents are invited to contribute to their children's care and learning and they are pleased when they are able to contribute resources or share their skills. This approach to linking with the children's home and family helps the children to feel settled and increases the opportunities for the children. The range of policies available for parents is comprehensive, but there is no system in place for logging any complaints. Parents are overwhelmingly very supportive of the nursery; they are particularly pleased with the friendly atmosphere, the range of activities and the good quality food provided.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children are well supported through the effective key-worker system. This is because the management and staff have good understanding of the principles of the Birth to three framework and how this can be implemented in practice. There are robust recruitment procedures in place to ensure the staff's suitability and the developing appraisal system is used to highlight ongoing training needs.

The facilities and resources are organised in such a way that promotes the children's independence and offers a good level of variety and choice of activities. All aspects of documentation, whilst constantly under review as the nursery develops, is well organised. All of the required records are used effectively to promote the children's care and learning.

The leadership and management is good. The management and staff have shared ethos of quality nursery education and all have a good understanding of what this involves. Team meetings are used effectively to evaluate all aspects of the provision and the children's learning. Systems for planning for the Foundation Stage and monitoring the effectiveness of this are very new. This means that although the staff are confident in what is needed in order to fully support the children's individual learning, the systems are not sufficiently established to fully evidence overall development. A key strength of the nursery is in all the adults' exceptional approach to the development of the provision and their links with the local authority for this.

Overall the needs of all the children attending are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There are no complaints to report.

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 children's safety by practising the emergency evacuation procedures
- establish a system for recording any complaints made by parents.

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 systems for evaluating the effectiveness of the overall educational provision and planning for the children's individual learning.

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