



Mary Poppins Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	118620
Inspection date	05 December 2006
Inspector	Jill Dawn Butler
Setting Address	162 Crow Lane, Romford, Essex, RM7 0ES
Telephone number	01708 722800
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Registered person	Mary Poppins Day Nursery Ltd
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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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?

Mary Poppins Day Nursery is a privately owned organisation. It opened in 2000 and operates from five rooms in a purpose built premises. It is situated in Romford, in the London borough of Havering, in a residential area close to local amenities.

A maximum of 44 children may attend the nursery at any one time. It is open each weekday from 08:00 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to a secure enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 26 children aged from three months to under five years on roll. Of these 10 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports no children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities, or children who speak English as an additional language. Children come from a local catchment area.

The nursery employs five staff. All of the staff, including the joint managers, hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children pursue their activities in a clean and well-maintained environment. Children's risk of cross-infection is minimised through practitioners implementing satisfactory hygiene procedures. Tables are suitably wiped and disinfected before and after snacks and meals, with spillages and food which has fallen on the floor promptly cleared away. A daily cleaner is employed which ensures good standards of cleanliness are maintained throughout the nursery. However, these good practices are compromised by outdoor shoes being worn in the babies' room.

Children develop good understanding of how to follow personal hygiene routines, for example, they know to wash their hands after using the toilet and before snack and meal times. Older children take it in turns to call out names of children to come and wash their hands before lunch, which reinforces their learning. Nappies are changed in a hygienic manner, with nappy disposal units easily accessible. However, in the youngest babies' room the nappy changing arrangements do not sufficiently promote the babies' privacy. Also, occasionally after babies' bottles fall on the floor they are given back to them to continue to drink from them. Children brush their teeth after lunch, and have their own labelled toothbrushes, which promotes good oral hygiene practices.

Appropriate sickness policies and procedures are implemented. When medication is administered all record keeping and consents are suitably completed. Children can expect to be treated effectively and promptly in the event of an accident or emergency situation. Well stocked first aid boxes are located in the playrooms, and three practitioners have current first aid qualifications. The individual sleep needs of babies are well met, with good supervision maintained. Children are gently settled to sleep.

Children enjoy dancing and moving to music in the spacious playrooms. The garden is well situated adjacent to the premises, with doors leading out from two of the playrooms with ramped access. In the garden there is a good range of equipment and all weather surfaces, which provide good opportunities for children to safely engage in physical activities, for example, climbing and running. However, during the winter time access to these opportunities are limited as children spend the majority of their time indoors.

Healthy eating is well promoted. The cook prepares varied and nutritious meals, using fresh ingredients. The menu is continually updated to take into account children's preferences. Any special dietary requirements are effectively met. Children eat a good range of fruit at snack times, for example, pears, bananas and melon, and they are encouraged to try new food tastes. All children eat together at lunch time, in small groupings. Older children chat happily and develop their social skills. They have access to drinking water at all times which ensures they can have a drink whenever they are thirsty.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The recently re-decorated environment is bright and welcoming. The spacious entrance lobby and playrooms have attractive displays of posters and children's art work. The premises are purpose-built and all activities take place on the ground floor which ensures easy access for children, parents and visitors. There are three playrooms where children are in age related groupings, plus additional shared playrooms for specific activities, one of which is for messy and creative play. The other room, known as the chill zone, is less well utilized. The premises are fully secure, both indoors and outdoors. The office is appropriately located by the entrance door, which enables good arrangements for monitoring visitors.

There is a good range of resources, furniture and equipment. Older children sit on small chairs and tables, and on mats to pursue activities. In the babies' room, the floor area is appropriately set up with suitable equipment, providing a safe environment for babies who are crawling and emerging walkers. Each baby has his or her own cot, and sleeping mats are available for older children who need to sleep. Good use is made of individual seating cushions which enable children to designate their own space, for example, when reading books. Outside consultants have recently conducted a health and safety audit at the request of the managers. No high risk concerns were identified, but there is an intention to attend to the lower level measures that were raised. Daily risk assessments are undertaken, but not routinely recorded, which does not ensure consistency and comprehensiveness in the checking process, leading to, for example, the utility room door not being secured for extended periods. Children are well protected in the event of fire. There is appropriate signage and fire fighting equipment around the premises, with designated evacuation assembly points.

Practitioners have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection. They are aware of their roles and responsibilities and know how to implement relevant procedures, which effectively safeguards children's welfare. An appropriate collection of children procedure is in place. All practitioners are vetted.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

The range of resources and activities presented in all the group rooms is appropriate for the age and stage of development of the children. However, due to inadequate numbers of practitioners working with under two year olds, babies sometimes struggle to get their individual needs met. This means that they cry for periods during the day when they are unhappy and this is not always promptly responded to, as practitioners have a number of conflicting needs to attend to.

Older children are confident, happily enjoy their activities and are interested in their play. Routines are suitable, and incorporate times for active and quieter pursuits. Short and long term planning takes place, and topics are followed throughout the nursery. It is clear that the current topic is Christmas, with an interesting range of activities and displays in evidence, including a Santa's grotto in the pre-school room. The Birth to three matters framework is incorporated into planning, but assessments and recordings are still being refined. The creative

and messy play room enables children to pursue their imagination and express themselves in art and design in a fun and free environment.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Practitioners make satisfactory use of planned and routine activities to extend children's learning. Long and short term plans are informed by children's progress along the stepping stones towards the early learning goals. Observations and assessments of children relating to their progress and development are undertaken. Planned topics are followed to extend children's learning.

Children concentrate well for extended periods and are motivated to learn. They confidently suggest ideas and play an active role in their learning. They share and co-operate well together and respect and value each other's contributions. During large group sessions they take turns to suggest and sing a song to the rest of the group. They support each other and listen well. They form very good relationships with practitioners and with their peers. Sometimes they spontaneously say "I love you". Children happily sit in practitioners' laps if they wish to. Children are very well behaved. They patiently wait their turn, for example, to wash their hands before mealtimes or go into the creative play room. They comply well with the routines and participate when it is tidy up time. They are learning self-care skills. For example, they take themselves to the toilet, clear up their own dinner plates when they have finished eating, and wipe their own faces with flannels. They are encouraged to pour their own drinks during the day.

Children happily talk about all sorts of issues. They share information well, and ask others to be quiet in order to be heard. Practitioners ask open ended questions to extend children's thinking, and encourage them to make connections. They enjoy talking about Christmas, for example, what presents they are hoping to get, and their parts in the forthcoming nativity play. Children have easy access to books. They enjoy looking at them by themselves, and concentrate and participate well in formal story time sessions. They are encouraged to recognize and name images in books. Labels are displayed around the playroom for children to begin to understand the formation of words. Children have their own name labels, which are set out at lunchtime, for them to recognize. A range of mark marking opportunities are available and children are sometimes helped to write their own names.

Children participate in counting activities when singing songs and reading books, which include opportunities for addition and subtraction. They talk about, recognize and recreate patterns as they play with increasingly challenging puzzles. However, opportunities for calculating, using mathematical concepts and problem solving are not sufficiently provided.

Children are encouraged to explore and investigate when playing with wet and dry sand, water and cornflour. They manipulate the sand to make a wheel go round and enjoy the effect of bubbles being added to water. They take turns to take the hamster home at weekends, they are learning how to take care of it and that hamsters are nocturnal animals. A range of construction materials enable children to build structures and they enjoy designing room layouts. Children currently have limited access to information and communication technology as the computer is not working, which restricts their learning in this area. Children learn about the days of the week, the current month and the year and decide what the weather is like today,

which extends their knowledge of features within their environment. Children are beginning to learn about their own and others' cultures, traditions and beliefs through engagement with a good range of resources and displays.

Children enjoy dancing and moving to music. A special weekly session promotes this activity. Although there is a well equipped and suitable outdoors area available which presents additional opportunities to promote children's physical development, its use is limited during the winter months. Children demonstrate good understanding of their bodies and bodily functions. If they are hurt they can describe what it feels like. They demonstrate understanding that if they eat healthy food it will help them to grow. Children competently handle small objects, for example, puzzle pieces, pencils, brushes, glue spreaders and scissors, and show good hand/eye co-ordination.

Children engage with a good range of adult led as well as child initiated creative art and craft activities and resources. They have access to interesting textures with which to design and create collages, and children contribute to large wall displays. Singing and music are regular features and children enthusiastically participate in familiar songs. However, use of musical instruments to support these musical events is limited. Children are routinely encouraged to respond to experiences and express their feelings, thoughts and ideas. However, currently role play opportunities are restricted due to the construction of the Santa's grotto.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Practitioners have good knowledge and awareness of children's individual needs and backgrounds. These are less well met in the care of babies, due to the low number of practitioners working with them. Information on children's religious, cultural and linguistic backgrounds are gathered through discussion with parents. Children learn about themselves and the wider society as they play with the good range of multi cultural resources and engage with the attractive and varied displays. The days of the week are displayed in different community languages and there is an imposing "welcome to our world" display in the pre-school room. A calendar of festivals celebrated throughout the year is displayed in lobby for parents to view. Currently the major emphasis is on the celebration of Christmas and there have been limited activities presented to acknowledge and celebrate other festivals. Girls and boys are encouraged to fully participate in all activities and they play well together, for example, when playing with the dolls house and associated small world resources. The nursery has experience of caring for children with learning difficulties and/or disabilities. Practitioners demonstrate a positive attitude towards providing an inclusive environment. Appropriate monitoring, assessments and recordings are undertaken. Practitioners work well with relevant outside agencies and parents. Overall, this positive approach fosters children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development.

Children form very good relationships with practitioners and each other. They like to hold hands and enjoy sharing space and playing co-operatively with each other. Disputes rarely occur and they share resources very well. Practitioners act as positive role models. They promote consistent boundaries, they routinely encourage and praise children's efforts. Consequently children feel valued and affirmed, and develop self confidence and high self esteem. A sticker reward system promotes wanted behaviour. Children comply with instructions, and enforce them with each

other. When older children are distressed they are quickly comforted. Practitioners are not, however, always in a position to be able to promptly respond to babies' cries, which compromises their well-being.

The partnerships with parents of children who receive nursery education are satisfactory. Effective communication is maintained, which contributes towards consistency in the care of each child. Parents receive a pack containing all policies and procedures when their child starts at nursery and good settling procedures are implemented. Parents can phone at any time to seek reassurance. Information is shared in a relaxed and friendly manner. Parents are encouraged to discuss any pertinent issues regarding the care of their child including, for example, what is happening at home. Parents' notices are displayed around the premises, including the nursery's complaints procedure. Information on the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage curriculum is displayed for parents to view, however, this is not kept fully updated. Parents of babies receive a daily written report on the events of the day with regard to sleeping, nappy changing, eating, behaviour and activities. Parents' evenings are held twice a year which provide an opportunity for parents to speak to nursery practitioners about their child's progress and development.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

The owners of the nursery are the joint managers. One manager has responsibility for day to day operations and is based in the office, although sometimes provides cover in group rooms. The other manager works in the pre-school room at all times, and has less of a strategic role. Both managers have appropriate qualifications in childcare and relevant experience. They have worked together at this nursery for the past six years. They have attended some in-service training between them, including child protection, health and safety, Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator and food hygiene. They have worked hard to meet actions raised at previous inspections.

Regulations and conditions of registration are generally known and adhered to. However, the registered provider is breaching a regulation in relation to the numbers of practitioners employed to work with the children, which, due to the deployment of practitioners, specifically relates to the care of the under two year olds. In addition, there is an insufficient number of practitioners who can be called upon to provide relief and emergency cover for absences. Therefore, the setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery education are satisfactory. Practitioners have knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum. Appropriate planning systems are in place and a suitable programme of activities is devised and implemented.

Children are cared for in a well organised environment. All practitioners have relevant qualifications and experience in childcare. They have all have been employed at the nursery for several years, which promotes continuity and consistency. They work well together as a team. Practitioner meetings take place on regular basis, but limited management supervision, appraisals and assessment of performance are undertaken. Opportunities for training and

development for practitioners are not sufficiently followed through. Not all roles requiring designated practitioners have been allocated, for example, in the area of behaviour management.

Satisfactory record keeping takes place. Required information is kept, and stored in a manner to protect confidentiality. A comprehensive set of written policies and procedures is in place, which includes an operational plan.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection, the nursery was asked to maintain required adult to child ratios at all times. This requirement is still not met. The nursery was also asked to ensure effective procedures are in place for checking that practitioners are suitably vetted, that there is a suitable induction programme and that Ofsted are informed of changes and significant events. Suitable systems are now in place, which ensures children's welfare is safeguarded. The nursery was also asked to develop documentation. Comprehensive policies and procedures are now in place. These are shared with practitioners which ensures consistency in practices. The nursery was also asked to devise a system for planning and implementing a suitable range of age appropriate activities for children. Planning is now undertaken and children participate in a range of activities to promote their development. The nursery was also asked to ensure nappy changing facilities allow for children's privacy. A curtain is now available to promote this outcome, however, it is not always used. The nursery was also asked to provide opportunities for parents to receive information on their child's progress. A range of measures have been implemented to improve communication and productive partnerships with parents, in order to inform them of their child's progress and development.

In addition, at the last nursery education inspection, the nursery was asked to improve management's overall evaluation of the nursery's progress, strengths and weaknesses. The management have been making improvements on the basis of findings from previous inspections, however, due to the shortage of practitioners, managers have to spend time working with the children, which reduces opportunities to strategically monitor and evaluate nursery practices. The nursery was also asked to provide additional opportunities to learn and use comparative and positional language. This remains an area for improvement.

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 inadequate - notice of action to improve. The registered person does not meet 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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure required adult to child ratios are maintained at all times.

These actions are set out in a *notice of action to improve* and must be completed by the date specified in the notice.

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 additional opportunities to develop children's skills in calculation, understanding mathematical concepts and problem solving
- develop children's skills in the use of information and communication technology
- provide additional opportunities to promote children's physical development by making greater use of the outdoors area.

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