



The Valley Nursery & Kids Club

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY320833
Inspection date	20 September 2006
Inspector	Julie Larner
Setting Address	New Road, Team Valley Trading Estate, Gateshead, Tyne & Wear, NE11
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Team Valley Nursery Limited
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Valley Nursery and Kids Club opened in March 2006 in a refurbished building on the Team Valley Trading Estate, Gateshead. The nursery is organised in several base rooms and children also have access to an outdoor play area. The current registration allows the group to care for 150 children from birth to under eight years.

The nursery offers full day care and wrap around sessions. Wrap around and out of school sessions are provided to children attending Lobley Hill Primary, Dunston Hill Primary, Corpus Christi, Dunston Riverside Community Primary School and St Mary's Catholic School. The nursery operates from Monday to Friday, from 07.45 to 18.00. It is open all year round, closing only for public holidays. Children attending come from a wide catchment area.

The nursery offers care and education for children from birth to eight years. There are currently 100 children on roll, of these 10 are in receipt of funding for nursery education. The nursery supports children with special educational needs and those who speak English as an additional language.

There are currently 14 childcare workers in the setting, all of whom have an appropriate qualification. The nursery is managed by three managers:- one manager, one deputy manager and one out of school club manager.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children benefit from regular physical exercise that they enjoy immensely. Younger children race each other in wheeled cars and older children practise kicking as they play football. Staff's enthusiasm and knowledge of the babies' development means that they have lots of opportunities to develop their walking skills as staff support them by holding hands.

Children enjoy a wide range of healthy enjoyable snacks, such as carrot sticks, celery, melon and banana. Children gather together in the hall area for meal time which contributes to them developing friendships with older and younger children, for example, younger children relish sitting on tables with older children. Older children take care of their own personal care needs, such as washing their hands, and staff re-enforce their learning by explaining that they need to do this to 'get rid of the germs'.

Children are cared for in a warm and mostly clean environment, however, nappy changing stations are not cleaned thoroughly enough. Staff practice is consistent to ensure that children are well protected from cross infection, for example, staff organise themselves to clean up spillages quickly whilst children are kept entertained by other staff.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children move freely and safely around the setting due to comprehensive checklists; these are completed daily by staff in the rooms children use. Before children use the outdoor play area checks are completed which ensures that the children remain safe and any risks are identified and dealt with promptly. Children learn about safety through staff's appropriate explanations, such as why they should not run in the rooms as they might fall down and hurt themselves. Younger children's safety is protected well due to vigilant staff. Staff ensure children are well supervised as they deploy themselves effectively within the rooms, for example, by sitting in the ball pool with the children to help them play together.

Children choose from a wide range of appropriate equipment that they enjoy and take pleasure in. Older children make model houses from Lego and younger children relish playing in the water pouring and filling pots and cups. Staff use equipment well to help children's development, for example, they help toddlers to build up foam brick towers and children happily knock them

down again and again. Older children enjoy making models out of junk materials and are supported well by staff who provide different materials on request, such as ping pong balls for them to use as eyes. Children confidently select toys and older children access low level storage to help them make choices about what they want to play with.

Children are cared for in a warm and welcoming environment where they feel valued. A friendly welcome from staff, asking how they are, ensures children are keen to attend and settle well. The environment is light and airy with plenty of space for children to move around. Some rooms show displays of the children's work meaning this is valued and adding a sense of belonging to the group. Whilst most areas in the nursery are used successfully, the pre-school room is not always set up to allow children to access all of the areas, for example, the comfortable area, construction toys and other equipment is in a separate room. This means that older children do not always have good opportunities to access a wide range of toys and materials or to rest and take care of their own needs. For example, whilst children joining together at meal times provides some positive experiences, the organisation of this means older children lack opportunities to develop independence, for example, pouring drinks and serving themselves.

Some staff have completed child protection training and some are keen and enthusiastic to update this knowledge with further training, ensuring they safeguard children's welfare and have up-to-date information. A child protection officer is in place, however, procedures for contingency plans when key staff are on extended leave needs consideration to ensure consistency.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

'Birth to three matters' is used productively to help children's development. Staff use their planning flexibly and to allow children under three to be involved in a wide range of activities to promote all areas of their development successfully. Children have secure and valued relationships with staff and have developed strong bonds because of this they are comfortable and content in the setting.

Nursery Education

Children make satisfactory progress towards the early learning goals. Children are confident communicators; they share experiences, are keen to talk about their family life and express themselves well. The quality of teaching is satisfactory, however, it does not always extend the children's learning. Some staff lack confidence and training to provide children with quality teaching and first hand learning experiences and, on occasion, checking children's understanding of what they have learned is missed. Due to the staff's understanding of plans it is unclear how areas of learning are consistently covered or how differentiation is effectively promoted and what the expectations of the activities are. Progress is not effectively monitored to ensure that planning for the next steps in learning is appropriate.

Children are becoming increasingly independent. They successfully take care of their own personal needs, such as going to the toilet, washing their hands and selecting toys to play with. Children are confident and will happily ask staff to support them with more difficult tasks, such

as fastening their coats. Children are keen explorers and are confident in trying new activities such as gloop. They are able to talk about their feelings and opinions, for example, they comment that the gloop feels like 'squadgy custard' and observe that it 'sticks to your hands'.

Children are successful in recognising colours and keen to talk about different shapes, for example, in their painting they identify circles and squares. Children are eager to use their own ideas, such as folding over paper to print paint. Children enjoy stories as they sit and listen attentively, asking questions, however, they do not have sufficient opportunities to handle books and take an interest in them. Children relish using their senses throughout the nursery. Sensory experiences play a large part in the nursery day and children's interests are captured by staff well, allowing them plenty of time and support to explore baked beans, rice pudding, jelly and shaving foam as they touch, taste and smell them.

The quality of teaching ranges significantly depending on the confidence and experience of staff. Some staff do well to challenge children, ask them questions and try to extend their learning whilst other staff are less successful. Training to enable staff to feel comfortable with the Foundation Stage is lacking.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Partnerships with parents are satisfactory overall. The nursery works in partnership particularly well with all parents to ensure that they collect comprehensive information about the children's care needs, for example, younger children's home routines are followed through careful discussion with parents. Booklets about the nursery are informative and introductory sessions allow both parents and children to get to know the staff and the setting well. Staff collect clear information about children, including their favourite toy and members of their family, because of this, staff are aware of the children's needs and likes. Parents are complimentary about the care of their children and feel able to approach staff meaning concerns can be raised freely and openly. Keeping parents informed about their child's educational development is not effective. Whilst parents are given information about the areas of learning, formal plans are not shared with them and as progress is not effectively monitored an accurate picture of their development cannot be shared.

Children are valued as individuals. Children's home language is respected, with some staff communicating in a similar language to children to help them and their parents feel comfortable. Staff show a sound understanding of children's individual needs as they know which younger children do not like to get changed and washed. An adequate understanding of equal opportunities is shown throughout the nursery, however, images to promote children's home language and diversity are limited.

Children behave well in the nursery. They enjoy playing together and are gaining an understanding of the needs of others. For example, when one child gets upset and cries another offers him their pencil to help him feel better. Older children begin to take care of their environment as they carefully put rubbish in the bin. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children relish seeing other children from different rooms as older children shout 'hello' through the window to the babies.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

High ratios support younger children well. For example, staff sit and read to children in the comfortable area; they deploy themselves around the room to develop children's play through questioning and observe younger children well so they can plan for their learning. Staff input is valued as they contribute to policies and procedures and are keen to undertake further training to benefit the care of the children. Induction of staff is thorough to ensure they are aware of their roles and responsibilities and new staff show an effective understanding of expectations to ensure children's welfare and happiness.

Leadership and management is satisfactory overall, however, clear monitoring and evaluation of the nursery education is lacking. Staff deployment throughout the nursery, when key staff are absent, does not always make use of the skills of the staff team and impacts upon the older children's education.

Staff are kept updated by monthly staff meetings, however, on some occasions after holidays and when contingency arrangements are in place, this is not always successful. For example, some staff are not aware that children are to be encouraged to tell their parents what they have had to eat, meaning that staff practice is not consistent in all areas.

Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards. 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 that staff are effectively deployed throughout the nursery
- provide stimulating and interesting opportunities for children to explore and learn about diversity
- ensure that good hygiene is maintained throughout the nursery, for example, with regard to baby changing areas

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, resources and space are used effectively to develop high quality first hand learning experiences for children that cover the areas of learning
- ensure that children's progress is effectively monitored
- ensure that staff have sufficient knowledge of the Foundation Stage and setting's plans to guide children's learning

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