



## The Dolls House

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY273915
<b>Inspection date</b>	19 September 2006
<b>Inspector</b>	Kate Bryan
<b>Setting Address</b>	6 New Walk, Leicester, Leicestershire, LE1 6TF
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<b>Registered person</b>	The D.H. Nursery LTD
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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 Dolls House Day Nursery opened in November 2003. It operates from a converted Victorian house on New Walk, close to the city centre of Leicester. Families attend the nursery from the city and county.

There are currently 50 children from birth to 5 years on roll. This includes 8 funded children. The nursery supports children who have learning disabilities.

The group opens 5 days a week all year round. Sessions are from 07:45 until 17:30 and children can attend for a variety of sessions.

There are 10 staff working with the children, of these 9 have early years qualifications and 1 staff member is currently on a training programme. The nursery receives support from the local education authority.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in clean and well-maintained premises. Their good health is promoted through a policy that requests that sick children are not brought to the nursery and by the good hygiene practices of the staff. For example, staff wear disposable gloves when changing nappies so that the risks of cross-infection are minimised. Children are in well-established routines, such as washing their hands after toileting and before food to ensure their health is well promoted. However, staff do not discuss with children the reasons for this so they do not learn effectively about germs and health.

Children's emotional well-being is promoted as babies sleep in their own routines and older children visit the nursery until they feel settled. However, the carpet in the baby room is marked and stained which does not promote cleanliness.

Babies and children have good opportunities for fresh air as they enjoy a daily walk and babies enjoy crawling, pulling themselves up and moving to music indoors. Older children have good access to a range of equipment at the local park, such as a climbing frame, slide, swings and bikes, which challenge them and promote their physical development well.

Children develop an awareness of the importance of healthy eating as they enjoy a good variety of nutritious home cooked meals and snacks, including different fruits. Staff sit with children at meal times in their own rooms, however, there is no discussion about healthy eating so children do not learn about this. Children have their health and dietary needs met well because all details about diets and allergies are discussed with parents. Children are provided with drinks at meal and snack times and older children can access their own drinks independently. Good use is made of practical activities, such as visiting the market to select fruit, to increase children's awareness of healthy options. They have also completed topic work on the importance of water so they are learning to be responsible for their own health needs.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is good.

Children learn to take responsibility for keeping themselves safe through daily routines and staff clearly explaining safe practices. For example, children are reminded not to run in the rooms in case they have an accident. Children are well protected because staff have a good understanding and knowledge of the child protection procedures. Several staff have attended training in this area and are secure in reporting concerns to the appropriate authorities. Helping children to have a positive self-image is also built into planning so that they learn to be confident in talking about concerns.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure indoor and outdoor environment. Their work is displayed around the nursery which makes the environment attractive and welcoming. Children can play, rest and eat safely because they are grouped in rooms according to their age and ability. Babies and children have good access to a broad range of safe and developmentally appropriate play materials which support play and learning in the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Resources are attractively displayed at children's height which encourages them to select activities and toys of their choosing.

Children are kept safe from fire within the nursery because effective risk assessments are in place. For example, all boilers have electronically operated lighting systems so that there is a reduced risk of fire and all electrical equipment is tested yearly in line with environmental health requirements. Staff provide good levels of supervision and identify and minimise hazards by carrying out daily risk assessments on equipment and areas used by the children. Effective procedures are in place to ensure the premises are secure and to monitor children's arrival and collection times. For example, callers can be viewed through a glass panel and all collectors have identity cards. The nursery also operates closed circuit television on the ground floor and in the pre-school rooms so that children can be seen to be safe.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is good.

Children are interested and engaged in their play and enjoy their time at the setting because staff use the 'Birth to three matters' framework effectively. Topics are carried on for six weeks and have a consistent shape, number and letter throughout all planning, this means children have continuity throughout the nursery which helps to embed learning well. Children's progress is also well recorded so that staff can build on their individual skills and interests.

Young children can explore various resources because these are easily accessible to them at their own level. They enjoy shaking a rattle and cuddling a bear and lots of praise encourages children to share. Positive relationships with staff and other children develop children's confidence and self-esteem and they are happy to sit in a group or follow their own interests, for example, rocking in a bouncy ring.

Children are learning to be skilful communicators because staff have a constant dialogue with them, talking to them and responding to their gestures and sounds and encouraging them to repeat words. They also enjoy activities which promote their creativity and imagination well, such as working with pasta, foil, sponges and chinks. Children also create cards for special occasions, such as Grandparent's Day, which they proudly take home as evidence of what they have achieved and enjoyed.

### **Nursery Education.**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. They enjoy learning and persevere at activities, such as completing puzzles, because staff expectations of them are high. Children can choose from a good range of activities which are free play or adult led and use high quality resources which fully support their learning

across the curriculum. For example, children enjoyed a staff led painting activity or worked with play dough to create their own designs.

Children's achievements are celebrated through attractive displays of their work and very effective use of praise. They are confident talkers and can work together creating story lines, for example, when playing with dinosaurs in the sand tray. They enjoy talking to others and confidently correct staff when they give incorrect answers such as the colour of play dough. Children also enjoy stories and can sit quietly and listen to these.

Children's vocabulary is enhanced by the effective use of stories to acquire new words. For example, they were asked what the word, 'clumsy' meant and given two examples to see which was the most appropriate. They are also beginning to mark make with meaning and sound out the letters of words as a start towards word recognition.

Knowledge and understanding of the world is developing well. Children look after a fish and take part in a rota to ensure he is fed which makes them aware of their responsibilities towards living creatures. They also have practical experience of growing and developing, for example, when they collected horse chestnuts. Children saw them progress from being hard and prickly on the outside to being soft enough to obtain the conker from within. They also have the opportunity to use a computer daily which enhances their awareness of information technology. Children have good construction skills and have made weather plates, rain shakers and collages which are displayed so that children feel their work is acknowledged. Their physical skills are developed effectively in activities such as manipulating the computer mouse and rolling out play dough.

Planning is effective in ensuring that children receive a good balance in the six areas of learning and progress is recorded and evaluated to ensure they are helped to move on to their next stage of learning. Staff make effective use of focused observations of children and also ensure that they have good access to a range of opportunities to experience the wider world. For example, by a range of interesting trips out which include the museum or nature walks to the canal.

Good use is made of two rooms for pre-school children which encourages free-flow when numbers are small. This means, for example, that children can access a maths area, computer area and writing table in one room. However, more effective use of a book corner in one room would increase children's opportunities to explore books and more effective use of name cards would also increase children's familiarity with letter recognition.

Staff have a good awareness of the Foundation Stage of learning and use questions well to extend children's learning and encourage them to predict. For example, children enjoying a painting activity were asked what colour mixing two other colours would produce and received lots of praise when the question was answered correctly.

## **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is good.

Children's behaviour is managed well by the use of age appropriate strategies such as distraction and withdrawing children from situations. Staff are aware of the needs of the children which allows them to be treated as individuals. For example, young children are spoken to kindly and comforted so they do not become distressed when they are reminded to behave properly. Children are aware of the rules of the nursery and therefore have useful boundaries to help them to regulate their own behaviour and develop good levels of self-assurance.

Children make positive relationships in the nursery and are encouraged to feel that they are contributing to daily routines such as helping to tidy up after activities. Their individuality is recognised because staff work closely with parents to ensure that all their needs are met and a good sense of belonging is fostered. Staff have a range of languages so that parents can communicate their child's needs effectively. Parents are kept well informed about their child's learning and well-being through a daily diary for babies and key workers are available to be spoken with daily.

Children with learning disabilities receive an appropriate service and the nursery works with the area special needs coordinator to ensure this. Staff ensure that inclusion is well promoted by offering children individual support to participate in all activities.

An effective equality and diversity policy underpins practice at the nursery which means that all children have access to all resources and can enjoy learning through play. The nursery provides a service for children from many different backgrounds and makes each child feel welcome by celebrating a good range of festivals, such as Chinese New Year and Eid. They also take trips into the diverse local community which enables them to develop positive attitudes and an appreciation of the customs and cultures of others. The provision fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

The partnership with parents and carers is good. Parents receive a good range of written information about the nursery and are made well aware of their child's progress. This is managed through open days and a 'Tumble Tots' weekend when they can visit the nursery, see their child's records and discuss their progress with staff. The policies and procedures of the nursery are available in the entrance hall and these are discussed with parents when they visit so that they are well aware how the nursery will care for children. A baseline assessment is completed for children so that staff can build upon their existing skills and they take home work sheets so that parents have good opportunities to be involved in their learning. Parents may also be involved in a range of daily activities, such as cornflour play, which are displayed on the Parent's Notice Board. Older children also have daily diaries which show how they have enjoyed learning through play in the six areas of learning.

## **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

Children enjoy and achieve well because the nursery is organised to ensure they have good opportunities to experience a range of activities. These are supported by easily accessible

quality resources which are maintained safe in line with current requirements. Children receive a consistent service because effective induction procedures ensure that policies and procedures are well known by all staff. Comprehensive action plans have been devised to ensure that nursery education and the 'Birth to three matters' outcomes are delivered effectively to children.

Training is given a high priority at the nursery which means children benefit from staff who are up to date with childcare practices. As the nursery has a consistent number, shape and letter motif running throughout all age groups this enables all staff to have some involvement in planning and feel a useful part of the staff team. All staff, except one who is on training, have a childcare qualification and are part of a stable group that promotes children's security.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The senior staff team have a good vision of how they wish the service to progress and a commitment to providing a quality service. In order to achieve this they have compiled action plans to improve upon any areas of weakness identified. The manager regularly monitors and evaluates how nursery education is being delivered by observing staff and completing a written report which is clear about what they do well and how to meet any set targets. Regular appraisals ensure that children benefit from motivated staff whose needs are identified and supported. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the provider agreed to develop planning systems which are clearly linked to the assessment of children's progress to enable staff to provide appropriate activities to help children learn; develop staff's awareness and understanding of effective ways to manage children's behaviour, taking into account their age and stage of development; develop systems for observing and recording children's progress and which also sets targets for the next steps children need to take in their learning and to ensure that staff are deployed appropriately at all times to meet the needs of children effectively, particularly in the morning.

All systems are now in place to plan, observe and assess children's learning and progress so their time at the nursery is well spent. Staff have attended behaviour management training to ensure behaviour is managed age appropriately and staff are deployed in the morning so that at least two are always on the premises prior to 08:00.

At the last nursery education inspection the provider agreed to develop staff's knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones so that the systems for assessing children's progress are effective and appropriate targets for their learning are set; develop plans to ensure that they are based on children's interests and what they need to do next; ensure that plans cover all aspects of the stepping stones regularly and consistently to establish and embed children's learning and that staff are clear about learning intentions; ensure that suitable methods are used to teach children which ensure they are sufficiently challenged to learn in all areas and which ensures that children with special educational needs are well supported; develop systems to monitor and evaluate the educational provision to give a clear focus for future development and develop effective partnerships with parents to ensure children's progress is regularly shared and that parents can become involved in their learning.

Staff have attended Foundation Stage training and planning, observations and assessments are now in place which are linked to the stepping stones and children's interests. Challenges are in place to enable children to achieve and a special needs coordinator has been appointed so that all children are well supported at the nursery. Systems are now in place to monitor and evaluate the provision by observation and target setting and parents have many opportunities to visit the nursery and join in with activities and learn about their children's progress.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since the last inspection 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.

## **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 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):

- improve outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework
- ensure that the carpet in the baby room is maintained in a suitable condition

#### **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):

- improve the design of the book corner so that children are encouraged to choose books
- improve the use of name cards so that children begin to develop word recognition.



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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)