



Stapleford Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY333946
Inspection date	15 November 2006
Inspector	Judith Chinnery
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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?

Stapleford Day Nursery is newly registered and part of a private chain of nurseries called Bear Care, in the East Midlands. It is located in the centre of the small town of Stapleford. The nursery is based in a two storey converted office building, with an enclosed outdoor play area, car park and extra play area behind this. Children are cared for in group rooms according to age or stage of development. On the first floor is a dedicated soft play room.

The setting may care for a maximum of 55 children at any one time. There are currently 40 children on roll, this includes one funded child. The setting supports children who may have learning difficulties or disabilities.

The nursery opens five days per week all year round, except bank holidays. Times of opening are 07:30 until 18:00. Children can attend for a variety of sessions.

There are a total of six members of staff working with the children including the manager/proprietor who is teacher qualified. Of the remaining six, five are qualified in child care and education. Some of the staff work part-time.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health, hygiene and well-being is promoted appropriately by the staff. Policies and procedures for promoting good health care are in place. The staff are beginning to use these to guide them in establishing routines such as cleaning tables used by the children between activities. Nappy changing is also appropriately carried out with staff using gloves and cleaning mats and surfaces effectively. This helps to prevent the spread of cross-infection amongst the children. Appropriate records for accidents and medication are in place as well as arrangements for handling emergencies should children become ill. This ensures that children are cared for according to their needs and parents' wishes.

Some appropriate routines are in place to enable the children to wipe their hands before eating food and snacks but older children have less experience with washing their own hands with running water, soap and using towels. This means that children are not yet actively involved in learning about good health and hygiene practices for themselves. Children receive healthy choices of food at meal and snack times, which ensure that they are well nourished. They like to choose between apples and oranges and other fruits at snack time but their understanding about healthy eating is less well developed because staff are not so active in talking about healthy choices.

Children are encouraged to be physically active on a daily basis in this setting. The outdoor area is available and used daily so that children can get out in the fresh air, they enjoy being able to run and use the tricycles. Most children are developing effective skills in avoiding each other as they run and many are starting to use the pedals on the bicycles. Staff provide lots of opportunities for babies and young toddlers to crawl and pull themselves up on appropriate furniture and equipment which ensures that they are starting to develop confidence in learning to walk and climb. The indoor ball pool and climbing area is very popular with the children. They climb confidently and love to chase each other through the balls and down the slide. However, staff are less confident in challenging the older children in their physical development. Consequently the older children are less able to practise and hone their skills in balancing, climbing and running.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's safety is given an appropriate priority in this new setting. The light modern building is decorated with children's pictures so that children and their families feel welcome. Appropriate safety features such as door gates prevent children accessing any unsafe areas such as the stairs effectively. The rooms used by the children are carefully laid out so that children can move around and play freely and safely.

Children have access to suitable resources and equipment for their age and stage of development. The low tables and chairs and appropriate harnesses mean that children can sit, eat and play safely. The external exits are secure and prevent access to the children by unwanted visitors. Health and safety policies are comprehensive and are being implemented as the nursery develops. The staff have a growing familiarity with them and are beginning to use them, such as the risk assessment, to minimise any hazards to the children. Staff talk with the older children about more obvious hazards such as the stairs so that they are able to use them safely. However, staff are less active in talking about other safety matters such as handling tools and other resources, which means that older children are less able to start to take responsibility for their own safety.

Children are protected and safeguarded in the setting because managers know their child protection procedures well. Most of the staff are aware of the main signs and know to whom to report their concerns. Training is being offered and child protection procedures are covered in induction for all new staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are mostly settled and happy in the setting. As this new setting expands and the number of children attending increases, the staff are forging sound relationships with the children helping them to feel secure. Young babies in particular, are cared for in a small group with familiar staff who have developed a calm atmosphere for them to settle and develop their confidence.

Children aged under two years experience a wide range of activities which they can explore and investigate for themselves. Babies delight in making the lights come on or in making a tune when they discover which button to press on the cause and effect toys. Since the staff talk to them constantly the young children are developing their communication skills, responding to staff with sounds and trying out new words. Toddlers enjoy making things splash in the water as well as testing their new found physical skills as they crawl and attempt to walk. This is because the staff provide opportunities and space for them to pull themselves up, take steps and move around the room.

Children aged between two and three years enjoy a variety of opportunities to explore water, sand and mud and other tactile materials to see what they will do. They attempt to build and play imaginatively with the train track and like to paint and use glue. The staff are becoming more confident with the 'Birth to three matters' framework and are using this to plan a wide range of stimulating and worthwhile activities for young children. They are also beginning to observe and assess children's progress through the framework. However, staff do not use this information to inform the planning of activities to ensure they are built on children's interests and what they need to do next.

Nursery education

The teaching and learning for nursery education is satisfactory. The number of funded children attending the setting is beginning to increase and staff are starting to implement plans to develop nursery education further. The low number of children in receipt of nursery education

funding makes it difficult to fully assess the impact of teaching on children's learning and achievement.

Staff's knowledge of the early learning goals is improving, although they are still not confident with the stepping stones and all the different aspects of learning. While the staff use some open-ended questions to encourage the children to think and express their ideas, their lack of knowledge sometimes hinders them from knowing how to move children on and develop their skills in all aspects of the Foundation Stage.

The children are eager to get involved in the activities provided for them. They are starting to develop sound relationships with the staff and with their peers and happily join in activities such as using the computer, where they persevere in using the mouse to operate the programme. The children are becoming familiar with the setting's routine particularly around meal times. Most of them are capable of taking care of their own personal needs such as going to the bathroom by themselves, but often do not act independently in other situations such as pouring their own drinks. This is because staff miss many opportunities for children to try things for themselves. Children are able to make choices in their play such as choosing the colour of paint or what to play with from the resources set out. However, staff do not always make best use of the space and resources to encourage children to be independent and use their initiative effectively.

Systems for assessing children's progress through the early learning goals are in their early stages. Staff have a sound understanding of the need to find out about children's starting points and to observe children regularly. They are beginning to use some of this information to chart children's progress towards the early learning goals but have not yet begun to identify the next steps children need to take in their learning. Current planning systems ensure that children have access to activities from across the six areas of learning often based around a topic or theme. While this means that children experience a wide range of activities, coverage of all aspects of the stepping stones is not always consistent, neither are activities based on children's interest or what they need to do next. This means that children may not reach their full potential as they progress through the Foundation Stage.

Children are confident and able speakers and like to engage adults in conversation about their home life, because staff listen to them and make time for them to speak. They use words and sentences to explain information such as 'the fireman uses his hose to put out the fire'. Children handle books appropriately and like to listen to stories, although they are not always able to access the book corner spontaneously. Most children make marks using lines and circles and some more able children attempt to write their name, forming some recognisable letters. However, some opportunities for children to draw and make marks are missed such as in the home corner. Children are able to count by rote beyond ten and are familiar with common shapes which they use in their play such as drawing around a circle to make a face. They also use some size language as they speak, such as big and little. However, they are much less familiar with simple calculating and problem solving because staff miss many opportunities during routine activities to practise these skills.

Children are purposeful in construction, ably fitting Lego pieces together to make a tower or joining the train track together. They are developing some skills with technology such as using

the computer and have a growing knowledge of the world around them as they talk about those who help us, such as firemen. Current issues with planning systems as mentioned above mean that aspects such as early science and the natural world are not always consistently and regularly covered so children are less familiar with these areas.

Children really enjoy using the ball pool and gym to climb and slide. They pedal tricycles well and are beginning to develop their large body skills, although staff do not always know when or how to challenge them to make further progress in this aspect. Children's fine hand skills are developing appropriately, they can use cutlery safely and are able to manage scissors to cut paper. The children like to get involved in painting and sticking and know most common colours. However, since much of this is directed by the staff children are less able to create and design their own art work for themselves. They are developing a wide repertoire of songs and rhymes and enjoy exploring percussion instruments and experimenting with the sounds they make. Children play imaginatively and use the dressing-up clothes to support the roles they take on such as being a cowboy or a fairy.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to join in and play a productive part in the setting because staff manage children's behaviour appropriately, work closely with parents and have a sound knowledge of equality of opportunity.

Young babies and toddlers are developing a sense of belonging since they are cared for in small groups with familiar staff. Older children are beginning to identify with their own group too when they meet for stories and specific activities. Staff take time to talk with parents and ask about the children's needs, they find out about children's likes and dislikes and keep appropriate records so that all staff are appropriately informed and able to meet children's individual needs for feeding and sleeping effectively. Comprehensive information is given to parents about the setting and appropriate records are kept regarding any complaints so that children's care is transparent to all.

Partnership with parents for nursery education is satisfactory. Parents receive appropriate information about the Foundation Stage and the curriculum offered in the setting. However, since many of the systems in the setting are in their early stages, parents are not yet well informed about their children's progress towards the early learning goals. Staff provide opportunities for parents to talk with them and share information about their child, but there are few opportunities for parents to become involved in their child's learning to support them in making progress.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Staff introduce children to their own and other cultures appropriately, they support children in behaving well and are beginning to promote children's personal, social and emotional skills effectively.

Most children behave well in the setting. Staff give clear explanations and set boundaries so that children are aware of their expectations. Staff appropriately distract and redirect young children to alternative activities should a squabble break out. Older children accept the

intervention of staff in managing minor disagreements and are usually willing to share. Children respond positively to praise from the staff and enjoy receiving reward stickers which helps them to behave acceptably.

Children are developing an awareness of their own and other cultures because they have access to resources which reflect diversity and positive images. The staff talk with the children about differences, the celebration of birthdays and other festivals helps the children develop a respect for themselves and others. Staff take care to plan activities which all the children can take part in to ensure that all children are included in the life of the setting. Appropriate procedures are in place to support children who may have learning difficulties or disabilities.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

The setting is appropriately organised and promotes positive outcomes for children. The provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The owner/manager has implemented robust systems to recruit staff that are appropriately qualified and have a suitable knowledge of childcare. The setting is also committed to ensuring that staff keep up-to-date with their knowledge through attending local courses in the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage. This ensures that children are suitably cared for and protected.

Children are cared for in small groups and there are usually sufficient staff to support their care, learning and play. However, on one occasion, due to unforeseen circumstances early in the morning this was not the case. The manager has suitable systems in place for planning for staff to ensure that this does not arise again and that children are well cared for. While young babies and toddlers are well supported in small groups, on occasions the organisation of staffing and space for the two to three-year-olds is less well planned to enable the staff to meet their needs fully. Comprehensive policies and procedures underpin practice in the nursery and staff are becoming familiar with them so that children's health, safety, ability to enjoy and achieve and to make a positive contribution is promoted.

Leadership and management for nursery education is satisfactory. The management team is now starting to develop the nursery education curriculum for the over three-year-olds. They are clear in their aims to offer stimulating and exciting opportunities for the children. Managers are knowledgeable about the Foundation Stage and are able to support new staff in establishing suitable systems for planning and assessment of children's progress. They have begun to target training for staff in the Foundation Stage to ensure that their knowledge is sound. They are also using staff appraisals to identify some strengths and weaknesses. However, systems are too new as yet to assess their impact on the quality of teaching. The setting has yet to develop systems for evaluating and monitoring its educational provision, relying instead on inspections and the mentor teacher to set a focus for future developments in children's learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration 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 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):

- ensure that staff to child ratios are maintained during the day particularly in the mornings
- ensure that assessment of children's progress is clearly linked to planning for children aged from birth to three years so that activities are based on what they are interested in and what they need to do next
- ensure that the organisation of the day meets the needs of the children particularly those aged two to three years.

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 staff knowledge and confidence in the Foundation Stage and their stepping stones so that they can challenge and question children to enable them to make progress
- develop systems for assessment of children's progress towards the early learning goals which identifies clear targets for children's next steps
- ensure that plans for activities are securely based on what children are interested in and what they need to do next and ensure that plans enable children to experience all aspects of the stepping stones regularly and consistently so that they make progress in all areas and can embed their learning
- develop systems for working in partnership with parents so that they are fully informed about their child's progress and can become involved in their child's learning

- develop systems to ensure that the educational programme is regularly evaluated and monitored so that children continue to make progress.

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