

Dawn to Dusk Day Nursery (Maidstone) Ltd
Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY321463
Inspection date	21 June 2006
Inspector	Linda Patricia Coccia
Setting Address	732 London Road, Larkfield, Aylesford, Kent, ME20 6BQ
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Registered person	Dawn to Dusk Day Nursery (Maidstone) 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

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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Dawn to Dusk day nursery (Maidstone) Ltd opened in 2005 and operates from 10 rooms in a converted extended residential house. It is situated in the town of Larkfield (Aylesford), Kent. A maximum of 75 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07.00 to 19.00 for 52 weeks of the year with the exception of Bank holidays and Christmas and New Year periods. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

The nursery accepts children aged from three months to 11 years and there are currently 57 children on roll. Of these six children receive funding for nursery education, 17 attend the Out of School Club but this was not observed in operation. Children come from a wide catchment area. The nursery has experience of providing care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language although none currently attend.

The nursery employs nine staff. Of these, eight 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 participate in effective personal hygiene procedures. They wash their hands or use antibacterial wipes to wipe hands after using the toilet or playing with messy play activities. One child, aged two years, was able to explain he washed his hands 'because of germs'. Staff use disposable gloves when changing nappies and clean the changing mats after each use. They protect younger children's privacy by pulling curtains around the changing area. Older children are encouraged to take themselves to the toilet. Children's independence is encouraged. All children must wear sun hats and have sun creams applied when playing in the garden. Some pre-school children were able to explain why they were wearing hats. Babies are protected by the additional use of a Gazebo in the garden. Children are protected from harmful UVA rays.

Children are offered a good selection of food which is healthy and nutritious. Menus have recently been amended, offering children more variety. Parents were consulted about the changes and some good feedback has been received. Children are given fruit and crackers during snack time. Main meals are varied daily and cater for children's individual dietary needs, for example vegetarian options are provided. Children use individual cups and beakers to avoid cross contamination. They are able to pour their own drinks and help themselves to water, which is readily available, throughout each session. Babies and younger children have drinks regularly topped up in their own drinking cups and bottles. Drinking water is also taken into the garden during outdoor play sessions. Children are suitably hydrated throughout the day.

All ages of children participate in a wide range of physical play activities. The babies get plenty of exercise crawling around the play room and pulling themselves up on appropriate equipment such as the baby gyms, as well as meeting other children and older siblings in the garden play area. The two to four year olds use the garden everyday, where there is plenty of room to run and use suitable equipment such as balls and bats, sand play and ride on toys. The Out of School Club children (called Duskies) also use the garden. Basket ball nets are at a suitable height for older children to practise scoring 'hoops'. A tyre on a rope has been suitably positioned for any child who is able, to use as a swing. On bad weather days, there is an indoor activity room for children to use with ride on toys, a small slide and a ball house. Children use suitable physical play equipment and enjoy their physical play.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in an environment which is cosy, brightly decorated, which staff make friendly and welcoming and where risks are identified and minimised. Children use a number of play areas in a day giving them variety in their surroundings. Children are able to move around safely, freely and independently.

The toys and equipment that the children use are appropriate to their ages, safe, checked regularly for hygiene and cleaned when necessary, particularly in the baby and toddler rooms. For example plastic bricks, finger toys are regularly cleaned in sterilising solutions. All children are able to help themselves safely to their toys as they are stored at suitable heights, in child friendly, shelving and cupboards.

Children are regularly reminded about using their toys and equipment safely. One child was reminded to sit at the table when using scissors. When she was asked why she must do this, she replied 'in case I cut someone'. A toddler was reminded not to throw bricks in case it hurt one of his friends. Children learn to consider safety during their play. All children participate in effective, monthly emergency evacuation drills, which are recorded and evaluated. Staff thoroughly explain emergency procedures to the pre-school children, some of whom, understand that the daily register plays a part in keeping them safe in an emergency. One child told a member of staff that he had heard a '999' song when out with his mummy. Children are able to keep themselves safe in an emergency.

There are well written, clear, concise procedures for dealing with child protection issues which help keep the children safe. The written information is shared with parents which ensures they have a good understanding of the group's role in protecting children. So far there has been no need to record any incidents. Children's well being is promoted. Children are very well protected as the nursery has good security. There is a closed circuit camera on the front door and security number pads on some doors leading to internal play rooms. Persons who collect children are verified by staff by the use of passwords, descriptions, photographs and permission from parents. 'Duskies' children are collected from local schools by staff members. Concise procedures are followed which have been discussed with and approved by their parents in writing. Children are only collected by suitable nominated persons.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

The children enjoy their time at the nursery and the company of the staff. Children smile, laugh and interact very well with staff, voluntarily offering them hugs and cuddles, discussing their home lives as well as seeking affirmation of their behaviour. The walls are decorated with children's work and photographs of children enjoying activities, as well as brightly coloured information posters, all helping to make the atmosphere homely, friendly and welcoming. Children are comfortable and settled at the nursery. They demonstrate high levels of well being and involvement, because staff provide them with a range of stimulating toys, resources and free play experiences.

There are lots of appropriate and interesting toys for the children to play with, which cover the appropriate areas of development and ages of children.

In the baby and toddler rooms, staff use the 'Birth to 3 matters' framework to assess the needs of the children and to complete suitable observations. There is a well equipped role play area, creative tables where children can draw, paint, or explore play dough, jelly play or shaving foam play. There are also quiet areas where the children can relax and explore books.

In the two-five year room children experience a wider range of activities including more group times during which they discuss the weather, listen to stories and sign songs and nursery rhymes. They also have free access to sand and water play.

In the 'Duskies' area upstairs, the children have a library room where they read books and rest or play board games, a computer room where they can improve their Information Technology Communication skills and a general play room with a table top football game and art and craft equipment. Children experience a variety of interesting activities.

The quality of Teaching and Learning is satisfactory. Staff understand children's needs and provide a sufficient range of activities and experiences. They have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage, a reasonable range of teaching methods and an adequate understanding of how young children learn and progress. The level of challenge is sufficient to interest most children in the activities and enable them to make satisfactory progress. However, the staff do not carry out an initial assessment on newly funded children, which means that planning does not include the 'next steps' for those children. It also does not show any differentiation between the three and four years olds or provide suitable challenges for the more able children.

Children show a sense of belonging as they play and learn together. They are confident and friendly and show care and concern for others. They use conventions such as 'please' and 'thank you', for example, as they socialise at snack time. Children are becoming independent learners as they move around the room, choose their own activities and follow routines such as helping to tidy toys away. Children learn about the similarities and differences between themselves and others through projects and themes, which include activities about their own families and experiences. They demonstrate curiosity and concern for living things such as feeding birds and watching plants grow. Use of the outdoor area promotes children's developing physical skills, through the use of ride on toys, different sized balls and group games, enabling them to learn to control their bodies and be aware of when they need to rest. Children are gaining confidence with shape, number and counting. For example, when using construction bricks, children can identify colours and shapes and individual numbers. Children have access to a suitable range of mark making equipment and use other mediums such as paint, crayons, and glue to create their own pictures or help construct group displays. Children have a developing command of language and are able to make themselves clearly understood. They are encouraged to think about what they are doing and why, and can clearly verbalise their reasoning. They enjoy looking at books both on their own and at group story times. Many children can write their own names; the letters are recognisable.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children benefit from the range of children from different cultures and ethnic backgrounds that attend the group. They play with a suitable range of toys, particularly small world figures and books, which show positive images of race and culture but fewer showing positive images of disability and gender. Although there are currently no children with 'English as an additional Language', or children with disabilities attending, there are procedures available which would enable staff to cater for a child's individual needs. For example there is a nursery Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) and the nursery has regard to the Code of Practice.

Children are well behaved, learn to share and take turns, and understand the difference between right and wrong. This is because staff are good role models, support children according to their individual ages and stages of development and regularly praise their achievements and good behaviour. Children play within well defined boundaries. Children's Spiritual, Moral, Social and Cultural wellbeing is fostered.

Parents report that the children receive very good care and support from the staff and they feel able to approach staff for advice about their child. Parents receive a good insight into how their children develop through the daily verbal exchanges about the children's well being and achievements. Parents of children aged under three are aware that the nursery uses the 'Birth to three matters' framework to assess their children. Children receive continuity of care.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents of children who receive education funding, report that they receive good written information in the prospectus and Foundation Stage information is displayed in the reception area on a specific notice board. Parents know that they may see their child's records at any time, but many do not do so despite written reminders, also posted on the notice board. One parent felt that the verbal information provided by staff was sufficient to give her a good understanding of how her child is progressing. Other's shared her opinion. Parents get involved in project/topic work. For example, for the topic of 'Holidays', parents send postcards to the nursery from their holiday destination, or do particular activities at home with their children.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The group displays their registration document. The provider ensures that the staff are suitable to work with the children through a robust recruitment and vetting procedure. All staff have been vetted and hold Criminal Record Bureau (CRB) checks. Children are looked after by suitable adults. Children and nursery records are well maintained, are confidential and stored appropriately. The nursery includes any complaints in the centre's complaints log, which is made available to parents. Anonymity is maintained. All Children Act regulations are met. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and Management is satisfactory. The aims and objectives of the nursery are clearly stated in the operational plan. The provider has lots of experience, enthusiasm and commitment, which in turn motivates staff. She ensures that staff are well supported and their individual training needs are met. She encourages staff to work as a team and staff have regular meetings to discuss the running of the nursery and to review their practises. The management team constantly appraise the nursery, using weekly, written assessments and comments from parents on service issues. The provider is continually looking for effective ways to develop and improve the nursery to enhance the experiences of children. For example, the garden area is being redeveloped to include sensory areas and more physical play equipment and the provision of computers in the pre-school room. However, there are no effective procedures in place to monitor the content of the Foundation Stage planning to ensure that needs of the individual children are being met.

Improvements since the last inspection

The provider has followed a previous recommendation to keep staff informed of the current status of CRB checks. The provider has now put up a list, in the staff room, of those staff who are fully checked and those waiting for checks to clear. This ensures that children are looked after by suitable persons and un-vetted staff are never left alone, supervising children.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration Ofsted has received 2 complaints relating to National Standard 1 - Suitable Person; National Standard 2 - Organisation; National Standard 4 - Physical Environment; National Standard 6 - Safety and National Standard 12 - Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers.

The first complaint was regarding the suitability of staff; qualified staff ratios and space available in the baby room. Ofsted carried out an investigation visit and found there was no evidence that the National Standards were not being met.

The second complaint was regarding the security at the entrance to the nursery; the suitability of staff and a failure to have daily feedback sheets. Ofsted asked the provider to investigate the concerns and on receipt of the provider's report, Ofsted reviewed the information and was satisfied that the National Standards were met. The provider remains qualified for 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):

- increase the range of positive images depicting disabilities and gender.

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):

- review foundation stage planning to show children's differentiation, challenges to older children, and starting points for younger children.

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk