



Mayfield Kindergarten

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	106355
Inspection date	13 July 2006
Inspector	Janet Butlin
Setting Address	38 St. Brannocks Road, Ilfracombe, Devon, EX34 8EQ
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Registered person	Gill Livings
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 satisfactory. 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?

Mayfield Kindergarten is a privately owned day nursery situated in Ilfracombe, in North Devon. It was an established nursery, taken over, refurbished and re-opened by its current owner in January 2000. The nursery is set in a converted Victorian House, with care being provided in several rooms over two floors. There is an enclosed rear garden for outdoor play.

The provision is registered to provide care for 34 children under eight, and accepts all

ages including babies. Currently there are 72 children on the roll, 29 of whom are in receipt of early years funding. There are no children attending at present with special educational needs, or for whom English is an additional language.

There are seven members of staff, six of whom (including the proprietor) have appropriate qualifications, one member of staff has qualified teacher status. The nursery is open from 08:00 until 17:00 Monday to Friday all year round. Overnight care is not provided. It receives the support of the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a clean environment where they learn about hygienic practices such as washing their hands. However, procedures in some parts of the nursery place them at risk of cross infection, as older children share one hand towel and one bowl of water. Appropriate hygiene procedures are followed when changing children's nappies.

Children are protected when they are sick or unwell as staff are qualified in first aid and there are sound systems in place for the recording of accidents and the administering of medication. However, a lack of regulatory consent means that staff may not be able to respond appropriately in the event of an emergency.

Children enjoy tasty meals prepared by the nursery, as well as having the option of bringing their own packed lunches, which are appropriately stored. They have a little fruit at snack time and sufficient to drink. Older children access their own drinking water easily from their own bottle. This ensures they remain well hydrated.

Children develop their large muscles effectively as they run and play in the nursery garden. They enjoy the fresh air and are protected from the harmful effects of the sun.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children have sufficient space to play and to rest. They enjoy an enclosed, shady and well appointed rear garden and all facilities are in place to meet their needs. They play with a wide range of toys, all of which are in good condition and are clean. Children access most of their toys and activities easily, and can ask a member of staff to get them something if they can't see it. They use furniture which is appropriate to their size and which is sound.

Children are protected by the rigorous recording of visitors and the times of everyone's arrival and departure, this means it is possible to tell who is on the premises in the event of an emergency. Children are aware of safety rules and are protected generally well from hazards within the nursery. They are prevented from

accessing hazardous areas, such as the stairs, by a series of gates. However, risk assessments have not identified all potential eventualities. Security systems are in place but children's safety is compromised by inconsistency in their application.

Children' safety is supported by staff's sound understanding of the child protection procedure.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by enthusiastic, committed staff who enjoy their time in the nursery. Young children enjoy a warm relationship with their carers who plan their day around children's individual needs and rhythms. These children become skilful communicators as they spend some time with older children, and chatter to staff and visitors. Early communication is effectively reinforced as staff repeat their words back to the children and encourage a conversation. They also become competent learners, making connections and working things out: for example, as they connect pieces of the pirate ship and link two play-tents with a nylon tunnel. Staff have learned about the Birth to three matters framework but its application to planning and assessment is informal and not very obvious.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children have an excellent disposition to learning and are eager to begin their day and engage with their activities. They are making good progress towards the stepping stones in all areas of learning, but it is hard to tell, from the assessment and planning systems, whether they are receiving sufficient challenge to help them make even better progress, particularly in the area of mathematics. Staff have a secure understanding of the Foundation Stage and use clear explanations to encourage children to think and to understand. Staff are sensitive and responsive, and swiftly engage children who may be becoming restless. Staff are able to accurately describe individual targets for children's progress but the system to record this is changing and is not yet fully implemented.

Plans show that a well balanced programme of activities is presented, over the course of a term, which covers all the areas of learning. Children are lively communicators, eagerly chatting about their news and talking in imaginary role-play. Many write their names on their drawings. They use and enjoy books frequently and throughout the sessions. They share stories with their playmates and handle the books appropriately. Children show a good understanding of the sounds that letters make, for example, confidently choosing the letters that make up their names from a jigsaw and from their friend's t-shirt.

Children demonstrate a good understanding of concepts to do with size and position and records show they have explored shape and counting skills. However, spontaneously chosen games and activities, which could support and enrich their understanding of calculation, are not fully exploited by staff.

Children use technology regularly, operating appropriate computer programmes.

They explore and discuss the small creatures they find in the outdoor sand tray and the mini beasts in the garden. They develop their small muscles as they pick up tiny objects using pincers and connect construction toys and interconnecting bears. Children enjoy the process of being creative as they explore and watch paint colours blend. They also develop lively role-play and create bowls of porridge for the three bears from torn up scraps of paper, demonstrating creative resourcefulness.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are confident, and settle happily and quickly when they arrive at the setting. They share toys very well and co-operate with their playmates, passing toys and helping each other. They understand the importance of being considerate towards others and follow agreed codes within the group very well. For example, they describe how they will use friendly hands and helpful hands. They respect an area that is set aside if they want to be quiet, or by themselves. Their behaviour is exemplary. They are extremely welcoming to newcomers and politely ensure that all have had a turn to share their news. They learn about cultural diversity through various activities. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's individual needs are known and respected. Children who have special educational needs benefit from the nursery's practice of working closely with parents and their ability to liaise with supporting agencies.

The partnership with parents is good. Children are cared for in accordance with their parents' wishes and there is a good system of communication across all age groups. Children benefit from their parents knowing what they are going to be doing and what they are learning about each day. This means they can talk about their experiences together and parents can be involved with their children's learning. The assessment records are available to view and regular parents' evenings enhance the communication process. There are good systems in place for sharing the nursery's policies and procedures.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children play in a generally well organised setting and are cared for by qualified, suitable staff who enjoy their work, and who are interested in developing and improving their practice and the experiences of the children in their care. They organise appropriate and stimulating activities for the children. The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides. The owner has established a secure system to ensure that those who work with the children are suitable. All regulatory paperwork and systems are in place although some require improvement to be effective.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. Staff are

supported in their professional development and have regular appraisals. The staff work together democratically to identify and improve systems, such as the new assessment system which is being applied over the whole provision. They are aware that this will require ongoing refinement and development, particularly to clarify stages of development for older children. The owner has a worthy vision for the future of the setting which she strives to implement through regular reflection and review. This evidences a thoughtful attitude towards reflective practice leading to improved experiences for children.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the previous inspection the nursery were required to ensure that all necessary policies and procedures were in place and that staff were familiar with the child protection procedures. All policies are now securely in place and staff are aware of child protection issues. The nursery has also been required to ensure that everyone working with children is secure in appropriate behaviour management strategies. Staff have been supported in their understanding of this area of provision and behaviour management is good, as is the children's behaviour.

Nursery Education.

At the previous inspection the nursery were requested to ensure that the planning system made appropriate reference to the stepping stones towards the early learning goals, and to make this planning available to parents. Plans are now linked to the stepping stones and parents are kept informed about their children's progress. However, how planning can support children's individual progress is an area to develop.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection Ofsted have received no concerns.

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):

- develop risk assessments and ensure that the security of the premises is maintained at all times
- improve hand-washing procedures for older children to prevent the risk of cross infection, and obtain written consent from parents for the seeking of emergency medical advice or treatment
- monitor and develop the new assessment system, across all age groups, to ensure it is effective, consistently applied and has regard to the appropriate referencing of developmental stages

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):

- develop the planning and assessment to make it clear how the children will be supported towards the next steps in their learning

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