



Lawnswood Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250083
Inspection date	18 October 2006
Inspector	Teresa Marie Taylor
Setting Address	Streetsbrook Road, Shirley, Solihull, West Midlands, B90 3PE
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Registered person	Lawnswood Childcare 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 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?

Lawnswood Day Nursery, Streetsbrook Road opened in 1986. It operates from converted premises at The Old Edwardians Rugby Club, in the Shirley area of Solihull. The facilities are on two floors, the ground floor provides accommodation for children from birth to two years whilst the first floor accommodates the two to five year olds. A maximum of 71 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each week day from 07:30 to 18:00, with the exception of Bank Holidays. Children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area and also have the use of the grounds around the club.

There are currently 80 children on roll, this includes 10 funded three-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. At present, there are no children for whom English is an additional language or who have been identified as having learning difficulties or disabilities.

There are sixteen staff who work with the children. All of the staff hold appropriate early years qualifications.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are encouraged to develop their understanding of good hygiene practices as the nursery has good routines in place which are shared with the children. There are good standards of hygiene within the nursery ensuring children's general good health. Staff have completed a first aid course and have appropriately stocked first aid kits, ensuring they are able to respond appropriately to any accidents children might have.

Children enjoy access to a range of outdoor toys and activities which contribute to their physical development and independence. The staff showed an understanding of the physical needs of young children enabling them to provide suitable and appropriate activities outside, to support children's development and co-ordination. Children enjoy daily walks around the grounds of the club.

Children's individual feeding and sleeping routines are agreed with parents, recorded, and supported by the staff enabling the youngest children to rest or sleep when they are tired. Some children can help themselves to drinks which are easily accessible to them, ensuring they remain hydrated at all times, other children are offered drinks at snack and meal times. The nursery provides freshly prepared and cooked meals and snacks for the children ensuring they meet their religious, cultural and dietary needs. Parents provide milk for the babies and some meals and these are appropriately stored in the fridge ensuring health and safety standards are met and children's milk and food are safe. Children are beginning to have some opportunities to develop independence at meal times but most food is cut up for them and only the eldest children are provided with a full set of cutlery.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming and child-centred environment where risks are identified and minimised. This means they can move around freely, safely and independently. Children are beginning to understand about safety and risks as the staff always gives explanations regarding the possible results of their actions for example, 'hold the hand rail when walking downstairs in case you slip'. There are good routines in place to ensure children's health, safety and general welfare.

Children sometimes choose their own activities from a wide range of toys and equipment that the staff ensure are safe, in good condition and appropriate for the children's ages and stages of development. A risk assessment and regular cleaning schedule are completed and daily checks on toys are carried out and all doors have a key pad entry system. This ensures that children are safe and well protected.

The nursery has all of the required procedures and documentation in place to ensure children's welfare is safeguarded and promoted but, not all is kept on the premises, for example the risk assessment. This means not all staff may be aware of any possible risk to children. The nursery has clear plans for fire evacuation and these are recorded, shared and practised with the children, ensuring they understand the routine and could safely exit the nursery if the alarms sound. Outings are planned to ensure the children's safety and all consents from the parents regarding outings and transport are recorded. The nursery staff have a good understanding of child protection issues and a policy on keeping children safe is shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff sometimes display a lack of knowledge and understanding of children's development. In some rooms the routine and planned activities detract from free play and staff interaction. As a result children are offered little opportunity for self expression or decision making. This means that some children are slow to develop appropriate strategies for sharing and playing together as they are not clear on what is expected of them and what the boundaries are regarding behaviour. Other staff show a very good understanding of children's development and this is reflected in children's enjoyment and level of activity.

Some staff encourage children to fully express themselves and they responds very well to children's requests for interactive play, attention or changes of toys. This enables some children to develop greater independence and self-esteem. The nursery has appropriate storage but overall, children are not encouraged to access the majority of toys and equipment independently and free choice is limited.

Children's work is displayed and children are given regular praise and encouragement. The nursery has a clear policy on displaying children's work but this is not followed in the main. So, although work is displayed few children would recognise their own work and staff lose opportunities to develop children's self-esteem and willingness to try new activities. Staff use of language with the children is on the whole good but staff do need to maintain a balance between routine tasks and being actively involved with the children.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making slow progress towards the early learning goals. They have few opportunities for free play or free expression and their curiosity is not always responded to appropriately. Undertaking planned activities is essential and the majority of these activities use pre-prepared worksheets which leave little room for individual expression.

Some staff show a good awareness of children's development and the Foundation Stage but this is not carried through by the whole staff team. Staff provide few activities to challenge or extend children's learning and often do not adapt activities to meet a range of children's abilities. Good levels of conversation and discussion did take place when children were outside. Staff questioned children on the workmen present on site and, asked them to compare the size

of the lorry the men were using with other forms of transport. Children were enthusiastic when outside.

There are good relationships between the staff and the children but, children do respond to individual staff differently, sometimes ignoring instructions or requests. This means children's learning is hampered by a lack of consistency from the staff. Children are beginning to develop some respect for others but this is often dependant on the member of staff present. Staff do encourage good manners and encourage children to help to tidy up this provides children with some independence and development of social skills.

Facilities for writing and the use of books are not well used as staff do not encourage the children sufficiently so children are losing opportunities to develop early reading and writing skills. Maths is a strong area and counting and calculating are used frequently, when lining up to go out and during finger and singing rhymes. Creative activities are often not utilised to great effect and free expression is often not encouraged, for example; when completing pumpkins for Halloween despite being told, by one member of staff, they could use a pre drawn pumpkin or draw their own, all children were given pre drawn pumpkins and were not allowed to decide what colour they painted them.

Children do move around with confidence and play outdoors on a daily basis, even during poor weather. This enabled staff to talk about appropriate clothing and the changing weather. Children were enthusiastic during this discussion and eager to relate their own knowledge of outdoor clothing. Children's achievements and progress are monitored and recorded but the daily assessment of activities is not always a true reflection of the day. This therefore means that activities, teaching methods and children's enjoyment are unlikely to be adjusted to provide greater teaching and learning opportunities.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are made very welcome at the nursery and for the majority their behaviour is acceptable. The staff in some rooms set consistent boundaries which helps the children learn to co-operate, share and begin to take responsibility for their actions. Other staff do not have appropriate strategies to manage children's behaviour and therefore children are not learning the boundaries or what the expectations are regarding behaviour. This means children are not learning social skills as quickly as they might. When needed staff discuss behaviour issues with parents and agree appropriate management of any problems. Children are valued and respected as individuals but staff spend too much time on routine tasks and lose opportunities to encourage children's development of respect for each other and all staff on an equal basis. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural needs are fostered.

The partnerships with parents and carers is good. This contributes significantly to children's well-being. Parents are provided with daily conversations and daily diaries detailing children's activities, food intake, nappy changes and activities ensuring they are aware of their child's day and reassured about their care. All agreements with parents are recorded and acted upon. Children's independence is not encouraged sufficiently and some children are slower developing a sense of self-esteem and belonging. The staff are aware of individual needs and try to meet

them enabling children to develop at their own rate but, they do need to ensure activities include some degree of challenge for the more able children. This would ensure that all children progress appropriately.

Staff have a good understanding of equal opportunities and the nursery provides toys and equipment and discusses festivals from around the world with the children. This enables children to begin to understand the wider world around them and see everyone in a positive light. There is an extensive portfolio of information and policies for parents ensuring they are fully informed of how the nursery operates and the activities their children are offered. However the nursery needs to ensure that all policies and procedures are up to date and give the parents accurate information.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are on the whole happy and settled in this very welcoming and child-centred environment. They have good resources but in some rooms little free access to them. Space is well organised in some rooms enabling the children to move freely as their play develops and, where they are allowed children do freely access toys and equipment and are keen to help tidy up this is increasing their confidence and self-esteem.

Staff are experienced and committed but some do not fully understand or operate the nursery's policies and procedures. They are encouraged to undertake training and are provided with a clear staff policy detailing the group's expectations of them. They are also provided with a comprehensive induction procedure. Staff do take children's safety seriously and ensure they are safe at all times. Relationships between staff, the provider, children and parents is on the whole good. The leadership and management are satisfactory.

All documentation, consents and daily activities are shared with parents and this help parents gain a good insight into the type of service provided for their children. Agreements with parents are all recorded and acted upon. This provides consistency for children and reassurance for parents. The provision meets the needs of the children for whom it provides. The nursery does however need to ensure that all documentation and records are kept up to date and that the daily registers are completed accurately.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was asked to; conduct a risk assessment on the ground floor windows. Although this has been done the risk assessment has not been retained on the premises; to ensure the daily register is accurate, the register is not being maintained accurately. These two issues could pose a possible risk to children; to extend the range of toys and resources to meet the developmental needs of children aged 3 to 5 years and that they reflect positive images. Resources have been increased including those that reflect positive images, unfortunately these are always used to good effect in some rooms; to review the deployment of staff and ensure the pre-school group does not exceed 26. Numbers of children in the pre-school group do not exceed 26 and the deployment of staff ensure the correct ratios are maintained, however staff do spend too much time on routine tasks and insufficient time, in

some rooms working directly with the children. This means children are not able to use the wide range of resources available to them sufficiently; to review the organisation of space in the pre school room to ensure children's needs are supported, space has been reviewed but children are not encouraged to make the best use of it so, children still have restricted access to many of the resources available; to update the child protection policy to include procedures for allegations about staff, the policy has been updated to include this and therefore everyone is aware of the procedures to follow.

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.

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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 activities and play opportunities are planned and provided to develop children's emotional, physical, social and intellectual capabilities
- ensure that the system for registering children on a daily basis is maintained accurately and that staff are deployed effectively
- ensure that the nursery's policies and procedures are kept up to date and are retained on the premises
- ensure all staff understand and follow the nursery policy on behaviour management.

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):

- play opportunities, activities and first hand experiences are provided to build on children's natural curiosity as learners, develop their language, use their imagination and develop social relationships

- ensure staff understand and implement the Foundation Stage.

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