



Dicky Birds

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY316138
Inspection date	23 June 2006
Inspector	Amanda Jane Tyson
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Registered person	Dicky Birds Pre School Nurseries Limited
Type of inspection	Childcare
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

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.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Dicky Birds Surbiton is one of five nurseries owned by Dicky Birds pre-school Nurseries limited. It opened in February 2006. The setting operates from a purpose built two storey building within a residential area of Surbiton, which is within short commuting distance of Kingston town centre.

There are three main base rooms; babies; toddlers; and pre-school. The baby room is based on the first floor. The pre-school is not yet up and running because the children are all aged two and under. Toilets, nappy changing and sleep rooms are integral to all three rooms and there is a secure outdoor play area. There is a kitchen

and laundry, office and staff room. The ground floor is accessible to wheelchair users and there are toilet facilities available to meet the needs of disabled users. The children are taken on regular outings, they either walk, use the company mini-bus, or public transport.

There are a total of 52 children aged from nought to two years currently on roll, of these, 44 are aged under two years. The nursery operates a full inclusion policy for children with learning, and physical disability needs. Three of the attending children speak additional languages to English.

A total of 16 staff are employed, which includes the manager. Eleven are based permanently within toddlers and babies, and the remaining are supernumerary, including the manager. The majority of staff hold level two and three qualifications in early years childcare. In addition there is a full time cook and the nursery has a contractual arrangement with a cleaning firm.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is outstanding.

The very well balanced and nutritious daily provision of snacks and meals is laying excellent foundations for a healthy lifestyle. Each day there are plentiful supplies of fresh fruit and vegetables, wholemeal breads and grains, and unprocessed meats. The setting's commitment towards meeting the dietary needs of children with special requirements, such as allergies ensures that wherever possible they enjoy meals that look the same as the majority; they are made with alternative ingredients. Children with allergies, vegetarians, or those with religious restrictions wear stickers, and their food is labelled to minimise the possibility of accidental consumption. The menu is very well adapted to meet the needs of weaning babies, in line with parental wishes.

Children are exceptionally well protected from the risk of cross infection because the standards of hygiene practised by staff throughout the nursery are particularly robust. The setting employ a qualified cook, who implements strict environmental health and food hygiene standards. Staff ensure that children's hands are washed prior to eating and after playing in the garden or using the toilet. Tables are rigorously cleaned with anti-bacterial detergent prior to use, and staff wear disposable gloves when changing children's nappies.

Children's individual health needs are met by staff who know the children very well. Records and documentation relating to health, such as accidents, administered medication, and written permission from parents to enable staff to seek or administer treatment, are all in place. Most staff are first aid qualified so that they are equipped to treat minor accidents and respond to some emergency situations. In addition, individual staff have completed specialist training, for example so that they can administer an epi-pen to children with allergy conditions. The attention given to meeting children's individual routine needs, particularly sleep and babies' bottle feeds, are a key strength of this provision. Babies and toddlers can rest comfortably in the well equipped integral sleep rooms whenever they need to. The children

demonstrate a strong sense of belonging, which is undoubtedly fostered by the affectionate interactions of the consistent staff team, a well thought through settling in procedure for new children, and superb presentation of the play rooms. Babies are taken out for lovely daily walks, for example down to the river to feed the ducks, and planning for both indoor and outdoor play ensures that toddlers take part in plenty of daily physical exercise, such as climbing, learning to use pedals, walking, running and kicking balls.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

The premises have been created to provide an exceptionally warm and welcoming environment for children to spend their day. The play rooms are equipped with home-style furnishings, for example French armoires (wardrobes), sofa's, voile drapes and pretty chandeliers. Low level stimuli such as mirrors and tactile murals adorn the baby room walls. Toilets, nappy changing and sleep areas are all integral to the playrooms. The outdoor play area is equipped with safety surfacing and secured with acoustic transparent perimeter fencing, to minimise noise to local residents.

Children benefit from the superb range of toys and equipment which are of high quality and well maintained to ensure safe use. For example, the ergonomically designed nappy changing tables encourage the children's independence and protect staff from possible back injuries; robust toddlers use steps to climb onto the table themselves. Whilst this new building has encountered numerous teething problems, the owner takes immediate steps to rectify any problems, or gaps. For instance, air conditioning was not initially considered to be necessary in the kitchen which proved to be a mistake, but is now being installed.

The arrangements for emergency evacuation, such as in the event of a fire has been well considered and a clear procedure is in place. However, practice has taken place during less busy periods and does not therefore demonstrate a clear picture of how effective it would be in a real situation. For example, if there are 15 babies present in the first floor playroom. All required fire appliances are in place, although the positioning of the extinguisher in the kitchen compromises both children and adults safety because it is not stored securely. The kitchen and laundry are at times accessible to children when there is no adult present, although this is due to the heat and will be immediately rectified once the new air conditioning is installed on the 26/06/2006. The setting implement robust risk assessment and a number of procedures to protect the children. Sleeping children are checked every 10 minutes; the times are recorded on a chart, and a baby monitor ensures that staff can hear the children at all times. Children's safety whilst on outings is given high priority. The setting have the use of a mini-bus, which is fitted with appropriate child safety restraints. The children wear identifiable clothing and badges which detail the name and telephone number of the setting so that a speedy reunion is more likely, should they become temporarily misplaced. Children are protected from un-vetted visitors, and the possibility of them being able to leave the premises unsupervised is very well minimised by the secure CCTV entry system. Visitors sign a book on entry and wear

a badge to identify them as such. There is a rigorous procedure, that is well understood by parents, to ensure that children are only collected by named adults who are either known to staff, or who provide identification to confirm information provided by parents.

The majority of staff have completed child protection training; it forms part of the staff induction procedure. The staff manual details a step-by-step guide to what to do if concerns are raised, in order to safeguard children's welfare. However, whilst staff are clear about their responsibility to record concerns, they do not record routine existing injuries, such as those sustained outside of day care. This means that patterns of injuries may be missed.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Staff plan and deliver a superb range of activities every day which inspire children's natural impulse to explore and experiment. The provision for sensory and creative play is a key feature of planning for both babies and toddlers. Staff use their rapidly expanding knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to guide their planning, and to monitor and record children's progress and development in comprehensive detail.

Squeals of laughter are constant throughout the day in toddler room as children explore real foods and ingredients such as cornflakes, by enthusiastic consumption and taste, and by scooping and transferring using different tools. Their enthusiasm to experiment with cornflour results in them being covered from head to toe, and they are immersed in their imagination as they bury animals and figures in sand. The topsoil filled flowerbed proves irresistible to a toddler who is determined to get inside, and children happily run around initiating their own games using fixed equipment, such as a steering wheel on the climbing frame, attempting ball skills and negotiating the tree stump stepping stones. Children are beginning to notice colour changes and experiment with weight, volume and capacity through water play. They have fun creating different expressions as they look through the mirror and try different ways to come down the slide. Their small motor skills are developing well through the regular use of tools such as scissors, glue-spreaders, pencils and chinks. Staff encourage children's imaginations and learning by joining in imitative play, maintaining high levels of communication and listening to what they have to say. Planning is loosely connected to a theme, for example 'Dinosaurs'. Staff skilfully incorporate learning through a mixture of focussed activities, such as making a two dimensional model from recyclable boxes and packaging, with providing different types of Dinosaurs within creative play, such as the sand. Staff take the time to browse through books with individuals and small groups of children, in addition to the regular group story times.

Babies are exceptionally well supported by the high adult to child ratios. They manoeuvre around the room eagerly, inspired by the interesting variety of heuristic learning opportunities which is encouraging early mobility. For example, babies gravitate towards resources such as sand, water, cornflour and the frequently

provided jelly, where they are able to pull themselves up by holding onto the sturdy low-level troughs. They freely use chunky tools, along with their mouths to explore taste and texture. Staff encourage them to create sounds with an interesting mix of real objects and musical instruments. They explore the treasure basket which is full of tactile objects, such as a sponge, wicker balls and shells. Babies are determined, interested and motivated to master skills, for example a 10 month old is immersed in concentration as he tries over and over again to place a ball in a small hatch without it falling out before he shuts the door. His self esteem, when he finally achieves this, is delightfully etched all over his face. Familiar routines, such as when highchairs are put out, ensure that babies know what will happen next. They are secure, happy and very well cared for.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Babies and toddler's are surrounded by positive images of diversity which lay the foundations for early awareness of the differences between people. For example, babies play with chunky figures and look at picture books which depict people with different skin colours. Toddlers are equally surrounded by positive imagery, such as posters on the wall, a wide range of books, different race dolls, multi cultural dressing-up costumes, and small world figures of people with various disability. Toddlers participate in creative activities to mark the religious and cultural customs of others, for example Chinese New Year and Diwali. The operational plan is flexible enough to be easily adapted to accommodate the children's individual needs, such as those relating to health, emotional, learning or physical disabilities. Developmental concerns are recognised, shared with parents and acted upon by experienced and qualified staff, which ensures that prompt measures are implemented to provide appropriate support to children.

Children's high levels of self esteem and confidence is fostered by the consistent use of praise for their efforts and achievements, such as babies attempting to walk. Toddlers are beginning to use common courtesies, such as 'please' and 'thank you', without the need for reminders. They play happily together and are encouraged by staff to use their developing independence and self-help skills, for instance helping to clean the tables after lunch. The presence of the pet guinea pigs encourages the children to be caring and kind; they hold and stroke them daily. Children are easily distracted from potential conflict, such as over toys, because there are so many other exciting activities to capture their interest.

Staff work in close partnership with parents and carers, which ensures high levels of continuity for children, and enables parents to provide consistent learning support within the home. Staff summarise details of the children's daily care routines, temperament and participated activities, and these are given to parents to take home each day. Activity plans are displayed, along with the weeks learning intentions. The setting's operational plan, in the form of well written policies and procedures, are all given to parents to read as part of the admission procedure. Many are prominently displayed on the notice board. Parents are astutely aware of the setting's regulatory responsibilities, such as those relating to child protection and the procedure for

making a complaint. Parents receive regular developmental reports and are able to meet with key staff to discuss children's progress and development in detail. Parents hold the provision and staff qualities in high regard. Relationships between both parties are friendly and open.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The leadership of the provision is strong and highly proactive. The robust staff recruitment procedures ensure that dedicated and motivated staff are permanently employed following a successful probation period. Dicky Birds Pre-School Nurseries limited have very good procedures in place to determine staff's mental and physical suitability to work with children, and they have made secure arrangements to ensure that staff are vetted by the criminal records bureau every three years. Children are cared for by consistent and familiar adults, which is clearly demonstrated by the babies who are wary of visitors, but quickly comforted by the staff with whom they are happy and secure. Ratios of staff to children are maintained considerably above the minimum requirements. Additional staff are employed to ensure there are sufficient cover arrangements for staff absences and busy times, such as lunchtime in baby room. Team meetings are regular and staff are well supported to develop their knowledge and skills through individual line management and good training opportunities, both internally and externally.

Records and documentation which are required for the safe and efficient management of the provision, and to promote the welfare care and learning of the children are mostly all in excellent operational use and well maintained. However, in addition to the misunderstanding regarding the recording of existing injuries, there are also gaps in the way that staff attendance is recorded. Although staff do sign in and out each day, this does not indicate where they are based for that day. This is particularly relevant to the peripatetic staff, who float between rooms, or for staff who may cover staff absence from one of the other nurseries within the company. Nevertheless, the staff team, and superb presentation of the nursery building provides children with a high quality day care experience. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Concerns were raised to Ofsted in February 2006, which related to National Standard 4, physical environment; improvements that were being made to the setting were resulting in a strong smell of paint, a noisy environment and that there was little natural light in one of the rooms. Ofsted asked the provider to investigate and based on her response, no further action was taken. The provider remained qualified for registration.

Further concerns relating to the physical environment were again raised in march 2006; that local housing had an unobstructed view of toilet and changing rooms at the setting. Ofsted wrote to the setting and asked them to provide a detailed response. From their response, Ofsted were satisfied that the National Standards continued to be met. The provider remains qualified for registration.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

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.

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):

- take steps to improve safety; practise the emergency evacuation plan during times that test the effectiveness of the written procedure; and ensure the safe storage of the kitchen fire extinguisher
- improve record keeping; maintain a record of existing injuries; make sure that the daily group room register shows the names of staff caring for the children, and their times of attendance

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