



Cambridge Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY308230
Inspection date	07 June 2006
Inspector	Caroline Wright / Heidi Falconer
Setting Address	67 Milton Road, Cambridge, Cambridgeshire, CB4 1XA
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Registered person	Cambridge Associates In Management 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?

Cambridge Day Nursery is run by Cambridge Associates in Management Ltd. It opened in 2005 and operates from premises close to Cambridge City centre. A maximum of 46 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 45 children aged from 0 to under five years on roll. Of these 18

children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 21 members of staff. Twelve of the staff, including the manager, hold appropriate early years qualifications; five members of staff are working towards a relevant qualification. The nursery uses the High Scope educational approach, integrated with early learning goals, to help children to learn.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and clean environment where staff follow suitable hygiene procedures to prevent the spread of infection. For example, they wipe surfaces where food is served with anti-bacterial spray and wear disposable gloves and aprons when changing children's nappies. Children are learning about good personal hygiene routines. Older children use toilet facilities independently and are encouraged to undertake their own personal care such as washing their hands before eating and brushing their teeth after meals. Children discuss with staff the need to wash their hands to remove germs so that they don't get poorly.

Children are well cared for if they become unwell or in the event of an accident. Systems to record accidents and medication are clear and used consistently to protect children and keep parents informed. In addition, sufficient staff are trained in emergency aid and a first aid kit is readily available.

Children enjoy a good range of healthy and tasty balanced meals, which are carefully planned to ensure that they are nourishing and interesting for children to eat. Children enjoy snacks such as carrots, cucumber, fruit, raisins and breadsticks. Children who have special dietary needs are catered for and details about their allergies are always clearly displayed alongside their photograph, which reduces the risk of children being given foods which are harmful to them. Children have the opportunity to make their own sandwiches for tea twice a week which helps them to learn about healthy eating through everyday meaningful experiences.

Children take part in regular outdoor activity to promote their good health. All children enjoy opportunities within the day to take part in physical exercise. They demonstrate their ability to climb, slide or balance on the equipment. However the resources do not always challenge older or more able children. In addition, the shared use of the garden by children of all ages means that there is sometimes limited space for older children to move imaginatively and develop new physical skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children use a satisfactory range of safe, good quality and developmentally

appropriate resources. These are generally well-organised in child-height furniture so that children are able to access them easily when they have permission. Children use suitable furniture and equipment to meet their developmental needs. For example, cots are provided for young babies to sleep in, whilst older children who need a rest during the day sleep in appropriately sized 'huggle' beds.

Children are cared for in a generally safe environment where most potential hazards have been identified and minimised to reduce the risk of accidental injury. For example, the premises are kept secure to prevent children leaving without a suitable adult and to stop visitors entering the premises unescorted. However, potential hazards which have been identified on risk assessments are not always addressed promptly enough and therefore pose a risk to the children. The staff explain safe practices to children, such as waiting until the child in front has gone down the slide, so that they don't bump into each other to help children to learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe.

Children's welfare is generally well protected. Staff demonstrate some awareness of the appropriate child protection procedures to follow to protect children if suspicions arose or if an allegation was made against a member of staff. A written child protection procedure is in place and is currently being reviewed to ensure that it is inline with the Local Safeguarding Children's Board to further enhance children's safety.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Babies receive lots cuddles and develop strong relationships with the staff who care for them. For example, as they begin to wake up from their sleep, staff spend time sitting with them as they wake up properly. This helps children to feel valued and secure in the nursery. Young children's communication skills develop well with support and encouragement from staff. For example, key workers consistently talk to babies about what they are doing so that they can link spoken words to their actions. Staff effectively encourage children to communicate, nodding their head and responding with smiles to babies' 'babbling' so that they experiment with their voices and practise their expanding vocabulary with confidence.

Younger children are happy and they enjoy a satisfactory range of activities to promote their development using the 'Birth to three matters' framework. However, staff's limited understanding of this document means that not all activities they plan are developmentally suitable. Children particularly enjoy outdoor play, catching sequins in water and playing with musical instruments. Children's ability to make extend their ideas, become independent and pursue their own interests is hindered by their inability to access additional resources other than the limited range put out by staff at activities and because they have to put one toy away before they can choose another to play with.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and children's learning is satisfactory. Children use their

imagination in role play and communicate effectively. They tell their own stories, such as rescuing their mother from a spider's web, and talk with understanding about what they know and do at home. The clearly labelled toys and equipment enables children to learn that writing carries meaning and they recognise familiar words such as their own name. Children listen well to stories and use books for enjoyment. They use number names and mathematical language such as 'more' and 'enough'; they measure who has the 'biggest' fork at lunchtime. Children enjoy using the computer and learn about everyday technology such as the telephone, cash registers and cooker in role play situations. They plant seeds and play outdoors in all kinds of weather to learn about living things and changes in the natural environment. They sing familiar songs and clap hands or 'click' their tongues to follow a steady rhythm.

Planning for activities is clear and balanced across the early learning goals; staff carry out daily observations of children and identify the next steps for individual progress. Key workers use their observations to plan activities that build on what children know.

However, although staff working with funded children are suitably qualified, they are not clear in their understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum. While the activities they plan are worthy, they are not well presented and fail to offer sufficient challenge or interest the children. Staff do not encourage children to make decisions or pursue their own interests. Children are unable to access sufficient resources at adult-led activities or in play situations and they lack opportunities to develop early writing skills in meaningful situations. 'Class' sessions are very structured, leaving children few opportunities to explore their creativity, investigate materials or extend their learning beyond those planned by staff. Furthermore, although children count by rote competently, there are insufficient opportunities to develop their recognition of numbers or learn about calculations in everyday situations. This impacts on learning.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from a satisfactory range of resources that reflect positive images of diversity and help them to develop self-esteem and a sense of belonging. This enables children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development to be fostered. Children who have English as an additional language receive appropriate support as staff learn key words to help them to communicate effectively and build on what they already know. Children who have learning difficulties or disabilities are supported by appropriate procedures that are in place. For example, staff discuss the child's needs with parents to enable them to provide appropriate care and seek specialist services where necessary.

Children's behaviour is satisfactory. They generally play happily together and children often seek out others to join in their play. With support from staff, younger children learn to share and take turns with popular resources such as cars and trains. The majority of older children show an understanding of the rules that enable them to work together harmoniously. However, children have limited opportunities to explore resources or pursue their own interests and activities for older children lack

challenge; adult led activities fail to interest them, leading to displays of challenging behaviour. This compromises learning.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive funded early education is satisfactory and contributes to their progress. The partnerships also contribute positively to children's care, well-being and sense of security. Parents receive a written report on their child's progress each half-term; key workers inform parents of the 'next steps' in children's learning so that they can support their children at home. Parents with children under one-year-old are provided with a daily diary and key workers talk to parents each day at hand-over times to make sure children's changing needs are adequately met.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by suitably qualified staff who are subject to rigorous recruitment and vetting procedures to ensure that they are suitable to care for young children. The induction procedure for new staff makes sure that all members of the team have a secure knowledge of their role and responsibilities. This enables them to create an environment where children feel welcome and develop high levels of self-esteem. Children's health, welfare and safety is promoted because the nursery ensures that all of the regulatory documents are complete and up to date. Records are safely stored with regard to confidentiality and are shared appropriately with parents.

The organisation of the premises is generally good and ensures that children are provided with a suitable range of activities to promote satisfactory learning and development. Children develop secure relationships with key workers who help them to become confident. The new management team are committed to improving the quality of the care and education that they provide and have made a number of improvements to the physical environment and the way the nursery is run. A self-evaluation schedule based on the 'Outcomes for Children' enables staff to examine their practice and learn about the National Standards. Questionnaires are distributed to parents to promote further discussion and to ensure that families' needs are well met. However, the system for monitoring practice and for ensuring the quality of early education does not always enable effective teaching strategies to be promoted.

The leadership and management of early education is satisfactory. Regular meetings enable staff to work effectively as a team. The manager is pro-active in seeking advice from the local authority teacher-mentor and is committed to her own professional development. However, staff training plans are not informed by observation or monitoring of practice by the nursery management team. Staff working with funded children have not yet received training in the Foundation Stage and therefore, they do not organise the sessions or activities effectively to promote exploration, challenge or interest for children. Opportunities for children to extend their thinking and learning and to demonstrate what they know are missed. This impacts upon children's behaviour and motivation and limits their learning.

Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 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.

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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 risk assessment procedure so that potential hazards are minimised immediately they are identified to promote children's safety at all times
- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework so that they can use it more effectively to inform the way they plan activities and identify learning outcomes for babies and children under three-years-old.

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):

- improve the organisation of the nursery sessions to provide children with more opportunities to pursue their own interests and freely explore resources both indoors and out; increase the range of activities and materials available at any one time so that children can extend their learning independently through their play (this also applies to care)

- improve staff's knowledge of the foundation stage curriculum so that they can present activities effectively to promote challenge and interest for all children, providing sufficient opportunities for children to demonstrate what they know and extend their thinking beyond the planned outcomes
- improve the system for monitoring the programme for funded early education and observing practice, so that areas for staff development are identified, individual skills are shared and effective teaching strategies are promoted (this also applies to care).

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