



Playhouse Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	507722
Inspection date	17 November 2006
Inspector	Hazel Christine White
Setting Address	190/192 Fenside Avenue, Styvechale, Coventry, West Midlands, CV3 5NJ
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Registered person	Mary Kefford
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?

Playhouse Day Nursery opened in 1994 and is situated in the Styvechale area of Coventry in the West Midlands. The nursery operates from a two storey converted commercial building. The baby unit is on the ground floor; toddler and pre-school rooms are on the first floor. There is a fully enclosed garden for outdoor play which is shared by all children. The nursery serves the local and surrounding areas.

There are currently 36 children on roll. This includes seven funded three year olds. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The setting supports children with special educational needs, and who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week all year round except for public holidays. Sessions are from 08.00 to 17.30; part time sessions are also available.

Thirteen full and part time staff work with the children. Twelve have Early Years qualifications and one member of staff is currently on a training programme. The setting receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership (EYDCP). The nursery is in the process of completing a quality assurance scheme, 'Quality Counts'.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean, healthy environment. Staff promote and encourage good hygiene practices and a cleaner is employed to ensure the premises are clean and well maintained. Children understand the importance of hand washing and follow routines before meals and after toileting. Pictures are displayed in toilet areas to remind children of good hygiene practices. More able children are encouraged to be independent in their own personal care. They learn to wipe their noses and cover their mouths if they cough to prevent the spread of germs. All staff are fully aware of their responsibilities with regard to health and safety issues and a named co-ordinator ensures that staff are kept up to date with changes in legislation. Children are well protected in the event of an accident. All members of staff hold a first aid certificate and first aid boxes are fully stocked and readily available in all areas. Accident and medicine records are satisfactorily maintained and signed by parents.

Children are well nourished as they enjoy a wide variety of cooked meals and snacks which are freshly prepared on the premises. Menus are repeated every three weeks and have recently been reviewed to ensure children have the recommended five portions of fruit or vegetables a day. Meals are varied and are planned to take children's individual dietary needs into account. Drinks are readily available and more able children are encouraged to help themselves. Staff directly supervise the children at meal times to encourage their social skills and promote good manners. All staff with the exception of one have completed a food hygiene course. There are good procedures in place for recording food, fridge and freezer temperatures.

Children enjoy a range of activities which promote their physical development. For example a qualified dance teacher is a regular visitor to the nursery. Children learn to follow instructions and are developing a good sense of rhythm and co-ordination. All children use the garden on a daily basis to ensure that they get plenty of fresh air. They learn to manoeuvre wheeled toys and are developing their balance as they use hoops and stilts. Children are regularly taken out for walks around the local area, woods and fields to compensate for the small garden. They use larger climbing apparatus in the park and have space to run and use their energy. Children show enjoyment indoors as they join in with action rhymes and use musical instruments. Older children learn the importance of physical activity in maintaining a healthy lifestyle. Younger children are able to rest and be active according to their needs. Staff talk to parents about children's individual requirements and respect parental wishes.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The nursery has sound safety and security precautions. Visitors are monitored and they cannot enter the premises unless they have confirmed their identity and signed the visitors book. Staff help keep children safe in the nursery and on outings because they understand and comply with health and safety requirements. Written risk assessments are in place for all areas and are regularly updated. Staff carry out daily visual safety checks to ensure that all potential hazards to children are identified and minimised. Children are cared for in specific rooms according to their age. Ratios are maintained throughout the day and children are appropriately supervised. Toys and equipment are in excellent condition and well organised. As storage space is limited not all resources can be kept at a low level. Staff have provided a photo album for children in the pre-school room which shows pictures of all the resources which are out of their reach. This encourages children to make independent choices whilst ensuring their safety.

Children are learning to keep themselves safe because staff remind them of rules and boundaries. They learn, for example, that they must be careful when using scissors and be mindful of other children's fingers when they sit on the floor at circle time. Children are protected in the event of a fire because the emergency evacuation plan is in place and fire equipment is well maintained. Children have practised the fire drill procedure and staff fully understand their responsibilities. Emergency evacuation procedures are displayed near all exits and records are kept when equipment has been tested.

Children's welfare is protected because staff have a satisfactory understanding of their role in child protection and are aware of referral procedures. A written statement is in place and child protection training is mandatory to ensure that staff knowledge is kept up to date with current practice.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy and settled in a welcoming environment. They enjoy a good range of activities and experiences, both indoors and outside, that contribute to their learning and all round development. Children go for walks to explore the local community, visit the mobile library and have weekly music and movement sessions with a qualified dance teacher. Toys and equipment are in excellent condition and most are accessible to children which means they can make independent choices. They are actively involved in singing and story sessions and move freely between activities according to their interests. Children regularly experience playing with sand, water, dough and have good opportunities to be creative. The role play area has recently been developed and children use their imagination as they dress up and become hairdressers, travel agents, doctors and nurses.

Staff have implemented 'Birth to three matters' in their planning to enhance the younger children's development. Babies and young children are developing confidence in their physical skills and are secure emotionally, enabling them to express their needs. They are encouraged to become vocal, for example, through imitation and begin to use appropriate language and gestures to communicate their needs. Younger children are able to investigate and explore

their surroundings and activities are adapted to ensure that they are given the same opportunities as other children.

Children relate well to each other and have developed warm and caring relationship with staff. They are shown affection, reassurance and good support. Children interact with adults and play independently, in pairs or in small groups. Children are frequently praised for their efforts and achievements and as a result they are motivated to learn and display good levels of self-esteem.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Key staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage. They have attended training and receive support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership in planning a curriculum in which children progress in their learning. Staff are familiar with the stepping stones which lead children to their goals. They recognise that activities have more than one learning outcome and know children's strengths and weaknesses. Staff continually record observations which are then transferred to assessment records. Assessments show what children are learning, however, they do not say what they need to learn next, therefore, this may impact on more able children, as they may not be sufficiently challenged in order to reach their full potential.

Staff take into account what children already know and can do, as parents' knowledge of their own children's learning is sought during their induction period. All children are developing confidence as they enjoy a wide range of planned activities and free play. They have formed friendships and show care and concern for one another. Children are well behaved and are learning right from wrong because staff set clear and consistent rules.

Children are building up vocabulary well and speak clearly and confidently to adults and other children about their experiences. They sit quietly during group times and join in with familiar songs and stories. Children show an interest in books and have their favourite stories which they enjoy listening to. They visit the community library on a weekly basis and handle books with care. They are gaining knowledge that information can be in print because they have loaned reference books for topics and themes. Children are learning early writing skills and more able children can write their name on their work. The graphic's area encourages children to write letters and messages which increases their awareness of writing for different purposes. More able children can recognise their first name and are learning to link sounds and letters.

Children are learning to count in planned activities and routines. All children can count beyond ten. They are developing number recognition and learning about addition and subtraction. For example children count how many boys and girls are present and add them together. They take part in action songs where they take one away. Children are learning to name shapes such as triangle, square and circle and can describe 'big' and 'small'.

Children show an interest in information technology. Most can operate the computer and complete a simple programme. Some more able children adeptly use the computer mouse. Children show an awareness of the world in which they live. They explore within the local community, celebrate festivals and fund raise for charities such as 'Children in Need' and 'Comic Relief'. They participate in topics about the world and have sent a post card to the nursery

when they have been on holiday. Children have identified the country it came from on a globe. They discuss the growth cycle of living things such as flowers, 'mini beasts and bugs'.

Children experience a variety of activities to explore texture, form and colour such as painting, playing with shaving foam, saw dust and bark. They cook and model with dough. Children recreate their own experiences through role play and respond to music through movement. Children's physical skills are developing appropriately. They use climbing and balancing equipment in the local park and skilfully use stilts and hoops in the nursery garden. Children practise and develop fine motor skills as they use brushes, scissors and pencils.

Resources are readily available and rooms are laid out to enable children to develop in their play. Children of all abilities are supported and encouraged to integrate. Questioning techniques are effective in making children think for themselves and problem solve. Staff ensure that children have toys and equipment to develop their own ideas and imagination. Children are encouraged to develop their independence in many ways, for example pouring their own drinks, making their own sandwiches at tea time and dressing themselves for outdoor play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individual needs are well supported by staff. All children are warmly welcomed into the nursery. Their likes, interests and special requirements are known by key staff because they have thorough discussions with parents. Children attend from different backgrounds and they have access to resources which reflect positive images of race, culture, gender and ability. For example, children have a variety of multi-cultural books, dolls, play figures, dressing up clothes and puzzles. They visit the community library on a weekly basis and are familiar with books written in dual languages. The equal opportunities co-ordinator organises a range of cultural festivals and special days for children to celebrate. Therefore, they are gaining a knowledge and understanding of the wider world. This positive approach fosters children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development.

Children with learning disabilities are very well supported. Staff work closely with parents and other professionals to enable children to reach their full potential. The special needs co-ordinator is clear of her role and familiar with implementing individual education plans to help children reach their goals. The nursery positively promotes inclusion. Key staff have attended specific training courses such as sign language and makaton to help children to communicate. Children are learning about similarities and differences in people through discussion and by mixing with children of all abilities within the nursery.

Children are well behaved and show an understanding of expected behaviour. They are made aware of the rules and boundaries through discussions and reminders from staff. Children help to tidy away toys and learn safety rules such holding on to the banister when they walk down the stairs. They respond positively when praised and their self-esteem is promoted as they are frequently rewarded for effort and achievement. Pre-school children have a reward chart to encourage good behaviour. Staff are consistent in their approach and use positive behaviour management strategies such as distraction and focusing on what children do well. Parents work in partnership with staff to resolve any problems that may occur.

Relationships with parents are friendly and informative. Key staff work closely with parents to ensure that they follow the children's home routines and a gradual settling in period develops their sense of belonging. Parents are welcomed and good communication exists. Notice boards provide information regarding children's activities and nursery policies and procedures. Parents are invited to attend an annual open evening and receive regular news letters. The manager has devised questionnaires for parents to complete periodically. This information is used to evaluate childcare practice and make changes which positively impacts on the care children receive. Parents are actively involved in supporting the nursery in raising money for charities. They are encouraged to join in the celebration of festivals and special days. Parents comment on the friendly environment and approachable staff team with whom they have developed a good relationship.

Partnership with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education is good. Parents are encouraged to share information about their children's development during their induction. This information is used as a starting point for their learning. Parents are invited to view their children's progress records formally during an annual open evening with key staff. They are encouraged to contribute to these records to enhance their children's learning. Consequently, parents' knowledge is valued and used to help children meet their goals.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, welcoming, friendly environment. Rooms are attractively decorated with the children's artwork, pictures and posters. Space is organised appropriately to enable children to experience a wide range of play activities. Children are motivated and interested in activities which are suitable for their age and stage of development. They follow familiar daily routines which provide them with security and consistency.

Children's welfare, care and learning are promoted by efficient and effective organisation. Staff fully understand the nursery's policies and procedures to safeguard children and support their learning. Documentation and records are well maintained and dated when they are due to be reviewed. The manager is less familiar with the current complaints procedure, therefore may not record concerns effectively.

Robust systems are in place to ensure the continued suitability of staff and there are good procedures for recruitment and selection. Ratios are maintained throughout the day and children receive a good level of interaction and supervision. The manager has contingency plans in place to cover absences such as holiday and sickness. Children are cared for according to their age and stage of development. A key worker system is in operation throughout the nursery. Therefore, children experience security and continuity of care.

Leadership and management are good. Children's play and learning experiences are enhanced because all staff are encouraged to develop their existing knowledge and understanding of child care related issues by attending training. Key staff have received foundation stage training and have a sound understanding of the stepping stones which help children achieve goals. The manager and her team plan a curriculum which enhances the children's learning. Observations are regularly recorded and transferred to progress records.

The manager influences good practice by being actively involved in the day to day running of the nursery. She is committed to making improvements and regularly evaluates practice. Strengths and weaknesses have been identified and support from the Early Years Childcare Partnership has developed the Foundation Stage curriculum. Staff are encouraged to attend training to keep their knowledge and skills updated. Health and safety courses such as child protection, first aid and food hygiene are mandatory. Staff are encouraged to make a positive contribution towards meetings and appraisals. They identify their own strengths and weaknesses and have action plans to meet their goals. The manager is constantly looking to improve practice and is working towards an accredited quality assurance scheme 'Quality Counts'. Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting agreed to follow recommendations made by the Fire Safety Officer, in this case the regularity of emergency evacuations. Ensure the written behaviour management policy reflected current positive practice and further develop the opportunities for children aged two to three years to engage in a range of activities that are appropriate to their stage of development.

Fire drills are practised more often to ensure that adults and children are familiar with the procedure, therefore appropriate measures have been taken to protect children. The behaviour policy has been re-written to reflect the settings positive attitude towards managing behaviour. Key staff have attended 'Birth to Three matters' training to further develop their knowledge of providing opportunities for young children to ensure that they engage in a range of activities that are appropriate to their stage of development. Planning is based on the 'Birth to Three matters' framework and covers all of the components. The manager oversees planning and monitors progress. Therefore, positive steps have been taken to ensure that young children engage in a full range of opportunities that are appropriate to their stage of development.

Nursery Education

The setting agreed to develop opportunities for children to be independent learners through accessing more of their resources and within some social areas. Also to further develop staff's knowledge of suitable questioning skills and their ability to extend children's conversational skills. The staff team have worked together with the Early Years Childcare Development Partnership in providing opportunities for children to become independent learners. Drawers have been clearly labelled and all resources that are inaccessible to children have been photographed and put into an album so children can see what's available and ask for specific toys and equipment. Opportunities for role play have been increased and a creative area added to enable children to enhance their skills. Staff have been supported by the manager in developing their questioning techniques. They are learning to ask open ended questions to develop children's thinking and problem solving. This is evident in planned activities and is being developed to include daily routines and spontaneous play. Therefore, good progress has been made to enhance the children's learning.

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):

- develop knowledge of the current complaints procedure.

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 current assessment records to include the next stage in individual children's learning and use this information to inform planning.

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