



Thorncliffe Barn

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	312316
Inspection date	13 March 2007
Inspector	Shirley Leigh Monks-Meagher
Setting Address	Thorncliffe, Hollingworth, Hyde, Cheshire, SK14 8JJ
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Registered person	Maureen Savage
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 outstanding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Thornccliffe Barn Private Day Nursery opened in 1992. It operates from a converted barn which is situated in a rural setting adjacent to a farm in the Mottram area of Tameside. Children are cared for in four rooms over two levels, with children under two years being cared for on the ground floor level. There are safe and secure outside areas for outdoor play.

There are currently 54 children on roll, this includes 22 children in receipt of the nursery education grant, attending for a variety of sessions. The opening hours are Monday to Friday, 08.00 to 18.00. The nursery opens all year round with the exception of one week at Christmas and statutory holidays.

The manager has a relevant early years qualification and manages a staff team of nine. This consists of a fully qualified staff team and a modern apprentice, who work directly with the

children, and a cook. The nursery is a member of the National Day Nursery Association, has been awarded a Tameside food safety award and enjoys the support of mentors from Sure Start.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The children benefit from premises that are very clean and welcoming, stringent procedures are in place for the general cleaning and clearing up after each session. Staff follow mainly effective procedures and practices, which enable children's nutritional, physical and health needs to be met. Babies and toddlers are able to rest and sleep according to their needs. However, they sleep face to face. Staff have undertaken basic food hygiene training and use aprons to serve meals and snacks, however, they do not use either gloves or tongs to serve snack foods. These actions leave children open to risk of cross-contamination. Children are developing an excellent understanding of personal hygiene and are keen to become independent in matters of personal care. They dispense soap and wash their hands thoroughly at appropriate times, such as before handling food, after toilet and messy play. Older children clearly understand the consequences of 'bugs' on their hands. The consistent support and guidance offered by staff to all children enhances their understanding of good personal hygiene practice. Fully stocked first aid boxes are readily accessible throughout the setting and staff, who are competent to administer first aid, ensure that children's minor injuries are treated appropriately. Attention to detail in the recording of accidents sustained and of any medication administered protects children's well-being.

Children develop and test their physical control in stimulating indoor and outdoor play experiences. Staff are knowledgeable and secure in their understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning. They know the children well as individuals and this encourages children to confidently try new skills, ask for help and set their own limits within a safe environment. For example, children skilfully manoeuvre two wheel scooters in and around cones, walk confidently on stilts and balance carefully along planks in the central area.

Children's health is fostered through the provision of nutritious, balanced meals and snacks. The nursery ensures that children are offered fresh fruit and vegetables throughout the day. Children's health and dietary needs are respected by staff who conscientiously record specific needs and allergies. Mealtimes are unhurried social occasions where staff sensitively and skilfully support children to choose and enjoy healthy foods as part of a healthy lifestyle. Children are able to help themselves to fresh drinking water to keep refreshed and hydrated.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children and parents are warmly welcomed into the bright, colourful environment, which is maintained to a high standard. Rooms are maintained at the optimum temperature and sufficiently ventilated to ensure children's comfort. Sufficient space ensures that children can play and explore in safety and comfort. The organisation and arrangement of the nursery rooms

meet the needs of the children superbly as the areas are set out thoughtfully, helping to promote a range of children's skills and independence. Rooms are divided into areas and this results in children experiencing a balanced range of resources.

The nursery is superbly equipped to promote all areas of learning. Resources are of a superior quality and include many made from natural materials. Toys and resources are organised effectively making them easily accessible to even the youngest children. They are labelled clearly with text and pictures, helping children to identify resources. Effective systems are in place for checking resources, thereby ensuring that they are always safe and suitable for children's use.

Staff are vigilant in reducing potential hazards, minimising risks of accidental injury to children. Thorough risk assessments are undertaken to monitor the safety of the premises and resources. Children are cared for by vetted adults who are skilful, experienced and knowledgeable. Children's welfare is fully safeguarded by staff who are clear that the child's welfare is their main concern. Staff have very clear knowledge and understanding of the procedures to follow in the event of concerns about a child. The managers work closely with parents to ensure that vulnerable children receive the best care possible.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is outstanding.

Children feel secure, safe and contented in the nursery. There are close and affectionate relationships throughout the setting yielding a happy and harmonious environment where children thrive. High quality interaction between the adults and children results in confident children who develop a strong sense of self in an atmosphere of trust.

Staff confidently use the 'Birth to three matters' framework to plan high quality care and education for children. They are sensitive to the children's needs and recognise them as individuals. Highly effective assessment and planning systems are used to ensure children's needs inform the learning program. Babies and toddlers enjoy a wealth of experiences and opportunities, which significantly enhance their development. For example, highly innovative sensory experiences, such as treasure baskets, textures, mirrors, flashing lights and interesting sounds. Babies are captivated, squeal with delight and are awestruck at their discoveries. Toddlers have a wonderful time exploring sand; they scoop it up with spoons and drizzle it through their fingers. The children really enjoy rhymes and simple songs and join in enthusiastically. Stories are very popular throughout the nursery with all age groups, and high priority is given to imaginative play and children learning to play cooperatively with one another. Babies and toddlers are making very good progress in the nursery and this is evidenced by the play that they exhibit. For example, under two's handle chunky chinks and paintbrushes with dexterity as they produce their pictures and confidently select toys from low level areas. A large cardboard carton has become a pond where children can sit amongst frogs and ducks and handle pebbles, rough stones and wooden logs. Good staff support helps them to compare the sizes of frogs and the noises ducks make. The two year olds competently use simple tools, such as cutters and rolling pins in the play dough, are learning to balance well on small planks and have great fun following the penguin's huge orange footprints on the floor. They wear flippers on their feet and try to walk like 'Cuddly Dudley' the penguin in their story.

Nursery Education.

Children are purposefully engaged at all times and thoroughly enjoy their play. There are a wealth of opportunities for independent learning and adult initiated learning throughout the sessions. For example, children are able to choose to become a doctor, nurse, receptionist or patient in the doctor's surgery, write letters in the writing area or create textured pictures and discuss textures, shapes and colours.

Children are independent. They put on aprons, pour out drinks and use the toilets. During activities children demonstrate high levels of concentration and spend lengthy periods of time completing puzzles, creating pictures, mark-making and identifying sounds. Children are eager to help staff to tidy away at the end of the session. They know where items belong because everything is clearly labelled. They sweep up the sand and pack away toys and by cooperating successfully, manage to get sand into the dustpan and a heavy box onto the shelf. Children behave well. They sit quietly at appropriate times and listen carefully to the staff. Children are developing good control of their emotions. They thoughtfully and confidently share things that make them feel happy during circle time. Many children state that sharing and treating toys and each other with respect makeS them happy. Children make very good progress in personal, social and emotional development.

Children are able to recognise their own name and can self-register successfully when they enter in the morning. They are developing a good understanding of letter shapes and can link them to their phonic sounds. Many are able to recognise letters and sounds that appear in their names. Children understand writing as a form of communication because they have many opportunities to use writing for a purpose. For example, they write letters and cards, complete medical records and diary during role play and write their names on work. Staff model writing well for children. There is a well stocked writing area where children sit independently. A comfortable book area is well used by children who are developing a love of books and stories. They handle them carefully, re-tell favourite tales and share books together. Children listen attentively to group stories, enthusiastically joining in with familiar stories and predicting events. Staff provide excellent support for individuals and provide one to one support when required, enabling all children to be involved and included in the activities.

Children use number spontaneously. They can count numbers up to ten forwards and backwards and are able to sequence them correctly, confidently recognising and naming numbers. Frequent number rhymes and games are helping children to understand simple addition and subtraction. For example, five currant buns and 12345, fish alive. They enjoy estimating in everyday activities and sort and match spontaneously in their play. For example, they match the number of leaves on each side of the stem when drawing flowers. Children use their understanding of early mathematical concepts to solve simple problems. For example, how they can carry a heavy box by sharing the load and how much liquid to add to the baking ingredients to change the consistency.

Children explore, investigate and discover for themselves during hands-on activities. For example, they bake, explore the similarities and differences of mini-beasts and follow the seasons. They are exploring the effects of recycling items and display samples, such as a pencil case made from a car tyre. Simple experiments with planting and nurturing seeds provoke much discussion

and bring about awe and wonder on the children's faces. They develop a clear sense of time as they discuss past and future events. They have a growing awareness of the wider community because visitors, such as the fire and ambulance service come to the setting and talk about what they do. Children develop a good understanding of simple everyday technology and are adept with the computer. Children express their own ideas confidently in creative work using a wide variety of media. For example, textured pictures using sand, glitter, seeds and fabrics and models made from recycled materials and conventional kits. Children are developing rhythm because they are encouraged to move their bodies imaginatively and rhythmically in regular music and movement sessions, and explore beat and sound using a varied selection of musical instruments. Children have ample opportunity to hone their imaginations; they play out situations in role play areas, they recreate events and stories using puppets and act out simple stories and rhymes.

The quality of teaching and learning is outstanding. Staff have an excellent knowledge of the early learning goals which is clearly reflected in their planning and teaching. They establish children's base line and build on what children know, understand and can do. Ongoing, thorough observation and assessment is used to inform the planning. Their skilful approach to promoting positive relationships and boosting self-esteem contributes significantly to children's rapid progress through the stepping stones in all areas of learning. Throughout the sessions children's efforts and achievements are celebrated and praise is consistently and appropriately endowed.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is outstanding.

Children significantly benefit from the strong, professional and positive partnerships that are developed with parents and carers. They are cared for by staff who work diligently with parents to meet their individual needs and ensure that they are fully included in the life of the setting. Consequently, key-workers fully understand the children's individual health, dietary, social and emotional needs, religious and cultural beliefs, and work hard to ensure that these are reflected and well catered for within the provision. Children learn about the diversity of our society through resources which portray positive, non-stereotypical images, the positive role-model of staff and as they acknowledge various celebrations and festivals.

Children are warmly greeted by staff who are interested in what they have to say, helping them to feel secure and a real sense of belonging. Samples of their work and photographs of them participating in activities are attractively displayed throughout the setting promoting their self-esteem and respect for others. They are learning to work harmoniously with others whilst enjoying the freedom to explore within appropriate boundaries. Children are learning to make informed decisions as they choose from a wide and balanced range of resources. Staff effectively support them in sharing and taking turns. Children's behaviour is admirable. They learn appropriate codes of behaviour and gently remind each other of these. Staff are exemplary role models who remain calm and positive at all times and use consistent strategies to promote acceptable behaviour. As a result of these positive approaches children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

The partnership with parents and carers is outstanding. Parents receive a high level of information relating to the Foundation Stage and the educational provision via a multitude of

sources. For example, the reception area contains useful information on all six learning areas, regular news letters, a video, photographic evidence linked to the stepping stones and early learning goals, and topic information with ideas on how parents can be involved in their child's learning. They are informed of their children's progress both informally and formally on a regular basis. Parents are further involved through participating in activities, such as festival celebrations, providing resources and visiting the setting to talk about their jobs. A parent who works for the ambulance service arranged to visit the nursery with the ambulance. Parents of younger children are well informed about their child's daily activities and progress through the use of daily diaries and diary sheets. Parents speak very highly of the setting and staff. They find staff approachable and welcoming and many talk about how their child has thrived, made rapid progress, loves coming to nursery, the atmosphere and children cared for in a safe environment.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The children's care is significantly enhanced by the rich, varied and imaginative quality of the organisation. Highly motivated staff are very well aware of the ethos of the nursery. Their hard work clearly demonstrates their high regard for the well-being of all children. Most policies and procedures are implemented conscientiously to promote children's health, safety, enjoyment, achievement and ability to make a positive contribution. Daily routines are flexible enough to cater for children's individual needs.

The comprehensive operational plan, which includes policies and procedures, ensures that most staff are clear about their roles and responsibilities, enabling children to benefit from a secure environment and continuity of care. However, staff registers are not consistently and accurately completed which could possibly pose a risk to children's safety and welfare. Both the indoor and outdoor space maximises play opportunities for children. Maintained records remain confidential and are easily accessible.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is outstanding. Children benefit from the excellent management of the nursery educational program. Staff receive clear and positive direction from the registered provider and management and are encouraged, through regular training and up-dates to maintain their professional development. The well established procedures, which systematically and effectively monitor and evaluate the quality of the teaching and learning, contribute significantly to children's excellent and rapid progress and effectively highlight areas for development.

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 setting agreed to develop observations, evaluations and next step planning for the younger children, to include some domestic style furniture in the baby room and to update the child protection policy.

The staff are now making regular observations on children under three years. These are linked to children's stage of development via the 'Birth to three matters' framework for young children

and next steps are identified. Staff use these next steps to plan for children's individual progress and development and as a result all children are maximising their potential. An armchair has been installed in the baby room; children are able to continue normal life experience. Work has been undertaken on the child protection policy. This has been updated; it now reflects the procedures followed in the event an allegation is made about a staff member and makes reference to the procedures of the Local Safeguarding Children Board. Staff have updated their knowledge and understanding of the procedures and have a clear understanding of the implications of allegations against staff. As a result children's welfare is safeguarded.

Complaints since the last inspection

Ofsted received concerns relating to National Standard 6, Safety, National Standard 8, Food and National Standard 12, Working with parents and carers. An Ofsted Early Years childcare inspector visited the provision on 22 November 2006. An action was raised on National Standard 12 and satisfactorily met by the registered provider. 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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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):

- further develop staffs understanding of routines and practice which minimise cross-infection, for example, when serving food and for sleeping children
- ensure that staff registers are consistently and accurately maintained.

The quality and standards of the nursery education

No recommendations for improvement are made because the quality and standards of nursery education are outstanding.

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