



Saplings Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY307246
Inspection date	20 November 2006
Inspector	Jackie Nation
Setting Address	56 Holyhead Road, Birmingham, West Midlands, B21 0LH
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Veron L'Ghoul
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?

Saplings Day Nursery opened in 2005. It is privately owned and operates from a converted house in Handsworth, close to the centre of Birmingham. There are three base rooms where children are cared for depending on their age. There is a fully enclosed outdoor play area. There are local shops, parks and schools within walking distance. The nursery serves the local area.

The nursery is registered to care for a maximum of 51 children under eight years of age at any one time. There are currently 64 children on roll. Of these 28 receive funding for nursery education. Children attend a variety of sessions. The nursery is open Monday to Friday, from 07:30 to 18:00 all year round.

The setting supports children with disabilities and children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 17 staff employed to work directly with the children most of whom hold an appropriate early years qualification. The setting receives support from the early year's advisor and the Birmingham early years team.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children play and are cared for in an inviting and clean environment. Positive steps are taken to enhance children's understanding and awareness of good health and hygiene practices through well-established routines. For example, children know they wash their hands after using the toilet and before cooking activities, meals and snacks. Good arrangements are in place to minimise the risk of cross infection. For example, staff implement effective and consistent hygiene procedures during nappy changing routines and children use individually named bedding at sleep time. Staff ensure children play with toys that are clean and in good condition. Table tops and high chairs are cleaned before meal and snack time and the food preparation and bathroom areas are clean and well organised.

Children's health care needs are supported very effectively with detailed policies and procedures which work in practice. For example, if they require medication, have an accident or become unwell. Most staff hold first aid certificates and are able to respond appropriately to accidents should they occur. Up-to-date information is available from the Health Protection Agency and the setting are aware of their role in reporting any notifiable diseases promptly. This document is useful for parents and staff when identifying childhood illnesses and exclusion periods. Written consent has been obtained from parents to enable the setting to seek emergency treatment or advice. This promotes children health and well-being.

Children are well nourished as they are provided with a nutritious, appetising range of healthy snacks, meals and regular drinks. Older children confidently pour themselves a drink if they are thirsty. Mealtimes are a sociable occasion and children benefit from a calm relaxing lunch time when they listen to music. Children's individual dietary needs are well met as these are discussed with parents and information about cultural and individual needs are recorded. This ensures children remain healthy.

Children's sleep routines are effectively accommodated because a quiet room or area for sleep is provided. Children's physical development is promoted as daily routines and activities ensure a good balance of energetic play and opportunities for quiet time. Children have opportunities to be involved in a variety of exercise both inside and outside. Older children become increasingly aware of the way activity affects their bodies. For example, they feel their heart beating faster. Children have a good awareness of space and they competently use a wide range of small and large equipment. For example, they pedal bikes, play with bats and balls, use scissors and paints brushes. This helps to promote their physical development and self-confidence. The nursery plan to develop the outdoor area and provide further opportunities for children to enhance their physical growth and develop their skills by using a range of equipment and a climbing frame.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming, safe and secure environment which is effectively organised. This meets children's needs, promotes their development and enables them to move around safely. Rooms are clean, bright and attractive with a range of children's art work displayed. Children use a range of suitable toys and equipment which provide a good level of challenge and are appropriate to their age and stage of development.

Children's welfare and well-being is fostered and children learn how to stay safe through consistent daily routines. Children are familiar with the emergency evacuation procedures and older children understand the 'golden rules' for example, walking nicely inside the nursery. The setting has a good awareness of how to ensure children's safety by carrying out daily checks on the areas used by children. Staff are vigilant, deployed effectively which means that children are supervised well at all times. Access to the nursery is closely monitored and all visitors are requested to produce identification before entering the building. Arrival and departure times are well managed so that children are handed over to the correct person at the end of the day.

Children are cared for by adults who have relevant experience, knowledge and skills. Parents are aware of the setting's responsibility for safeguarding children. Staff demonstrate a good understanding of child protection and their role in reporting any concerns to the relevant agencies. Staff have attended child protection training. They are familiar with the signs and symptoms of abuse and this ensures children's welfare is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children enjoy their time in nursery, they arrive happy and eager to play and learn. Older children settle quickly and take a full part in all the activities provided. Good emphasis is placed on children's personal, social and emotional development and activities help children develop a sense of belonging. All children benefit from good interactions with staff who are interested in what they say and do and who give them praise and encouragement. All staff respond promptly and with genuine interest to children's questions and conversations about their homes and families. This helps children feel valued and settled. Those who are new to the setting are helped to settle by staff who are sensitive towards their individual needs. Staff develop children's confidence by warmly greeting them on arrival. They encourage children to join in discussions at registration time and help them to get to know the other children and become familiar with the routine. Staff have a good understanding of the range of experiences and activities which enable all children to make good progress in all areas of their learning and development. Planning and assessment of children's progress incorporates the "Birth to three matters" framework and the Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage. Observations are used to complete individual evidence profiles and children benefit from a key worker system. This provides good links with parents as they are kept informed about their child's progress and development while at the setting.

Younger children enjoy plenty of creative and exploratory play. They enjoy playing with natural materials, for example, dry sand, shells and pebbles. They dance and move around with

enthusiasm waving ribbons as they listen to the music, and praise themselves by clapping when the music has finished. Some younger children are confident when using the microphone to sing songs they know well. During role play they use chopsticks to pick up play food and staff introduce new words to them. Staff plan a good range of activities for young children to take part in, they play in small groups with play dough, painting, chalks, water play, crawling tunnel and building blocks. This ensures they enjoy their time at the setting and all aspects of their care and development is promoted.

Children are interested and engaged in their play and make choices from a wide range of well-organised and stimulating resources which enhance their development. Children are relaxed and comfortable with staff and older children will happily engage staff in play or conversation. Staff encourage the children to be interested in what they are doing and motivated to learn.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff are enthusiastic, demonstrate a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and implement this effectively. This means that children are progressing well through the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. The curriculum is planned to provide a broad and balanced range of play and learning experiences that cover all six areas of learning. Plans show clear links to the early learning goals, stepping stones and the intended learning outcome. Staff work together effectively to create an environment which is stimulating and ensures that children are meaningfully engaged. Children concentrate well during activities and readily make decisions on where and how they want to play and explore.

The room and resources are well organised, toys and resources are accessible and stimulate children's interest in learning. The playroom has been organised effectively into specific play areas, this includes a creative area, role play room and an area where children can enjoy looking at books. There is a good balance between adult-led and child-initiated activities, children self-select activities and develop independence. Good staff interaction and effective staff questioning helps children to persevere with tasks, consolidate their learning and promote further discussion. Observations of children are used well and contribute to children's evidence portfolios, children's progress is recorded, monitored and shared with parents. A good range of information is provided for parents about the foundation stage and stepping stones. Parents are encouraged to become involved in their child's learning, they are aware of the various topics and activities children take part in.

Good consideration is given to supporting children with learning difficulties or disabilities. This ensures all children are included in all aspects of play and learning. Good support is available for children who speak English as an additional language. This helps children make good progress.

Children are developing a respect for each other and staff encourage good manners. Children are beginning to learn right from wrong. Staff manage children's behaviour well by helping them to understand what is expected of them in terms of acceptable behaviour. They create an environment that sets, explains and maintains clear and consistent boundaries. Children's behaviour is good and they are learning to share, take turns and take part in group activities.

Children make good progress in all aspects of communication. For example, speaking, listening, reading and writing. Good emphasis is placed on developing children's speaking and listening skills. Children have regular opportunities to recognise their own name and practise mark making skills. For example, in the writing area and writing their name on their work. Some children are beginning to recognise initial sounds in their own names and some words, staff reinforce letter sounds during daily activities. Children speak with confidence, for example, during registration time and individual situations. Children enjoy looking at books which they access independently and they listen to stories attentively. Story times are supported by staff who demonstrate good skills in story telling techniques and some children are able to predict what happens next.

Children are beginning to see connections and relationships between numbers. Effective teaching encourages children to show an interest in numbers and they enjoy many activities to develop their skills in counting and calculation. During registration time they count the number of days in the week, at lunch time they count how many plates and chairs are needed. Mathematical language is used regularly during activities for example, sand, water play and cooking.

Children are given time to develop their senses and investigate a wide range of materials. For example, sand, water, play dough, model making, painting and cooking activities. Children enjoy cooking activities and this incorporates many aspects of learning. For example, health and hygiene, weighing the ingredients, guessing the name of the ingredients, predicting what happens next, talking about how the bread mixture feels and tasting the bread later in the day. However, there are limited opportunities for children to increase their awareness of investigating objects and asking questions about why things happen and how they work.

Children have good opportunities to explore a range of music and dance from around the world. For example, Spanish, African and Asian music and dancing. This helps children develop an understanding of their own culture and the wider world. Through planned activities children become aware of various festivals and celebrations, they visited a local church and explored local shops. This helps to contribute to children's social and cultural awareness and helps them to understand the world around them.

Children's use their imagination as they take part in role play, dressing-up, music and movement. They enjoy playing parachute games together, musical chairs and musical statues. Children are creative and express themselves through painting, leaf printing, model making and play dough. They develop their awareness of space and others around them as they play outside on bikes, play with hoops, and practise aiming and throwing skills. This helps promote their confidence and self-esteem.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are cared for by staff who value and respect them as individuals. All children are welcomed into the setting and staff get to know children well. They liaise closely with parents and good information is recorded about children's individual needs, likes, dislikes, comforts and preferences. Children develop a positive attitude to others and an understanding about the wider community through enjoyable activities. Resources positively reflect different cultures

and disability, children learn about similarities and differences and the importance of treating each other kindly.

Children are well behaved and are encouraged by staff to play alongside each other sharing both space and resources. Children listen and respond positively to gentle reminders and explanations from staff, older children understand about sharing and taking turns. Good behaviour and positive self-esteem is promoted by staff who praise and encourage children in their achievement. Staff involve older children in devising the 'golden rules' this helps children to reflect on what they have said or done as staff sensitively discuss issues with them. Staff lead by example in promoting acceptable and positive behaviour. They are positive role models, polite, caring, courteous. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. A key worker system helps children, parents and staff to get to know each other. There are good systems in place for sharing information about the setting policies and procedures as parents are provided with a comprehensive prospectus. Parents are kept fully informed about their child's progress and development. Parents receive feedback each day about their child's care and daily routine. Parents receive information about the curriculum guidance for the foundation stage and birth to three matters framework.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children play and learn in a welcoming and well organised environment. Staff are friendly and approachable, they make children feel happy, settled and secure. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities in promoting the welfare and development of all children in their care. Staff have a good understanding of the setting's policies and procedures and are effective in their implementation. Children benefit from being cared for by an experienced and committed staff team who work together with enthusiasm. Recruitment and vetting procedures ensure children are cared for by suitable staff who understand their role in the nursery. New members of staff are informed about the policies and procedures through effective induction procedures.

Leadership and management is good. This contributes to children making good progress towards the early learning goals. The setting is clear about their aims and objectives. They are committed to developing and improving all areas of their practice and the quality of care and education for all children. Practice issues are regularly evaluated and the staff team meet on a regular basis. An appraisal system is in place and relevant training is provided to develop staff skills, knowledge and understanding. Information gained on training is cascaded to the rest of the staff team and changes are implemented effectively and with enthusiasm. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection the provider agreed to develop aspects of health and safety in relation to; the stairs and the ramp in the outdoor play area, develop staff knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework, increase the opportunities for children to engage in imaginative and creative play and ensure these areas are inviting and offer challenge

and ensure staff adopt a consistent approach to behaviour management which is helpful to children and offers explanation and guidance.

Actions were raised at the last nursery education inspection in relation to; increase staff knowledge of the foundation stage, introduce effective contingency plans to ensure the educational programme is not disrupted due to staff absence, introduce a robust system to regularly monitor the progress of teaching and learning and plan and deliver a range of activities and play experiences to cover the six areas of learning, paying particular attention to communication, language and literacy, knowledge and understanding of the world and mathematical development.

The setting have made good progress in addressing the recommendations and actions from the last care and nursery education inspection. All aspects of safety at the setting are given good attention, the use of stairs and safety gates has been reviewed and children are prevented from gaining access to the ramp in the garden. This ensures children are safeguarded.

Staff plan a good range of opportunities for children to enable them to be creative, play imaginatively and take part in dressing-up. In the pre school room an area of the room is dedicated to creative play and there is a separate room off the main playroom for imaginative play and dressing-up. Both areas are inviting and offer appropriate challenges. This helps children enjoy and achieve.

Staff have attended training to develop their knowledge and understanding of the "Birth to three matters" framework and the foundation stage guidance. Overall, staff plan effectively and monitor and assess children's progress and development. This ensures they make good progress in their play and learning. A recommendation has been made at this inspection to improve opportunities to increase children's awareness of knowledge and understanding of the world, for example, by investigating objects and asking questions about why things happen and how they work.

The policy for managing children's behaviour is effectively implemented. Staff have a good awareness of relevant strategies which help children understand the need for simple rules. Staff value good behaviour and children receive praise and encouragement.

Overall, the completion of the recommendations and actions improves outcomes for children in their care, nursery education, learning and development.

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):

- continue to develop the outside play area to promote children's physical development.
(care and nursery education)

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 opportunities to increase children's awareness of knowledge and understanding of the world, for example, by investigating objects and asking questions about why things happen and how they work.

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