



Catherine House Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number 219903
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Inspector Patricia Bowler

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Registered person Buds 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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Catherine House Day Nursery is one of six nurseries run by Buds Limited. It opened in 1992 and operates from six rooms in a purpose built building. A maximum of 55 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 47 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these,

16 children receive funding for early education. Children come from the local and surrounding areas. The nursery currently supports a number of children with learning difficulties and also supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

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

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a clean and tidy environment where they remain healthy and receive good levels of care. Comprehensive health and safety policies and procedures are established and vigilantly maintained by staff to prevent the spread of infection. Robust procedures ensure that any accidents children have are managed appropriately as the staff have knowledge of first aid and available first aid equipment. Accurate recording systems are maintained, including any medication administered to children, sleep routines and food intakes.

Clear information is recorded with parents to identify and provide for children's specific health and dietary requirements. Children's health is maintained through vigilant hygiene practice, such as the single use of disposable aprons and gloves to minimise the risk of cross infection during changing routines. Children are developing a good understanding of personal hygiene through daily routines, talking knowledgably about the use of soap to remove germs during hand washing. Picture prompts in the bathrooms for example, flush, wash and dry and using Mr. Soap, act as reminders to children and encourage spontaneous discussions as they attend to their personal needs.

Children access a fully enclosed area for outside play where they experience and enjoy resources to promote their physical development. A range of equipment provides opportunities for children to gain control of their bodies as they confidently ride a range of wheeled toys, balance on low level beams and engage in a full curriculum of outside play opportunities. They develop co ordination as they jump and step in and out of a sequence of rubber tyres. Organised sessions ensure all children play outside every day with alternative arrangements for indoor activities when this is not possible. Children have planted bulbs and flowers in the garden to develop their awareness of growing processes including the need for sun and water. Older children discuss the benefits of fresh air and exercise to keep themselves fit as they eagerly practise skills in running and balancing hand held bean bags for a forthcoming sports day.

Good arrangements ensure babies can rest and sleep to ensure their emotional well-being is promoted. Individual sleep patterns are discussed with parents, and cots and prams with clean bed linen are provided in a separate sleep room within the baby room. Window blinds, soothing music and ceiling mobiles assist to provide a peaceful environment and cool air fans are located in all rooms to maintain

temperatures in warmer weather. Mattresses with clean single use pillow cases are available for older children. All children under three years are given the opportunity to rest or sleep after lunch. However, children sometimes do not sufficiently settle and not always offered an alternative activity.

A menu established by an experienced nutritionist provides children with a range of varied and balanced meals encouraging their awareness of healthy eating. Food is hygienically prepared and children enjoy the meals provided. Foods for babies comply with various stages of weaning. Older and more able children serve themselves at lunch time becoming aware of amounts they can eat with sufficient food for additional helpings if they require. Water is readily accessible for children to have when they require including during outside play. Covered jugs and cups enable children to address their personal needs as they recognise being thirsty. Older children independently access milk or water and snacks as these are readily available between meals. These are provided for younger children on an organised basis.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

High regard is given to ensure children are cared for in a safe and secure environment. Robust systems for arrival and departure, including a visual security system, ensure they are protected at all times. Internal monitors, situated in all rooms where children are cared for, enable the managers to observe staff's working practice from within the office.

Good procedures and a consistent risk assessment ensures that all areas accessed by children are safe and any hazards are minimised. Children are cared for by qualified and experienced staff and thorough clearance procedures ensure they are suitably checked and vetted. An effective induction programme introduces new staff to current working procedures, and continuous monitoring by experienced staff and managers ensures these are diligently followed to maintain children's health and safety.

Children move confidently around the nursery. They wait patiently for each other and know to hold the low level banister rail as they use the stairs to access the upper floors. Furniture is suitably arranged enabling them to move freely and access play resources within their base rooms. Organised outings allow children to explore their local environment and gain confidence and awareness about keeping themselves safe. For example, they learn about road safety procedures as they visit local parks and recreational facilities. Appropriate fire safety equipment is available. Vigilant arrangements for emergency evacuation, including regular fire drills, equip children with the knowledge of what to do if the need arises and they discuss the procedure identifying the assembly point in the garden.

Children are protected from harm because staff have a good understanding of their role in child protection, and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice if necessary. A clear written policy ensures parents are fully informed of the responsibility to protect children from harm.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Babies are cared for in a bright and visually stimulating environment. Staff work diligently with parents to ensure their care needs are met and development is enhanced through a range of hand held toys, varied equipment and a range of messy play activities. Babies are appropriately supported through early milestones as staff build warm and caring relationships to promote their well-being. Babies are generally settled and content as they receive good levels of care appropriate to their individual needs. Staff caring for babies and younger children are aware of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this is implemented effectively to plan and promote opportunities to increase their overall development.

Younger children under two years take part in a range of activities where they develop good skills in most areas. They are confident and relate warmly to positive staff interaction and play happily with each other and staff. They enjoy group and individual situations to build confidence and develop their physical skills as they mount steps and enjoy sliding down a low level climbing frame. Children use a range of resources, such as paint, cooked and dried pasta and natural materials including sand and water to develop their sense of touch. There are opportunities for children to enjoy an enclosed ball pool in the divided room. Soft lighting and soothing music operates when this area is used for rest and sleep. Organised access to outside play enables children to develop their skills as they enjoy a range of wheeled toys and organised outside activities.

Children aged two to three years enjoy a range of well planned activities similar to younger children, including coloured mashed potato as a tactile resource. A range of other activities are available and organised. They are presented to provide children with play opportunities to encourage them to make active choices about their play to build on their natural curiosity and imagination, for example, the animal hospital. A range of soft toys enable children to make connections with the care of animals. Children have good opportunities to experience outside play with periods planned into the daily routine.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have a comprehensive knowledge of the Foundation Stage, a good range of teaching methods and a sound understanding of how children learn. An interesting and welcoming environment reflects children's backgrounds with photographs of recent outings and wall and table displays to promote their awareness of the wider world. Teaching successfully motivates children so they are keen to learn. Staff consistently make very good use of their time to support children's learning and they make good progress as staff effectively use spontaneous opportunities, such as how shadows are formed to encourage their progress and understanding. As parents are not fully included, valuable information about what children can do is not incorporated into the initial assessment so individual starting points are unclear. Assessments and observations are good but do not provide sufficient informed detail of children's achievements to plan for their next steps in learning. A range of methods to manage children's

behaviour are successfully implemented and maintained. Staff work consistently to encourage children's awareness of the needs of others resulting in positive outcomes for all children. Clear procedures to evaluate activities and working practice successfully identifies ways to improve teaching and the continuing progress of children's learning. Planning includes a range of interesting topics which are taught successfully to promote the progress of individual children through the stepping stones. The range of activities are extended to challenge more able children to increase their learning and independence.

Children are happy and enjoy coming to the nursery. They show interest in the excellent range of activities and enjoy playing with activities such as jelly to learn about the effects of heat as it melts during play. They are keen to offer their own ideas and respond well to challenges especially during outside opportunities where they steer most of their play from a full range of activities and resources. They show good levels of independence and imagination and gleefully discuss an instance of using an adults shortened name as opposed to the full version. Much laughter and discussion results in them deciding to use the shortened version when the adult says it is used by her friends. Children have designated tasks including feeding the fish and watering the plants increasing their sense of responsibility and care for their environment. They gain a well developed respect for others as they share and take turns and experience some monitored opportunities to resolve minor conflicts. They show respect for other cultures and traditions as they engage in well planned topics to learn about other countries and environments which results in the effective promotion of their spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children make very good progress towards the early learning goals especially in activities to promote their personal, social and emotional development. Children confidently demonstrate a sense of belonging as they greet each other, staff and visitors throughout the day. They build warm relationships with staff actively seeking support when required and interact appropriately with peers to work well in supported small and large groups. Children use their imagination very well in role play situations and these areas are suitably resourced to fulfil their purpose. Two children engaged in conversation as one child used the ironing board. He discussed taking care when using the iron as it needs to be hot to remove the creases and related the activity to home where he stated " my mum does the ironing, not my dad 'cause he's at work". Role play areas are equipped with additional resources, such as paper, pencils and telephones to encourage children's communication skills. Resources including plastic milk crates, bread delivery trays and cardboard boxes in the outside play area encourage children to use their imaginative skills as they steer their own play. They successfully work as a small group to make a train where they then share a story with a member of staff.

Communication, language and literacy skills are effectively promoted. Appropriate resources with paper pads and pencils in all role play areas, including outside play enable children to use and develop their skills in mark making. They form recognisable letters and some are able to successfully write their own names. They are encouraged to practise this in situations such as identifying their own creative work. Children speak confidently in small and large groups and are developing in their ability to communicate their needs as they negotiate effectively to build positive peer group relationships.

Children independently address their own personal needs to enhance their self help skills. They speak confidently about the importance of washing their hands after using the toilet and before meals. Arrangements at meal times are used effectively to ensure these become an integral part of children's social development. Systems, including children helping to set tables, and opportunities to serve themselves from dishes placed on individual tables encourage their dexterity skills as they handle different sized utensils including large serving spoons. Children make active choices about the foods they eat increasing their self-esteem as they select foods and appropriate amounts. Staff sit with children at small group tables to engage in meaningful discussions, for example, lentils being a healthy and nutritional food option. Children access drinking water as they require during the day and pour successfully from readily accessible jugs. Arrangements for snacks between meals encourage children to become independent as they address their needs as required from accessible toasted bread fingers, which they spread themselves, and fresh fruit. Children know to re cover these appropriately so they are not exposed throughout the day.

Children have good opportunities to engage in creative activities. Water and sand are available every day for children to experiment with natural resources and an alternative of garden compost was enjoyed as children played with a range of wild animals. They successfully pour and scoop dried pasta during outside play and discuss the composite changes of jelly from cold to warm as they enjoy tactile play. Children's creativity is evident in current plans and in the work displayed within the nursery through pictures, including the use of paint, crayons and sticking materials. They independently access additional equipment, such as scissors, glue sticks and collage materials as these are readily accessible to support creative activities.

A range of equipment such as a washing line with numbered socks and a fence mounted ball counting abacus provide children with opportunities to develop their counting skills. They enthusiastically join in activities to associate numbers including skills in early calculation. Children use mathematical terms such as full and empty, and big and little, as they enjoy filling containers with dried pasta using a range of scoops and spoons.

Attractive wall and table displays increase children's awareness of cultural backgrounds and celebrations. Interesting activities, such as a recent topic about the jungle and a current topic about Africa increase their awareness of the world around them. Children speak knowledgeably using a map to talk about Africa and spontaneously instigate a cultural dance with chants learnt in an organised dance session. Interesting outings increase their awareness of the local surrounding area and photographic evidence is displayed to depict these. Spontaneous opportunities are appropriately supported to increase children's awareness of cause and effect. Two children noticed the shadow created by the trees in the garden and enjoyed looking for their own shadows. Children recognised the disappearing shadows when the sun went in gleefully delighting on their return when the sun re emerged. A discussion developed about weather conditions relating to clouds and the part they play in causing the sun to disappear and cause rain. Children have regular access to a computer and are progressing appropriately in their use of intermediate communication technology in their play. They are encouraged to operate equipment to develop their awareness of how things work.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. Excellent information is provided about the setting and procedures for discussing and recording information about children ensures their individual needs are met well. Newsletters and meetings with parents provide opportunities for staff to share children's progress and have open discussions about the care and education of their children. However, parents are not actively involved in sharing valuable information about what children can do at home so this is not incorporated when individual starting points are set for children's continued learning and development.

Children's sense of belonging is enhanced through daily contact using both written and verbal communication to ensure staff and parents are kept fully informed. However, some basic individual care information is openly displayed and does not fully respect privacy and confidentiality. Good procedures and secure relationships help children to settle. Children benefit from the staff's positive awareness of equal opportunities and inclusion of all children. Practical activities, such as the celebration of cultural festivals and the inclusion of a wide range of toys and resources promote positive images of culture and disability to further assist children in their awareness of diversity. Staff work successfully with other agencies to ensure children with additional needs receive appropriate care.

Children make active choices about their play and use their imagination well to extend their awareness of the world around them. They engage in meaningful discussions about other countries increasing their awareness of climate, habitation and animals across the world.

Older children develop good relationships with peers and work well in small and large groups. They are actively supported in developing strategies to negotiate, take turns and work harmoniously with others. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides. Arrangements promote children's health and safety and they receive generally good levels of care appropriate to their age and developmental stages. Space and resources are organised well to enable children to move freely within their base areas and activities are very well presented to capture children's interest.

Comprehensive policies and procedures, which contribute to children's well-being are established to ensure their specific needs are provided for and fully recorded. A very good information pack ensures parents are fully informed of the service provided and clear written and verbal communication keeps them fully informed about their child's care. Secure arrangements ensure confidentiality is maintained.

Staff are generally deployed actively within the nursery to maintain appropriate adult to child ratios. However, this is managed less effectively over the lunch and sleep time periods when staff members take a break. This results in some staff being left alone with children making it necessary for them to seek assistance from staff in other rooms when required. This interrupts the otherwise good level of care maintained throughout the rest of the day.

Leadership and management is good. The manager receives good support from the owners and area managers, and staff training needs have been identified with a clear vision for ongoing improvement. A designated area manager takes responsibility for the Foundation Stage and works effectively with staff to ensure children receive appropriate levels of care and learning, which is monitored and maintained to ensure good nursery education is provided.

Improvements since the last inspection

Previously the nursery was required to review the deployment of staff to ensure the ongoing safety, welfare and development of children, to ensure hygiene practices prevent the spread of infection and ensure ongoing compliance with food safety and hygiene regulations and ensure consistency in the staff's handling of behaviour and the development of the environment to encourage positive behaviour. The nursery was required to improve the organisation of time and routines for funded nursery education to promote positive behaviour so that children are better able to work cooperatively and persevere for longer periods. They were required to develop the observations and assessments so it is clear what children have already achieved, and what they are aiming for next, and to continue the development of the planned programme so that all children are challenged appropriately through practical play activities.

The nursery maintains appropriate adult to child ratios to meet the ages of the children present. If agency staff are required there are mutual arrangements to provide consistent staff in order to ensure the children are cared for by familiar adults. Deployment of staff is good for most of the day but is less effective during the lunch and sleep time periods. Systems are established to prevent the spread of infection with colour coded cloths identified for specific purposes. Staff follow vigilant procedures during changing routines with single use aprons and gloves. A range of appropriate agents including anti bacterial soap are used. Foods are stored appropriately and arrangements ensure foods are not left exposed to contamination. The cook and staff hold appropriate food hygiene certificates.

Staff follow clear policies and procedures to manage children's behaviour including swift intervention. Methods including reasoning and explanation and opportunities for older children to negotiate and resolve issues are successfully implemented by staff.

Although some progress has been achieved, the systems for observation and assessment are still in a stage of further development in line with ongoing support from the designated area manager. This also includes the programme of planned activities. Staff's working practice is effectively monitored and enhanced with regular meetings with the manager.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted has received three complaints.

Concerns were raised with Ofsted about: an accident that a child had at the setting; of bite injuries to a child; an alleged lack of supervision that may have contributed to these incidents; that a member of staff who didn't have appropriate skills and abilities was left in sole charge of children; that the nursery had not worked with a parent regarding potty training; nappy changing procedures and that the dirty clothes of one child had been sent home with another child. These concerns relate to National Standards 1 Suitable Person, National 2 Organisation and National Standard 7 Health. A visit was made by two Ofsted inspectors and based on the information and evidence reviewed there was no breach of the National Standards and the provider remained qualified for registration.

Concerns were raised about the correct adult: child ratios not being maintained and staff were not deployed effectively, that existing staff members were not Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) cleared and new staff were not asked to provide evidence of this. The complainant also raised concerns about a breach of parents confidentiality. These concerns relate to National Standard 1 Suitable Person, National Standard 2 Organisation and National Standard 12 Working in Partnership with parents and carers. A visit was made by two Ofsted Inspectors who reviewed policies and procedures, made observations and gathered evidence. An action was raised under National Standard 2. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Concerns were raised regarding the number of accident forms which were required to be countersigned for their child. The complainant alleged that these accident forms arose from their child being subject to another child's challenging behaviour. The complainant was also unhappy with the settings response to this situation. These concerns relate to National Standard 11 Behaviour, National Standard 12 Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers and National Standard 14 Documentation. The setting was asked to investigate this internally, and produce a report on the allegations. We also requested documentation from the setting, and copies of their policies and procedures. Based on the information and evidence reviewed there was no breach of the National Standards and the provider remained 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.

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.
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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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 staff are aware of the need to maintain privacy and confidentiality
- ensure that staff are deployed effectively within the premises to ensure the safety and welfare of children with reference to lunch and sleep periods

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):

- further develop assessments to include information from parents to give clear starting points for children's nursery education and ensure that these are used effectively to identify their next steps in learning.

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