



The Meadows Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 257187 |
| Inspection date | 05 June 2006 |
| Inspector | Jennifer Turner |
| Setting Address | 79 Bells Lane, Birmingham, West Midlands, B14 5QJ |
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| Registered person | Michelle Brain and Donna Barrett |
| 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?

The Meadows Day Nursery opened in 2001 and operates from six rooms in a converted detached house in the residential area of Brandwood, Birmingham. It is situated on the outskirts of Kings Norton with good commuter links into the centre of Birmingham.

A maximum of 60 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18.00 for 50 weeks of the year. All children share

access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 42 children from three months to under eight years on roll, of these 16 children receive funding for early education. Children come from a wide catchment area, as most of their parents travel in to work on or around the area. The nursery supports children with special needs and children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs seven members of staff. Of these, six hold appropriate early years qualifications and one is working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children stay healthy because staff follow current and appropriate environmental health and hygiene guidelines, policies and procedures. They follow a very stringent cleaning routine to ensure standards of hygiene and cleanliness are maintained at all times. Staff ensure that disposable gloves and apron are worn when they change children's nappies and that protective clothing is worn when preparing snacks.

Details of children's medical needs are well maintained and systems are in place to ensure that all staff are aware of individual needs. Staff have a good working knowledge of the setting's health and hygiene policies and all of this helps to foster and promote children's health. However, children's health is compromised because they do not check the temperature of the fridges. Children learn the importance of good hygiene and personal care through example and discussion. They are aware of the importance of wearing sun protection, so they do not 'get burnt' before playing outside when it is hot. Their clear understanding of why they must wash their hands before eating, and after using the toilet, helps reduce the risk of cross-contamination. They know that if they wash their hands they will 'get the germs off'.

Children are provided with healthy foods that appeal to them and meets their dietary needs. Parental wishes are listened to and acted upon, and staff keep written records of children's specific dietary needs, to ensure they avoid certain foods because of allergies or preference. The children enjoy a particularly good range of fruits at snack times and nutritious drinks such as milk or juice, and they know that they can access water whenever they desire, because it is available to them in their rooms. This helps to maintain their fluid levels throughout the session.

Children enjoy their physical play and are allowed to try new things and practise learned skills, through the encouragement and support of staff. This coupled with the staff's good understanding of the importance of exercise, aids children's growing confidence and physical co-ordination. Children have regular physical play both indoors and outside, as they take part in activities, which help to develop their physical skills. These activities range from riding bikes and scooters, playing ball games or using the climbing frames. A variety of planned activities aid children's physical development and staff encourage children to be independent in self-care

skills. For example, children enjoy using a variety of large and small play equipment, which they can use unaided. All of this contributes to children's developing understanding that exercise helps them to remain healthy.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are protected from harm and neglect because staff carry out daily risk assessments of rooms and areas used by the children. Their good knowledge of the health and safety policies and procedures enhances a mainly safe environment, although details of the times children leave the setting are not accurate. The staff's consistent vigilance reduces potential hazards for children, both within the setting and when they use the garden. By minimising risks, the staff enable children to move around and explore their environment with growing confidence and safety. The staff plan the children's environment carefully and achieve a balance between freedom and setting safe limits, they involve children in boundary setting and teaching them about safety. This allows children to learn some sense of danger and knowledge of how to protect themselves and others from harm.

Children have good access to a broad range of good resources that they can self-select confidently. Staff use these appropriately to aid and assist children in all developmental areas. Children are aware of what to do in the event of a fire, because fire drills are practised regularly with them. Their welfare is safeguarded because staff maintain all the required procedures and documents. For example, most staff hold current first aid certificates and each has a good knowledge of child protection procedures in line with the local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) procedures. The policy includes procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a member of staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children clearly enjoy being at the setting, and eagerly take part in the varied stimulating and practical activities provided for their learning and enjoyment. There is a warm and caring atmosphere where children feel genuinely valued. They initiate their own play and develop this to include ideas and subjects they have learned about. For example 'foods that are good for you'. Children achieve well because staff plan effective activities and have a good understanding of the Guidance for the foundation stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework, they use this to ensure they suitably challenge individual children.

On arrival children are happy and eager to participate. Staff's sensitivity towards children's individuality and needs ensures that new or anxious children are skilfully settled and happy to remain. Also, the setting's policy of encouraging parents to attend initial sessions with their children allows them to become accustomed to the environment and staff. The consistent, warm and caring relationships developed by staff foster the children's trust and sense of well-being. These relationships result in

good adult-child interactions, which in turn help to promote the development of early communication skills. The relaxed and child-friendly environment allows children to make confident choices and they are absorbed and very happy in their play.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy and choose from a good range of appropriate resources and activities. They have the confidence and abilities to initiate their own play and do so with ease as they move around their play room selecting what they want to play with. All children are inquisitive and curious, clearly intrigued by the inspectors laptop, comparing it to their computer. Children begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas as they join in a wide range of exploratory and sensory experiences. For example, they enjoy exploring the properties of water, sand and paint.

All children are eager to learn because of the stimulating environment provided for them. They sit patiently, listening intently to various stories, and confidently participate in group discussions and answering questions asked by the reader. They are able to recall events in their lives and details that interest them as they talk about members of their family and about a recent birthday party they attended with excitement. Children play co-operatively in groups and are learning to speak in turn and listen to others. They are confident in remembering instructions given by staff, such as 'can you find me three red items and place them under the table'. They enjoy imaginative play and have opportunities to role-play whilst acting out real life situations such as pretending they are going shopping. Children enjoy creative play as they paint pictures and create models using junk materials.

Children access an extensive range of good resources, which support their learning across all of the six areas of learning. They are keen to be involved in the very good variety of activities that meet their needs. They enjoy using the computer which is a favourite for some children. They confidently use the programmes to play their favourite games and are proud when showing the inspector how they write their names. Children enjoyed guessing the nursery rhymes when given clues. Staff said, 'the rhyme I am thinking about has a drain pipe in it'. Straight away a four year old shouted 'Incy wincy spider'. All three-year-olds use mark making to represent their ideas and children are becoming confident in attempting to write their own names.

Children count and are learning to recognise numerals to five. The more able children confidently use these skills with purpose in their play by counting objects and learning numerals towards ten and some past ten. They are using and developing mathematical ideas and methods to solve practical problem during their daily activities. For example at mealtimes and drinks times they counted how many children were seated at the table and how many cups were handed out. Staff asked children how many more cups were needed, showing they have a good understanding about simple calculations.

Staff have a good understanding of the use of the Foundation Stage Curriculum. They gather evidence of children's starting points from parents and use their written observation and assessments to assist in planning for the children's learning. However, this did not sufficiently include planning the next step in children's learning

or extended and adapted activities for the more or less able child to ensure they benefit from the full range of the curriculum. Children enjoy physical play which is available to them daily. They can ride bikes and scooters and operate smaller equipment such as hole punchers and scissors.

Staff ensure that admission information is thorough so that they are aware of children's skills, interests and needs. They plan themes for the year, a medium term plan then identifies learning objectives and these are then programmed into weekly activities. Staff continually record observations of the children, which are then transferred to the assessment records, and with the information obtained from parents this is then used to inform future planning. Children learn at their own pace because staff organise a good balance of adult led, adult supported and child initiated play opportunities to ensure that all children are challenged effectively.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff ensure parents and children are warmly welcomed. They consider and act upon individual need, family background and parental wishes. In addition, in order to assist children to integrate, accept each other, and feel welcome in the setting, the staff plan and adapt resources and activities to take into account the children's individuality and any specific needs.

The children have good opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through planned themes, activities, and visitors to the setting as well as through the wide range of positive images resources available to them. Children behaved extremely well, they are polite and know how to share and take turns. All of these positive approaches ensure that children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered well.

The partnership with parents and carers is good and this contributes greatly to the children's wellbeing in the setting. Staff actively seek parental views and opinions prior to admission, and on a regular basis whilst the child attends. These are valued, respected and acted upon. Staff ensure that parents are aware of how their children are progressing and developing through regular discussion. The involvement of parents in the setting and their good communication with staff benefit the children greatly.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

A robust recruitment and selection procedure means that children are cared for by suitably qualified staff. The proprietors are committed to improving the service provided and this is addressed through regular staff monitoring and training opportunities. Staff give good regard to the well-being of the children they care for and communicate well to ensure they all understand any child related issues.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The very good induction programme and strong commitment from staff and joint owners ensures that all adults work well together to promote children's health, achievement and enjoyment. This very good teamwork enhances children's care and learning.

The setting is very well organised with indoor and outdoor space being used to maximise play opportunities for children. All legally required documentation, which contributes to children's health, safety and well-being, is in place and regularly reviewed. Along with the commitment of the management team, skills of the qualified staff, who are highly motivated and committed, all effectively contributes to the continued improvement and development of the care of the children. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children who attend.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the setting was asked to obtain planning consent for the numbers of children registered and to update the Local Safeguarding Children Board (LSCB) to include the contact details and to revise the format used for recording medication. These have been updated with the relevant information to ensure children are protected. They have update the behaviour policy to include a statement regarding bullying and appointed a designated person responsible for this area. The windows on the ground floor of the building has been fitted with safety bars to restrict access. These have all been addressed satisfactorily, to ensure that the welfare of children is fully safeguarded.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been no complaints made to Ofsted since 1 April 2004

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):

- ensure Environmental Health recommendations are met with regards to recording the fridge and freezer temperatures
- ensure children's attendance is recorded accurately including the times they depart each day

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):

- ensure that staff differentiate activities for the more able and less able children and that they plan the next steps in the children's learning

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