



Denton Island Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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Registered person	Newhaven Community Development Association LTD
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

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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?

Denton Island Nursery and Children & Family Centre opened in 2004 to serve the local area of Newhaven. The centre comprises a day nursery, which is open each weekday for 50 weeks of the year from 08.00 to 18.00; a crèche to support parents and carers attending the centre; and a variety of courses and drop-in support groups for parents, carers and their families. A board of trustees oversee the operations of the centre and manages the budget and recruitment of staff.

The centre operates from a purpose built nursery and family care centre. There are currently 85 children aged from 3 months up to 5 years on roll in the day nursery; 24 of these receive nursery education. The crèche offers a maximum of 24 places and operates as required, to support various adult groups that meet in the centre. The number of children attending the crèche varies and children who attend are mostly under 3 years old. The centre supports children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children with English as an additional language.

There is an overall centre manager who is supported by a management team which includes the day nursery manager, the Children and Community Development Co-ordinator and the Quality and Early Years Development Officer. There are 15 staff who work with the children in the day nursery. In addition, 18 staff can be called on to work when the crèche is operating. Of the total number of staff at the nursery and crèche 22 are qualified. There are two part-time nursery teachers who provide support in the day nursery.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in an environment which is generally clean and tidy. There are routines in place for cleaning equipment and checking areas such as the toilets to ensure they are always clean and suitable for the children's use. However, the fridges in both the cloak room and babies' room are soiled with stains and food crumbs; this impacts on the children's health. The baby and toddler chairs used at meal times are also grubby and this also impacts on the children's health. There is an effective no shoe policy in place in the baby and toddler rooms to ensure that floor surfaces are hygienic where they crawl and lie on the floor. Children understand why they need to wash their hands after using the toilet and before eating and most children do so without hesitation, while others are given a gentle reminder by staff. The older children brush their teeth after lunch each day which also helps them develop important self care skills. Nappy changing procedures in both the nursery and the crèche effectively reduce risks of cross infection to young children.

Children's health and welfare is safeguarded regarding accidents, illness and medication due to the effective policies and procedures in place, throughout all areas of the children's centre. The accident and medication records are well maintained and there are a high number of qualified first aiders who can therefore tend appropriately to a child should they have an accident.

Healthy eating is promoted and children enjoy the nutritious snacks of fresh fruit, while the meals are nutritious and also enjoyed by the children. Older children are able to decide for themselves when to eat, as there is a free flow snack bar system. The babies are fed according to their individual need and are encouraged to develop their own feeding skills as they practise using a spoon and feeding themselves finger foods. At lunch time, the older children are developing some independence serving themselves and helping to lay the table. However, lunch time is chaotic in the nursery and does not provide a sociable time of day for the children. The tables are very

close together and younger children do not always have an adult sat with them to support them as they eat and chat with them.

Babies in both the nursery and crèche are held close when given a bottle of milk which helps create a sense of belonging and security for the young child. Drinks are easily accessible to children and they are able to help themselves to a drink at any time, while younger children are also offered regular drinks to ensure they remain hydrated throughout the day.

Children in the nursery enjoy outdoor physical play, using a variety of equipment to support their gross motor development, while younger children are appropriately supported as they learn to stand and walk. There is a large, pleasant and inviting garden, with ample space for the children to play and move around freely but the doors to the garden are often kept shut, limiting opportunities for children to make full use of both in and outdoor play in order to develop their physical skills.

There are good opportunities for energetic physical play in the fresh air. Children use the outdoor play area and develop skills such as skipping and balancing. They use the large equipment, gaining self-esteem as they climb, clamber and jump. They show coordination and spatial awareness, moving confidently and safely. The use of one handed equipment such as pencils and weaving ribbons in and out of paper and fences, supports their hand eye co-ordination. This in turn helps develop their pencil control and pre writing skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children benefit from playing in a bright, spacious and generally well organised environment where displays of the children's work enhance the areas used. In the crèche the staff create as welcoming and cosy play space as possible through the use of rugs, cushions and play equipment. Although the baby room is cosy and comfortable, there are too few visual images and stimulating, tactile resources at the babies' level to captivate their interest, encourage them to explore and stimulate them. Children move around most areas freely and enjoy the large amount of clear floor space, so they can relax and play freely. However, staff often keep the doors to the garden and quiet room closed, which creates a physical barrier for children and most children make no attempt to open the doors and use the space; any child that does, struggles with the physical weight of the door and this restricts children's play opportunities.

Children have access to a wide range of age and developmentally appropriate toys and play equipment in both the nursery and crèche. Children are able to independently choose resources as they are clearly labelled for easy identification and are also stored at a low level. This encourages children to make their own decisions about what they do and play with.

Children play in a safe and secure environment; security of premises is good, ensuring children are unable to leave the premises without a suitable adult. Door entry is via a push button entry system and parents have to ring a bell to gain access.

Passwords are used for alternative collection and staff would not let a child go with someone unknown to ensure their welfare is safeguarded at all times. Daily risk assessments are carried out and children are able to gain an understanding of their own safety when playing. Fire drills are carried out and both staff and children are aware of what to do to evacuate safely, with two mobile cots available to evacuate babies safely. Evacuation drills are not carried out on a regular enough basis, consequently staff are not aware of the procedures to follow.

Staff have a good understanding of the signs and symptoms of child abuse and know what action to take if they have concerns about a child in their care which helps protect children and safeguard their wellbeing. Records are used to record any concerns and are stored securely for confidentiality.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are happy, settled and enjoy their time in both the nursery and the crèche, playing contentedly with their peers and adults. They participate in a range of activities that support their learning and development, though there is no specific planning for the children aged two to three, and the activities in the baby room are sometimes pitched at too high a level for the younger children's developmental needs, for example doing an evaluation of an activity to touch their nose, staff noted that the babies were too young to understand. However, activities such as playing with shaving foam are particularly enjoyed by the toddlers and they have great messy fun standing in it and rubbing it through their fingers. Other messy play activities that babies enjoy include playing with pasta and jelly. The two to three year-olds participate in activities that have been adapted from the Foundation Stage curriculum and are not always appropriate for their needs and interests. They do enjoy activities such as 'playdoh', looking at books with a member of staff, talking about what they can see, using construction for a purpose and creating collages during art and craft activities.

In the crèche staff interact very warmly with the babies. They sit playing with them, supporting them as they play and explore the toys, responding to their sounds and mimicking them so that the babies learn important early communication skills.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Staff generally interact well with children and support their learning. However, some staff lack a secure familiarity with the Foundation Stage curriculum. As a result, they do not always make effective use of activities to extend children's skills and abilities. Generally, they ask good open questions of children, getting them to think. Staff create a visually pleasing environment where children's work is nicely displayed and labelled. This shows children that their work is valued and gives them a sense of belonging.

The staff make regular observations of children's achievements and use these to record progress towards the early learning goals. The Learning Stories are a useful observational tool and give some information about a child's involvement in the

nursery activities over a set period of time. From these, children's individual next steps can be identified. However, the assessment profiles are not always kept up to date. This means that staff have limited accurate knowledge of what individual children can do within the areas of learning. Therefore, they are unable to plan effectively to ensure all children make good progress.

Children respond well to adults and form caring relationships with them. They develop some independence, for example, by using the toilet when they want or accessing their own drink. They have opportunities to make choices about their play, including at times, whether they play indoors or out. Most children communicate easily and effectively with staff and others. Children enjoy sharing books and listen well to stories. The use of pictures and words, as labels on the resource boxes, enables children to make connections. Children are able to use pencils and paper freely but need further encouragement to practice their pre writing skills in other situations.

Children are happy to count and they enjoy number activities. They are beginning to recognise familiar numbers. During some everyday routines and activities, children's understanding of simple calculation is promoted. They get to explore and investigate living things. They have fun as they look for worms in the compost tray and examine them closely using magnifying boxes. They gaining a sense of time and interest in the natural world, as they watch their bean plants grow. There are items displayed that children can freely explore and investigate. The environment around them is reflective of the wider world, though they have few opportunities to gain an awareness of how other people celebrate festivals and events.

Varied activities, both indoors and outside promote children's physical abilities and creative development. Children have great fun as they bury and look for 'minibeasts' in the compost tray or create collages. They get to explore other materials such as playdoh, soap flakes or pasta as well as sand and water. Children are keen to take part in action songs and enjoy exploring sound. During art and craft activities, children are able to be expressive and develop their own ideas.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed into the nursery and crèche and are respected as individuals. Children have established secure relationships with their peers and adults and are encouraged to feel a sense of belonging as they see their art work displayed all around the nursery. Staff undertake home visits to new children and this enables the family to get to know their child's keyworker in an informal manner and enables the staff member to discuss each child's care and learning needs and forge initial important relationships. Children have some opportunities to learn about the world around them, as they celebrate a limited range of cultural and religious festivals and have access to a range of resource that promote and reflect equality. Children with English as an additional language are positively included and staff find out a few words in the child's first language to help them settle and feel part of the nursery. The special educational needs co-ordinator has attended training and has a sufficient

understanding of her role. Children identified with learning difficulties and /or disabilities are also supported by early years advisors. They have individual educational plans in place so that their specific needs are identified and appropriately supported. However, staff do not always consider the long term developmental needs for children with disabilities and learning difficulties, so that their future needs are as well supported as their current ones.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are well behaved and receive praise and encouragement to help develop their confidence and self esteem. Children also enjoy having a cuddle with the nursery pet rats as a reward for good behaviour. The behaviour strategies used to deal with negative behaviour with the babies and toddlers are not always appropriate as a time out system is used, with them being expected to say sorry and this is not suitable for their age and level of understanding.

Partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. They have information about the Foundation Stage that shows how children learn through play and can view the nursery education planning. They find the staff approachable and can discuss their child's achievements with identified keyworkers. However, they do not receive ideas of how they can support their child's learning at home. As assessment records are not always up to date, parents and carers are not fully informed about the progress their child is making towards the early learning goals. The Special Books are informative and a wonderful memento of their child's journey through the nursery.

In discussion with parents, they comment that they are happy with the care their children receive. They particularly like the home visits and feel involved in their children's learning at nursery. There are regular newsletters to keep them up to date with current events and there is a wealth of information easily accessible to them in the children's centre. The required complaints log is in place and any complaint is dealt with in line with current guidelines, which helps foster a positive partnership with parents.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

A thorough recruitment process is in place, helping to ensure that staff are suitable to work with the children. Children's welfare is safeguarded, as they are not left alone with unvetted adults. There is a comprehensive range of policies and procedures for both the nursery and the crèche. Staff have access to core training as part of their induction and through access to external training courses. Appraisals on a twice yearly basis help to identify training needs and professional development.

Children are looked after in an organised, welcoming environment. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities and there are clear management structures. Members of staff also have additional responsibilities for specific areas of the nursery to ensure that there is continued development. Children are cared for by staff who are supported by clear routines and planning. Children benefit from the good adult to child ratio, with staff who interact with the children effectively, at all times. Staff give children support and encouragement, as a result they are secure and confident. Staff

meet regularly to plan and evaluate their practice and undertake future planning.

All the required documentation is kept in relation to the children and secure storage ensures that personal information is kept confidentially.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. The day is planned to ensure that children have sufficient opportunities and make full use of the premises although these are limited in relation to use of the quiet room and the outside area. The nursery education provision is evaluated and monitored by the early years teachers. Action plans are devised and acted on across a range of working practices. Staff show a commitment to the nursery and extending children's learning and have regular opportunities to plan for their needs. The management of the crèche is effective and children are provided with good quality care and learning opportunities. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Additional services.

A number of groups are established at the centre and benefit from the modern facilities. A parents' forum meets regularly to identify the needs of the community and sub-forums are now being established to work on particular responsibilities within the centre. A new centre manager is in post and is working with local groups to develop their services. A range of services continue to develop with the community health services and they make effective use of the centre. A wide range of groups use the centre and are often supported by colleagues from other agencies, for example Sure Start. Parents are also involved in wider community activities which include a float and stall at the Peachaven carnival.

Many children and families from the local community use the centre. At this time there is very limited evidence to show the impact of these services on the children. Very few children who attend the centre access the nursery until they are of funded nursery education age.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the children's centre was set four recommendations. These related to the arrangements at lunch time, children's developmental records, the monitoring of the provision relating to the development plan and the training and record keeping relating to the special educational needs co-ordinator. Since the last inspection, the nursery has drawn up action plans, carried out observations and held discussions regarding the lunch time to make it a more sociable experience for children and to encourage their independence. However, there continues to be weaknesses regarding the organisation and deployment of staff at lunchtime, which impacts on the children. Lunch times are hectic and children are seated in a small area, it is difficult for them to interact positively due to the noise levels at times and the organisation also hinders children's opportunities to further develop their independence.

Some progress has been made regarding the use of assessment, although the records relating to the nursery education funded children continue to not be kept as

up to date as they should be. Observations and assessments carried out on the are being used to some degree to inform future planning, so that it arises from the children's developmental needs. There is no specific planning tailored to the children aged two to three years-old and therefore any observations and assessments carried out on these children are not being fully used in future planning. This continues to be an area for development. Parents are invited to contribute towards their children's assessment during parents' consultation events.

The special educational needs co-ordinator has attended all three stages of the inclusion training and has a sufficient understanding of her role, to be able to support children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Children have individual education plans in place and these are used to identify future targets for the children. The co-ordinator also works in partnership with parents and early years advisors to ensure that children are being appropriately cared for.

The management has drawn up a number of action plans and had discussions around improvement needed and are working together with the nursery staff to address any issues raised. Staff attend regular training to keep themselves up to date and have specific responsibilities within the nursery and work closely with outside agencies. This is a continuing area of development.

Nursery education

At the last inspection four actions were set and the nursery produced action plans to show how they would be met and continually review these. They were asked to increase staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and to establish systems for regular assessment. Staff have attended training and there are systems in place to support their developing knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage. Some staff still lack a firm familiarity of the curriculum and understanding of how they can support children's individual learning through daily. Staff now record children's progress to the early learning goals and use this in future planning. The effectiveness of this is sometimes limited, as the records are not regularly completed.

In addition the nursery were asked to improve systems for monitoring and evaluating the nursery education provision and to ensure that planning covers the breadth of the Foundation Stage curriculum. There are new systems in place for monitoring and evaluating the nursery education provision. However, they are not rigorous and records are not checked sufficiently well, to ensure they are kept up to date. This lessens the ability of staff to plan for children's individual learning needs. The planning is regularly reviewed and monitored to ensure it covers the curriculum, with specific planning for outdoor play and activities.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection. 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

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):

- review the organisation of meal times and the deployment of staff to effectively support children's personal and social skills
- maximise the use of outdoor areas for all children in order to promote their physical development
- review the behaviour management strategies used with the under two's to ensure that they are appropriate to their age and stage of development
- review the planning and organisation of the day so that the developmental needs of children under three are met

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 all staff's familiarity with the Foundation Stage and how to enhance children's learning at all activities
- ensure that the Foundation Stage records are kept up to date and used effectively to promote children's individual learning needs in future planning
- encourage more involvement from parents in supporting their child's learning at home
- continue to develop systems for monitoring the quality of the provision and evaluating its impact (also applies to care)

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