



Brookbank Private Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY268852
Inspection date	18 October 2006
Inspector	Shirley Leigh Monks-Meagher
Setting Address	239 Mottram Road, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 2PE
Telephone number	0161 3661645
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Registered person	Treetops Nurseries Limited
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Full day care, Out of School 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?

Treetops Nurseries Ltd operate Brookbank Private Day Nursery from a large, converted 19th century listed building in Hyde, Cheshire. It is close to the motorway network. The children's rooms are spread over two floors. There is an office, reception area, kitchen, staff room and toilets. All children share a secure outside area with hard and soft surfaces for outdoor play.

The nursery is registered to provide day care for 128 children at anyone time. There are currently 104 children on roll; this includes 20 children who are in receipt of the nursery education grant and eight children who attend the out of school provision. Children with additional needs and English as an additional language are supported by the nursery. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery is open from 07.00 to 18.15, Monday to Friday, all year round with the exception of one week at Christmas and statutory bank holidays.

There is a staff team of 18 including two cleaners and a cook. The majority of the staff who work directly with children hold relevant childcare qualifications. The group maintain a bank of additional staff for contingency arrangements, many of whom hold relevant qualifications. The nursery are members of the National Day Nursery Association, hold the Investors in People award and the Tameside National Health Service Healthy Eating Award. An early years mentor, from the local authority, supports the nursery.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are cared for in a clean environment. Staff follow basic hygiene routines, such as wiping tables before snacks, using gloves and aprons for nappy changing and encouraging children to wash their hands at appropriate times. However, dummies are stored together in one container and uncovered snacks are open to contamination and over handled by staff. This poses a risk to children's health through cross-contamination. Children are treated appropriately for minor injuries because all staff are first aid trained and an effective sick child and exclusion policy protects them from illness. Secure systems for recording medication administered and accidents sustained protect children's welfare. All children benefit from a routine that includes both vigorous play and times to relax or sleep. However, sleep routines for the younger children do not always recognise and meet individual needs.

Children's health is fostered through a varied choice of healthy snacks and meals. Secure and sensitive systems ensure children's individual dietary needs are met. Fresh ingredients are used to provide home cooked meals, such as sweet and sour chicken with rice, followed by banana mouse and fresh fruit. Older children serve themselves, using appropriate equipment, and take sufficient to meet their individual needs. This promotes their independence well. Children enjoy the dining experience. They eat together in dining rooms, where tables are set with cloths, flowers and appropriate cutlery and crockery. Children are given sufficient time to allow them to develop eating skills, such as chewing and manipulating cutlery. Children are refreshed and hydrated. They drink sugar free juice with meals and have water available at drinking stations in the rooms.

Children benefit from daily outdoor activities; they run and play in the fresh air, which contributes to good health. The large outdoor play area houses a selection of equipment, such as slides, climbing frames, tunnels and wheeled vehicles to help children develop strength and co-ordination, but these fail to challenge older and more able children. Children are developing spatial awareness; they swerve to avoid bumping into equipment or each other. Babies are encouraged to develop physical skills; staff ensure there is plenty of space for them to crawl and explore their environment and suitable equipment, such as walkers and domestic style furniture, help them to pull up and practise walking.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel welcome in warm, brightly decorated and generally well organised rooms where the furniture is of suitable quality and an appropriate size. However, insufficient sleeping equipment and the procedures for helping young children and babies to sleep, pose a risk to their health and safety. For example, children use bottles as comforters and staff vigorously encourage children to sleep by patting or rocking bouncing chairs and car seats. Most rooms are well organised into learning areas and generally children can move around safely. Ample toys and resources are stored at child height. Children make confident use of equipment. Older children are learning to return toys and equipment to shelves, drawers and areas when they finish playing. This develops their sense of responsibility and encourages them to respect their environment.

There are appropriate processes and procedures in place to keep children safe. Staff are vigilant about the security of the premises to protect children. For example, secure entry and exit systems, consistent signing in and out each time staff leave the premises and clear records of visitors. Risk assessment procedures take place frequently for indoors and outdoor areas. The toys and equipment are generally clean and maintained, minimising risks to children. Children know how to keep themselves safe. For example, during the inspection the nursery experienced a fire alert. Children calmly and sensibly evacuated the building and assembled outside. The whole operation was slick and effective.

Children's welfare is effectively safeguarded. Staff know how to protect children from harm and neglect and are clear that their first responsibility lies with the child. They are confident about the procedures to follow and who to contact in the event of concerns. A comprehensive policy is shared with parents.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Overall, there is a satisfactory range and balance of activities to promote the children's learning. Children are happy and generally well settled, and demonstrate a positive attitude to play and learning. Staff are developing their understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and plan activities for children linked to it. However, some staff still lack confidence and knowledge, therefore, it is not effectively based on what children already know and can do, which hinders their progress. Similarly, the staff do not plan at all for children who attend the out of school provision. Children who attend the out of school provision join in with the pre-school children and can choose from their activities and select from their continuous play. Older children state they enjoy 'helping' with the younger children, such as reading to them and playing games with them. However, they lack access to age-appropriate toys, equipment and challenge to stimulate their interests and promote their learning.

Babies respond to activities that appeal to their senses. They jiggle up and down to music and explore sand; they crawl in it, sieve it through their fingers and taste it. They explore an array of interactive toys using all their senses. As they play, they make the connection that lights pulse or chimes ring out. Physical skills are developed because babies are given plenty of

opportunities to sit, crawl, roll and encouraged to pull up and practise their walking. Toddlers have plenty of sensory opportunities in fun activities; they cover themselves in shaving foam, handle pasta and cornflour, and experience change when they mix colours. They are generally well supported by staff who play with them at their own level.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. An inviting learning environment, where children can easily access toys, equipment and resources, motivates children and develops positive attitudes towards learning. Staff have a sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage, which they use as a basis for the whole curriculum. Planning covers all the required areas, but not all aspects of learning are included and it does not link to the stepping stones or address the next steps of learning for children. Consequently, there are some gaps in children's learning and some activities offer children inappropriate challenge. Staff interact positively with children, encouraging their ability to think things through and develop initiative. They use a variety of teaching methods, such as small groups and one-to-one activities, in addition to whole group activities, such as a story. This helps children to make steady progress towards the early learning goals.

Children are developing good communication skills. They talk confidently and are able to effectively express themselves. For example, during meal times children politely ask each other to pass the water, remind children who are interrupting that they are speaking and advise during play, that it is their turn. They are developing a love of books and freely choose favourites, such as 'Mister Magnolia' and 'The Magic Paintbrush' to look at independently or share with a friend. Story times are lively sessions where attentive children predict events and join in with well known refrains. Children handle mark-making equipment well and the writing areas are well used by the children. They can recognise their names on coat pegs and place mats and have a go at writing them. However, they do not have many opportunities to use these skills in meaningful activities to help them understand writing as another form of communication. Children use their understanding of early mathematical concepts well. They measure out fine sand in measuring cups and calculate how much water to pour into their cup so that everyone will get a drink. They are beginning to identify some number shapes and are learning to sequence numbers with jigsaw puzzles. Their understanding of more and less is fostered through simple number rhymes.

Children have lots of opportunities to develop their understanding of the wider world. They make visits to the Science and Industry museum and the Blue Planet aquarium where they can undertake simple experiments and handle fish, such as stingrays. They record their experiences using photographs, art and crafts. Children explore similarities and differences. For example, they look at pet cats and compare with large cats like tigers and lions and examine mini beasts through magnifying glasses. Children are learning about design and use commercial kits to make aeroplanes with moving wheels and propellers and flip open mobile phones. They explore simple everyday technology, such as cameras and tape recorders, but have little opportunity to access basic information and communication technology. Children explore texture, colour, shape and sounds; they print using balloons, make simple tunes on instruments to accompany their singing and are learning new songs for their Christmas play 'Whoops-a-Daisy Angel.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are welcomed into the setting and cared for by staff who know them well. They settle into the nursery because an appropriate settling-in procedure is in place. Staff listen to children, value and respect them and children confidently express their own needs. For example, they ask staff for help and request toys and equipment if they cannot find something. Children make free choices, develop independence and initiative and are encouraged to participate in all opportunities and experiences on offer. All children play a full part in the nursery.

The nursery has a good selection of play materials and books, which help children recognise the rich diversity of our society and celebrations of festivals and traditions, such as Hanukkah and Christmas, mean children are developing positive attitudes to others.

Overall, children's behaviour is generally good. Most children are motivated and purposefully engaged. Their efforts and achievements are appropriately praised and encouraged by staff increasing children's confidence in their abilities and developing their self-esteem. Children are polite and show concern for others. For example, older children read stories to younger children, more able children help others with construction and dressing-up and children use please, thank-you and excuse me. Generally children play together harmoniously, they are learning to share resources and take-turns and are developing positive attitudes. Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers of funded children is satisfactory. Staff share information about activities and events both verbally and in writing. They display the planning for parents to see and encourage them to frequently access children's individual files. Twice a year parents are invited to a parents' evening to see samples of work and discuss their child's progress. Parents are not however, provided with information about the Foundation Stage to enable them to effectively measure their child's progress. Parents of children under three are provided with information about the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Policies and procedures are shared with parents including information relating to the complaints procedures. Parents positively endorse the care and education their children receive at the nursery.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children's welfare and wellbeing is fully safeguarded. There are robust systems in place to ensure children are cared for by a suitably vetted, qualified and experienced staff team who undertake regular training for their professional development.

Children benefit from the smooth running of the nursery and clear routines which make them feel secure. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities within the nursery and they work well together to promote the effective operation of the establishment. The staffing ratio supports positive outcomes for children. Space and resources, including the staff, are mainly organised effectively to promote most children's enjoyment and achievements, and encourage their independence and disposition.

Leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. Children benefit from the positive and supportive environment, which effectively supports their social and moral development. Space and resources are well organised to promote children's enjoyment, achievement and initiative. Systems are in place to monitor the effectiveness of teaching and learning, however, these are not rigorous enough. Children have gaps in their learning and are not always challenged appropriately. The organisation has a strong commitment to improvement and their approach to professional development contributes towards maintaining and improving the quality of care and education for all children who attend.

All legally required records and documentation to promote the welfare and well-being of children are in place, well organised and suitably maintained. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery agreed to improve behaviour management, maintain clean safe toys and update some policies.

The nursery has undertaken extensive training for all staff relating to appropriate strategies and approaches to managing children's behaviour. As a result, staff treat children with respect and value them as individuals. They are good role models of behaviour and manners, and are calm and polite with each other and the children. Consistent use of age-appropriate strategies, such as distraction, diversion and clear explanations ensure children know what is expected of them and are learning right from wrong.

Systems have been introduced to ensure all toys and equipment are suitably maintained and kept clean. Rota systems ensure regular cleaning and consistent inspection of toys and equipment ensures any damaged items are removed for repair or disposal. This minimises risks to children.

The child protection policy and a written complaints procedure have been updated to ensure they effectively meet the requirements of the National Standards. These policies now effectively safeguard children's welfare.

Complaints since the last inspection

There have been four complaints made to Ofsted since the last inspection.

Ofsted received concerns on 7 July 2005, in relation to National Standard 1: Suitable Person. The Complaints, Investigation and Enforcement Team contacted the provision. The provision provided an investigation response regarding the concerns raised. Ofsted are satisfied the provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 1: Suitable Person, National Standard 6: Safety and National standard 13: Child Protection. A Childcare Inspector visited the provision on 23 November 2005. Actions were raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standards 1: Suitable Person, National Standard 2: Organisation, National Standard 6: Safety, National Standard 8: Food and Drink, National Standard 12: Working in partnership with parents and carers and National Standard 13: Child Protection. A childcare inspector visited the provision on 23 November 2005. Actions were raised and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. The provider remains qualified for registration.

Ofsted received concerns in relation to National Standard 1: Suitable Person. The Compliance, Investigation and Enforcement Team contacted the provision. The provision submitted an investigation response regarding the concerns raised. Ofsted are satisfied 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.

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 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 staff awareness of hygiene practices which minimise cross infection
- ensure equipment is suitable and procedures are safe when children are sleeping
- ensure space and resources are organised to meet all children's needs effectively.

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 the use of observations in identifying the next steps for children to ensure planning builds on what children know and can already do and provides them with appropriately challenging experiences and opportunities across all aspects of the curriculum (this also applies to day care)
- provide parents with information about the foundation stage of learning to help them to be involved in children's learning and progress

- refine the system for monitoring and evaluating the nursery education teaching and learning.

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