



Saplings Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY307246
Inspection date	22 May 2006
Inspector	Permjit Tanda

Setting Address	56 Holyhead Road, Birmingham, West Midlands, B21 0LH
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Telephone number

E-mail

Registered person	Veron L'Ghoul
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Type of inspection	Integrated
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Type of care	Full day care
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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 inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Saplings Day Nursery opened in December 2005. It operates from a two storey converted building in Handsworth, Birmingham. There are local shops, a park and a school within walking distance. The nursery serves the local community and surrounding areas.

Currently there are 50 children on roll. This includes 1 funded four-year-old and 19

funded-three-year-olds. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports children with special educational needs, and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery is open five days a week throughout the year with the exception of a week at Christmas and bank holidays. Sessions last from 07:30 to 18.00.

Seven staff work directly with the children of whom all have an appropriate Early Years Qualification. The setting receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. The appropriate adult support and guidance helps children gain an understanding of hygiene and they become increasingly independent in their personal care. As part of the daily routine children learn about the importance of washing their hands prior to eating their meals.

There is a sufficient range of physical outdoor play equipment for children. They have the opportunity to develop their skills of climbing through the use of the climbing frame and slide. They learn to avoid obstacles through the use of tricycles and wheeled toys. Children explore, test and develop their physical control through use of smaller equipment such as various sized balls, hoops and bean bags. Indoors children have some opportunities to engage in music and movement and use small physical play equipment.

Children have access to drinking water and enjoy a range of fresh fruit at snack time daily. Meals are freshly prepared they are well balanced, nutritious and take account of the individual and cultural needs of all children.

Children are able to sleep and rest according to their needs throughout the day.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Risks of accidental injury to children are minimised because staff are vigilant and supervise the children well. The developing risk assessments reduce potential hazards indoors and therefore children can move safely and freely around the play rooms. However safety gates to the stairs are not always kept locked and the ramp in the outdoor play area poses a risk to children's safety.

The rooms are organised with the children in mind it allows for children to gain some independence safely. Children use quality equipment and furniture which is appropriate and safe. All resources and equipment are checked and monitored regularly for safety.

Children are protected by staff of who all have a satisfactory understanding of child protection policies and give priority to children's welfare. All the required policies and procedures required for the safe management of the setting are in place and regularly updated.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Most children arrive happy and eager to participate; those who are new to the nursery or room are helped to settle. Children make steady progress because staff recognise the uniqueness of each child. Close and caring relationships increase children's sense of trust and help them develop a strong sense of self. Children under three years explore and discover through a planned activity daily such as, painting, sand, dough and water. Children show appropriate levels of involvement in their play and staff spend much of their time playing with them. However staff do not always successfully build on their natural curiosity and develop their language and thinking. They have the freedom to engage and play with the many sound, shape and push button toys daily. The small group size allows staff to support babies to develop and acquire new physical skills. Children increase their confidence through selecting and deciding what to do daily. Children have a sense of belonging and enjoy being with familiar adults and are comfortable with the daily routine. Children have access to an appropriate range of stimulating activities throughout the day. Although have fewer opportunities to engage in imaginative and symbolic play for example, using dolls, tea-sets and other familiar objects to make sense of the world are limited and lack challenge.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. All staff do not have a secure knowledge of the foundation stage and therefore children make poor progress towards the early learning goals. Staff do not plan effectively and the range of activities is too narrow to promote progress in the six areas of learning. Staff lay out activities and resources according to some areas of learning, but lack understanding of what children are expected to learn from them. Often activities are poorly planned and organised, and their purpose is unclear to children. For example, children take part in an adult-led activity to build and construct towers but because staff do not have a clear learning intention it lacks purpose and direction and children become disinterested. Some staff feel more able with certain areas of learning and therefore a balance is not achieved and children's learning is not successfully increased especially in the areas of knowledge and understanding of the world, communication, language and literacy and mathematical development. Staff do not carry out developmental assessments and therefore fail to take account of children's knowledge skills and interests when planning the next steps in learning.

Children do not always show good levels of involvement in their play they often become boisterous and loud. For example, a group of children play in the role play area it starts off well with them pretending to wash their hair and comb it using pretend forks but play quickly deteriorates which leads to them slamming doors to the

pretend appliances and stepping on the kitchen utensils. During more structured activities such as lotto games they show an awareness of the listener and are able to take turns and share. Children become self-assured and confident because mostly they decide what they want to do. It is a new group of children and staff and therefore relationships are developing as staff get to know the children. There is an accessible writing area for children to use however, it lacks appeal and therefore children do not always make good use of it. Children have few opportunities to learn to recognise their names and link sounds to the letters of the alphabet. On occasions children have the opportunity to write their name on their artwork. Children do not show a fondness for books this is because they are not made freely available throughout the session.

Children have access to arts and crafts twice a week and experience free painting, hand, and finger painting. They use different types of paper to make collage and enjoy using dough to mould. More exciting media and materials for them to explore texture, shape and form are not made readily available. Children use their imagination through using small world toys such as the garage with cars and enjoy dressing up and engage in role play with others. However the pretend house is not well resourced and lacks challenge therefore opportunities for children to express and communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings through a wide range of experiences is limited.

Children gain confidence in counting during daily situations such as, counting cups at snack time and older children respond enthusiastically during number rhymes. Children begin to use mathematical vocabulary such as, big and small. However children are not exposed regularly to numbers and early calculation within their environment, play and daily routine. Children are not effectively challenged to observe and manipulate objects such as tape measures, weights, calculators and scales and therefore show little interest in early mathematical ideas and methods to solve problems.

Children handle tools such as scissors and build using a variety of construction toys and enjoy completing jigsaws and puzzles. Children show little interest in their natural environment and living things because staff do not successfully incorporate opportunities for children to observe, manipulate and identify natural and living things. Children have regular opportunities to freely access the sand and water and play at their own leisure but staff do not effectively build on the children's learning or encourage them to question why things happen and how they work.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are welcomed and staff value and respect their individuality. Most staff support younger children in sharing and turn taking well, whilst others do not always give children a full explanation to why their behaviour is wrong. Therefore children do not always successfully learn right from wrong. Children usually respond well to gentle reminders to care for their environment, the nursery resources and each other.

Children have appropriate opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and

the world around them through planned activities. Children have access to an appropriate range of resources depicting positive images of diversity. Children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural development is fostered.

The Partnership with parents and carers is inadequate. Parents of children in receipt of funding have little information about the educational programme. There are no systems in place to keep them informed about their child's learning and progress. At induction parents are encouraged to share information about their children through completing a basic record form detailing their characteristics and routine. However, staff do not actively seek parent's views about their children's interests or achievements before the child starts at the setting, and on a regular basis throughout their time there. Staff ensure they make time to speak to parents about their child's day and parents also receive a daily written report for babies which includes details about their feeding, sleeping and toileting. Systems for updating parents on how children under three years are progressing and developing are not in place. Parents have access to a detailed prospectus, policies and procedures and are kept updated through newsletter and memorandum system.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The leadership and management of the setting are inadequate. The manager has not established any system to regularly monitor the strengths and weaknesses of teaching or the children's learning. The lack of a systematic review of practice means staff are unaware of the weaknesses in communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and mathematical development. There is not an effective contingency plan in place in the event of staff absences this adversely impacts on the delivery of the educational programme and hampers the children's learning.

The owners of the nursery play an active role in the running of the setting but systems to monitor the improvement and development of the care and education throughout the nursery are not in place. Staff plan a satisfactory range of activities and play experiences for children under three years in an environment which is safe and organised well.

All legally required documentation which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being is in place and is regularly reviewed. There are appropriate recruitment and selection procedures in place and all staff receive a satisfactory induction.

Overall the provision does not meet the needs of all the children attending.

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.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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):

- further develop the health and safety risk assessments to include the stairs in the hallway and the ramp in the outdoor play area to ensure they do not pose a hazard to children
- improve staffs knowledge and understanding of the needs of children under three, for example through the use of the "Birth to Three Matters" framework and introduce a system to regularly monitor the children's development to help staff plan the next steps in children's learning
- increase the opportunities children have to engage in imaginative and creative play ensuring the areas are inviting and offer challenge
- ensure staff adopt a consistent approach to behaviour management which is helpful to children and offers explanation and guidance.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

To improve the quality and standards of nursery education, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- increase the staff's knowledge of the foundation stage
- introduce effective contingency plans to ensure the educational programme is not disrupted due to staff absence
- introduce a robust system to regularly monitor the progress of teaching and learning

- plan and deliver a range of activities and play experiences to cover the six areas of learning, paying particular attention to communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and mathematical development.

These actions are set out in a ***notice of action to improve*** and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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