



Inglenook Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY231990
Inspection date	05 December 2006
Inspector	Michelle Smith
Setting Address	Inglenook Nursery School, 619 Pershore Road, Selly Park, Birmingham, West Midlands, B29 7HA
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Registered person	Nadia Dowell-Lee
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?

Inglenook Nursery School was registered in 2002. It operates from six rooms within a converted house in the Selly Park area of Birmingham. A maximum of 55 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 until 17:30 for 50 weeks of the year. It is closed for two weeks during August. All children have access to a fully enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 47 children aged from eight months to nine years on roll including 16 children who receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchment area as the nursery is located on a main bus route into Birmingham city centre.

The nursery employs eight members of staff who work directly with the children. All staff hold an appropriate early years qualification. The nursery receives support from the local authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are learning about personal hygiene and keeping themselves healthy. They wash their hands before eating and use individual flannels to clean their faces after lunch. They are protected in medical situations. All staff are trained to administer first aid and appropriate procedures are in place to prevent the spread of infection. Children rest and sleep according to their individual routine. Young babies sleep peacefully in cots. Toddlers settle well on mattresses with their own blanket. Older children rest as they experience quieter times of the day, for example, on occasions they watch television before eating their lunch.

Children thrive on healthy, nutritious food. They sit with their friends and enjoy a sociable lunch time where they actively discuss familiar events and experiences. Children eat well. A cook is employed to prepare and serve fresh food which is planned on a four week rotational basis. Children who arrive at the setting after school have a less formal snack time where they are able to choose what they would like to eat. Children adopt a positive attitude to food, for example, they talk about how sweetcorn is grown after watching the television programme 'Big Cook Little Cook'. Children's specific dietary needs such as allergies are known by all staff who ensure children eat appropriate foods that safeguard their welfare.

Children enjoy regular access to outdoor play. They put on their Wellington boots to play in the garden and develop their climbing and balancing skills as they use the slide. Children learn to further their coordination as they play indoor games with a parachute and leaves. Young children become increasingly competent in their basic skills such as sitting unsupported through the smart use of resources. More able babies move with speed as they chase a plastic ball and reach for items that interest them such as Noah's ark. Activities such as pegging and jigsaws help children to develop control over their finer movements.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a warm and caring environment where most risks are minimised. Staff effectively monitor access to the setting and precautions are taken by staff to make sure the outdoor area is safe. Children have safe access to the stairs as they walk carefully and receive gentle guidance from the staff. All children play with age and stage appropriate equipment. This reduces the risk of accidents such as choking. Toys and activities are easily accessible to them which help them to become independent learners.

Children feel welcome as they enter the setting. Their art work is displayed around the building which provides a bright and colourful space in which they feel special. Children move comfortably around their base rooms as the temperature is maintained appropriately, ensuring they are warm or cool enough.

Children's welfare is adequately safeguarded because staff have a clear understanding of child protection issues, including possible signs of abuse. The management team are clear of their

responsibility to protect children and have the contact numbers of local support agencies. This means that any concerns can be dealt with in a calm and swift manner.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children take part in a suitable range of play opportunities which they find interesting and enjoyable. Younger children sit supported whilst playing with a small computer. More able children colour Christmas trees with felt tip pens. Children are able to choose what they wish to play with from an attractive range of activities and resources such as sand and pop-up toys. They enjoy picking up plastic bottles full of different textures and holding the bottles to the light to watch the changes. However, the large majority of resources that young children are able to access independently smell and feel very similar. This limits their sensory development and their ability to explore the world through a wide range of materials. Children are well occupied and show an active interest in the activities that have been selected for them. They fill up a bucket with sand and talk confidently about creatures that live in the sea. Some staff members have attended the 'Birth to three matters' framework training. However, the framework which supports children in their earliest years has not been fully implemented.

Children form strong relationships with staff and their friends. They work well together, for example, when playing imaginatively with dolls and pushchairs. Staff interact well with young children. They take the time to talk to them and allow children sufficient time to respond. This helps children to develop sound early communication skills. Children have some access to art activities. They learn their colours as they paint a snowman's scarf and begin to develop a sense of self as they name the features on the snowman's face, for example eyes and nose.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Most staff have secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage and a suitable understanding of how children learn and progress. Written plans are detailed and clearly state the learning intention of focused activities. However, activity plans do not allow for extending older or more able children's learning which means that on occasions they are not stimulated enough. For example, children colour a Christmas scene and then cut and stick images onto the paper. More able children complete this activity with great ease. Their thinking is not challenged sufficiently as the learning intention is below their level of ability. Most staff members are able to implement the Foundation Stage spontaneously within general play to progress children's development. However, some staff members are not confident enough to recognise the potential of free play activities such as when children attempt to solve mathematical problems using a shopping trolley. This reduces children's learning and produces gaps in the educational programme. The large majority of the daily routine works well. Time, space and resources are used effectively to provide children with an interesting and stimulating environment. However, during the period after lunch resources and staff are not used as well. Children become restless and do not display as much motivation to learn as the environment has lost its appeal. Children behave well for most of the time as staff offer them gentle guidance. Throughout the day staff praise children for their achievements, for example, telling children they are very good when they have attempted to fasten their own coats.

Children join in with enthusiasm in group sessions such as parachute play and flash card recognition. They are confident and motivated enough to say which flash card numerals they recognise, showing a willingness to learn. They make choices about where they wish to play which develops their independence and builds on their natural curiosity. Most children concentrate well. They use their fine motor skills to place pegs into a board, remaining with the activity until all holes are used. Children are able to self-select many resources. They each have a named pencil container which they use as they wish, writing for a variety of purposes. However, they have reduced access to other resources such as materials to join and assemble. This limits their ability to solve problems. Children thoroughly enjoy books and stories. Staff use visual stimuli well to bring the meaning of the story to life. Children listen to the story as they are eager to talk to the puppet that is used, Mrs Honey. They put items, for example, felt eggs onto Mrs Honey's hat in line with the story and show much pleasure when it is their turn.

Children are beginning to understand mathematical concepts. They count with confidence, for example, counting up to 27 pencils when writing in their diaries. They know that only two children are allowed to play in the sand at any one time and hold up their fingers to represent the meaning of two. However, children are not encouraged to use solve mathematical problems within the daily routine, for example, working how many chairs are needed for the amount of children present. This reduces their ability to calculate and think situations through themselves. With staff guidance they are developing more knowledge of how numbers are used in the wider world, for example, on train and lottery tickets.

Children enjoy imaginative play. They dress up and act out familiar experiences in the home corner and push their shopping trolleys around the room. More able children give a story line to their play and take much pleasure from being, for example, the Mother. They repeat the words to familiar songs and join in with the actions such as pretending to sleep like a baby. Through craft activities they express their creativity. They use felt tips to draw their family and use brushes and sponges when painting. Children are confident to name colours and shapes, for example, they explain they are using red to draw a circle.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children enjoy positive relationships with the staff and each other. They are confident to approach staff for comfort and to ask for help when needed, for example, when fastening dressing up clothes. All children are respected. Staff meet babies individual care needs and follow their routine in line with their parent's wishes. This provides consistent care for babies and helps them to settle easily. There are effective strategies in place to care for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. This includes firm links with relevant support agencies. Children are familiar with the routines and the storage of equipment. This helps them to develop a strong sense of belonging. Children learn about their local community and the wider world because staff plan themes and projects. Throughout December children enjoy singing traditional songs and work well together to act out the story of Mary and Joseph which parents are invited to watch.

Children behave well for the large majority of the time. Toddlers sit at the table for a drink when asked and settle well for their midday sleep as the routine is consistent. Older children

are aware of the group rules, for example, they wait for everyone to be ready before saying their prayer and eating their lunch. Children receive gentle guidance and praise from staff. This helps them to understand right from wrong and to boost their self-esteem. Children learn to take care of their environment. They help to tidy away, share and take turns. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

All children benefit from the positive partnership staff have developed with parents. Regular informal discussions with parents help staff to understand the changing needs of children. Activities such as the Christmas nativity provide parents with the opportunity to become further involved with their child's learning and to see what their child has been doing whilst at the setting. The range of methods used to provide parents with access to policies is limited. Newsletters are sent home and parents can ask to see written procedures. However, policies and procedures are not available for parents to access at their leisure. This reduces the parents understanding of the way in which the setting is underpinned. The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is good. Information on the Foundation Stage is displayed at the bottom of the stairs. Written plans outlining what children are expected to learn and what activities are to take place are easy to see in the funded children's base room. Parents are invited to attend parents evening where they are able to discuss their child's next developmental steps. This consistent approach helps to extend children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Staff are deployed effectively for most of the time which means children receive a suitable level of adult attention. Staff interact well with babies through verbal and non-verbal methods of communication, for example, smiling and repeating simple words. Toddler room staff sit at the side of the sand pit and show children how to control the pouring of sand into their hands. Children enjoy their time spent with staff. Space, staff and resources are used effectively for the large majority of the time. As a result, children receive consistent care. A key person system is successfully implemented. Staff know their key children well and ensure the environment meets the child's individual needs.

There are satisfactory recruitment procedures. The management team have a reasonable understanding of how to implement vetting procedures to protect children from risk of harm. However, they have not kept accurate records of, for example, references obtained for staff members. This reduces the impact of staff checks and does not fully safeguard children. All of the legally required documentation is in place.

The leadership and management of funded children is satisfactory. Clear guidance is given by the management to ensure staff are clear in their roles. Informal staff meetings are held every morning and there are consistent staff members in the funded children's base room. Monitoring of the education programme takes place, however this has not been rigorous enough to identify where improvements are needed. This restricts children's learning.

Overall children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the setting was asked to make better use of documentation to record children's times of attendance and to maintain confidentiality when completing the medication and accident books. Children's times of arrival and departure are now recorded accurately. Staff make precise notes of the times children arrive and leave the setting. Each child now has their own accident and medication book which is stored appropriately and maintains confidentiality. This enhances the way in which documents support children's welfare and care.

The setting was also asked to develop staff knowledge of child protection issues. Staff are now confident to recognise the signs of abuse and are aware of suitable procedures to follow. This means that children are further protected from harm.

At the last nursery education inspection, the setting was asked to provide children with greater access to undirected information and communication technology (ICT) activities; the writing area and the role-play areas. They were also asked to give greater emphasis to developing children's self help skills and increase the range of methods used for them to self-select resources. Staff have worked well to set up separate areas within the base room in which children can select equipment themselves to write for a variety of purposes. The conservatory has been designed as a role-play area which children access with enthusiasm. However, the ethos of self-selection has not been carried through to the rest of the curriculum and some resources are chosen for the children rather than allowing them to experiment freely with their own ideas. Children use the computer each day however, they are not developing a sufficient understanding of how ICT can be used effectively in other areas of everyday lives. The free access to a greater range of resources and ICT issues have been carried forward as a recommendation from this inspection.

The setting was also asked to develop staff knowledge of the Foundation Stage and to make information on the educational programme available to parents. Most staff members are now familiar with the contents of the Foundation Stage and implement the contents adequately to guide children's learning. However, not all staff members are confident enough to recognise the full potential of the curriculum during spontaneous or free play activities. As a result, children's learning is not maximised and the issue is carried forward as a recommendation from this inspection. There are effective strategies in place to inform parents about the educational programme which increases the link between home learning and the setting.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004, Ofsted has received one complaint relating to three of the 14 National Standards which required the provider and Ofsted to take further action.

In July 2005, Ofsted received a complaint regarding staffing issues and the providers understanding of the National Standards, failure to provide children with regular drinks and failure to provide parents with information. These concerns relate to National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 7: Health and National Standard 12: Working in Partnership with Parents and Carers. Ofsted made an unannounced visit to the setting and raised three actions relating to staffing issues, the system for managing access to the premises and the recording of complaints. The setting was asked to make sure all records are available for

inspection at any time. The registered person reported that the appropriate steps had been taken to address the concerns raised and the provider remains qualified for registration.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are satisfactory.

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):

- make greater use of the 'Birth to three matters' framework to encourage children to explore a greater range of sensory objects and materials
- increase the range of methods used to share all policies and procedures with parents
- ensure the vetting procedures are more rigorous.

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):

- increase staff knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage in order to maximise the potential of free play and spontaneous activities
- extend the range of methods used for children to self-select resources and to further their understanding of information and communication technology within everyday lives
- make further use of the daily routines to extend children's problem solving and calculation skills
- plan, monitor and evaluate the curriculum more effectively to make sure all children are challenged.

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