



The Village Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	322994
Inspection date	12 October 2006
Inspector	Victoria Gail Halliwell
Setting Address	Crooke Road, Standish Lower Ground, Wigan, Lancashire, WN6 8LR
Telephone number	01942 323 444 and 01204 695 688 director
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Registered person	The Village Day Nursery Ltd
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

The Village Day Nursery opened in 2000 and is situated in Standish Lower Ground, Wigan. It operates from a converted village primary school and provides accommodation on two floors. Most children under three years are cared for on the ground floor whilst the older children use the two pre-school rooms on the first floor. All children have access to a secure outdoor play area. A maximum of 89 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 7.30 until 18.00 throughout the year.

There are currently 112 children from birth to eight years on roll. Of these, 33 receive funding for early education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. The nursery currently supports a very small number of children with learning difficulties.

The nursery's management structure consists of a principal and two joint managers, all of whom hold child care qualifications to Level 3. In addition the nursery employs 23 staff, the majority of whom hold or are working towards a recognised qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Overall, children's health is promoted, because staff carry out routine procedures, such as wiping tables with antibacterial spray, using individual cloths to wipe faces and follow hygienic procedures when changing nappies. Bathroom facilities are adequately equipped to support effective hand washing, however children do not always have access to warm water. Staff are aware of individual children's health needs and follow individual sleep routines to ensure babies under 12 months are well rested. Some good practices are introduced, for example, children over two years are encouraged to brush their teeth. However, this is dependant on parents providing a toothbrush and is not fully implemented. Children are not learning the importance of regular hand washing as practices are inconsistent. For example, children are encouraged to wash their hands before meals but do not always wash their hands before icing biscuits.

Systems to ensure the cleanliness of the premises and equipment are not effective, for example, window sills, skirting boards and other surfaces in the children's rooms are not clean. Some toys and equipment, such as high chairs and travel cots are in need of attention to ensure appropriate standards of cleanliness are maintained.

Children are developing healthy eating habits. Menus are regularly reviewed and improved to promote healthy eating. Most meals are prepared using fresh ingredients, for example, fisherman's pie served with peas and cauliflower followed by fruit yoghurt. Menus are displayed and parents of all children are advised of their child's eating habits each day. Mealtime is generally a positive experience for children over two years, however the arrangements for babies under two years are poor. As a result, some babies do not receive appropriate levels of support. All children are provided with drinks at regular intervals throughout the day. In addition most rooms have water and cups available should a child request a drink. Additional drinks for babies are obtained directly from the kitchen.

All children have timetabled opportunities to play outside in the fresh air and sunlight which helps contribute to a healthy lifestyle. Children over two regularly play outside, running freely in the open space. A very small selection of outdoor toys encourage children to develop new skills, such as pedalling and steering are provided. Children do not have sufficient opportunities to explore physically challenging apparatus which promotes climbing and balancing skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children and their families are individually greeted by staff as they arrive at the nursery. Notice boards are prominently displayed for parents information. Children are individually grouped according to their age and development. Attention to furnishings and resources varies

considerably between individual rooms. The pre-school rooms are generally well resourced, whilst some rooms on the ground floor are sparse in comparison. Most rooms on the ground floor do not have any accessible low level storage. Consequently, children are not able to select their own resources. One room does have a small selection of toys available at low level, but children are discouraged from helping themselves. Children on the ground floor share a communal selection of resources which are mostly located in the reception area. Whilst sufficient, this limits the range of play activities the children are able to experience at any one time. Little attention is given to comfort and children in most rooms are unable to relax in comfort during the nursery day. Children under two years do not have access to any domestic style furnishings. Such furniture allows staff to sit in comfort whilst bottle feeding and helps promote the physical development of babies as they learn to stand and walk.

Staff throughout the nursery are mindful of the children's safety. They routinely check their own rooms and take appropriate steps to remove potential hazards. As a result, children can move around and play safely. Formal risk assessments are completed yearly and systems to ensure the safe maintenance of the building, for example, gas and electrical installations are very good.

Children's welfare is satisfactorily safeguarded by staff, who have a clear understanding of their duty to report concerns to their room leader or manager. Staff are able to identify possible signs and symptoms of abuse and maintain a record of any concerns. Training in respect of child protection is varied and this is reflected in the knowledge and understanding of staff. Designated persons are clear about their role and are able to implement the settings child protection procedure, to protect children from possible harm. A child protection statement is routinely given to all parents to inform them of the nursery's duty to report any concerns they may have

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children throughout the setting are mostly settled and enjoy their time at nursery. Almost all children enter the nursery confidently and happily say goodbye to parents and carers. Many older children have formed secure attachments and seek out particular staff to share achievements, for example, showing the picture they have completed or informing a member of staff that they have eaten all their lunch. A basic key worker system is in operation for children under three years. The main responsibilities include monitoring children's development, nappy changing, and helping children settle. However, the quick progression through the nursery rooms is problematic for a small number of younger children who do experience some difficulty settling.

There are significant differences between the quality of play experiences offered to children under three years and those offered to older children. Children under three years follow a timetable or toy rota which indicates which activities are available at any given time. As a result children do experience a varied range over the course of the day but their choice at any given time is limited to three or four choices. For example, sand, crayons and paper and a dolls house is provided for one group of children whilst children in another room have wooden blocks, a garage and cars, crayons and paper and an adult led painting activity. Most children are satisfied

and occupy themselves with what is provided. However, some children become restless or bored and seek alternatives, such as the home corner but this area does not contain any play food, pots and pans unless it is a specified play activity. Each day staff provide one creative experience, such as sand, water or a painting activity, however the practice of sharing resources means that the activity is time limited and not continuously available. Over time children enjoy a range of sensory experiences, such as silk play which is a mixture of cornflour, exploring pasta or bubble play.

Staff are developing their knowledge and understanding of the 'Birth to three matters' framework and this is reflected in new planning systems for children from two to three years. Staff caring for these children plan activities based on children's own interests. For example, a two-year-old crumbles his cake and examines the pieces, so his key worker plans an activity where he can make cakes. Planning for the two-year-olds who are cared for in the pre-school room is very good. Staff have made clear links between the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the early stages of the Foundation Stage curriculum to ensure children are effectively supported.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children enjoy a broad range of well planned activities which help them make good progress towards the early learning goals. For example, children enjoy making 'diva lights' for Divali the Indian festival of light. Staff routinely monitor children's progress using both planned and spontaneous observations to maintain an informative record of assessment. Planning clearly reflects individual levels of learning, one activity may have three planned learning intentions which take account of each child's ability. For example, younger or less able children will be encouraged to listen and join in with stories whilst more able children will be encouraged to make links to their own experiences and think about cause and effect.

Children confidently explore their learning environment and make some meaningful choices about how they spend their time. A range of play materials are accessible at low level, however, these could be improved to provide greater opportunities for children to learn and consolidate new skills independently. For example, by providing a greater range of resources in the role play and mark making area. Children are interested in the range of activities available. They experiment freely during water play lifting the sponges higher and squeezing harder to create a bigger splash.

Children are developing an interest in the written word, many enjoy stories and are able to link sounds with letters in their name, for example, one child states s is for Sam and s is for snake. More able children are beginning to form recognisable letters and spontaneously attempt to write their name on their pictures. Children enjoy using the computer and are to use the mouse with increasing skill and they click and drag items around the screen.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered. Children are valued as individuals. Parents are encouraged to share details of their child's preferences and experiences away from the nursery. As a result staff are well informed about individual needs. Staff value what children have to say and encourage them to share their 'news' with their peers. Children are encouraged to listen to one another as they take turns to share their news or experiences from home. A soft toy is passed around the circle which encourages the children to respect their peers talking time, as they learn to listen and wait patiently for their turn to speak. Pre-school children have routine planned experiences to learn about the cultures and beliefs of others through a range of interesting practical activities which give them an insight into the lives and celebrations of others. A celebration tree is used to show individual achievements or celebrations of children, staff and parents within the nursery.

Children with learning difficulties or disabilities are very well supported. Staff work closely with parents and external agencies, including, sensory workers, physiotherapists and inclusion workers. Staff to child ratios are reduced to ensure children with additional needs receive the individual support they require to help them make progress. Children of all ages are generally well behaved. Staff routinely praise children's achievements and put age appropriate strategies in place to promote good behaviour. For example, individual reward charts are located outside the bathroom to encourage children who are toilet training and pre-school children receive certificates in recognition of their help at tidy up time.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. All parents are very well informed about their child's time at nursery. Parents of children under two years receive a written record which includes details of feeds, sleep patterns and activities. Staff caring for older children maintain a log throughout the day, so staff can accurately advise parents about all aspects of the day even if they were not present. Notice boards are also used to inform parents of menus, details of planned activities are displayed within individual nursery rooms. In addition to a yearly parents evening, parents are encouraged to book individual 'pop in' appointments twice a year so they can discuss their child's progress. All parents receive an informative booklet which advises them of key policies and procedures.

Information relating to the Foundation Stage curriculum is prominently displayed for parent's information. During meetings with parents, staff share children's assessment files and explain the links between the activities children have completed and their progress towards the early learning goals.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Systems are in place to ensure the setting is satisfactorily managed. The current management team are very committed to further developing their own knowledge of early years, through further training and higher level qualifications, such as the Foundation Stage Degree. Clear operational systems are in place, as a result the joint management structure works well and both managers are consistent and are clear about their individual roles. Effective recruitment

procedures are in place to ensure that all staff are appropriately vetted and have the necessary skills and experience to work with young children.

Satisfactory staffing levels are maintained to meet the minimum required staff to child ratios. However, deployment and organisation is at times poor, this impacts particularly on children under two years who are not always adequately supported at meal and sleep times.

The quality and leadership and management of the nursery education is good. A qualified teacher is employed to work with the pre-school children. She has responsibility for monitoring the effectiveness of the nursery education in the two pre-school rooms. Routine observations of staff's teaching practices and assessments of children's progress are well used to monitor the delivery of nursery education. All staff have completed a minimum of four related training courses during the academic year.

Attention to documentation is satisfactory. Records relating to children's hours of attendance, medication, parental consents and children's details are satisfactorily maintained. Information regarding the nurseries operation is known by staff and shared with parents in the information booklet.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last care inspection two recommendations were raised, as a result parental consent has been obtained so staff can take photographs of children. Photographs are displayed within the nursery and used to provide a record of children's achievements. Little action has been taken in respect of the second recommendation to provide comfortable seating and this remains a recommendation following this inspection.

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 any 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):

- review and improve cleaning and maintenance schedules to ensure all areas of the nursery are clean and well maintained
- improve the range, quantity and accessibility of play materials
- provide facilities for children to sit or relax in comfort and consider the use of some domestic style furniture, to assist children in developing mobility and to continue normal life experiences
- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of child protection procedures
- review the organisation and deployment of staff caring for children under two years to meet the children's needs more 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):

- provide opportunities for children to use physically challenging apparatus which would further promote their physical development
- improve the range of accessible resources so that children can learn independently and consolidate new skills following planned activities.

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