



Twixus (GH) Ltd

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	137253
Inspection date	18 January 2007
Inspector	Claire, Alexandra Parnell
Setting Address	Garland Hill House, Sandy Lane, St. Pauls Cray, Orpington, Kent, BR5 3SZ
Telephone number	01689 821033
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Registered person	Twixus (Garland Hill) 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?

Twixus Childcare is privately owned and operates from Garland Hill House in St Pauls Cray, near Orpington. The nursery was established in 1977. The nursery provides a range of childcare services for children aged three months to 11 years. This includes, full-day and part-time care for pre-school children, and before and after-school and holiday care for school-aged children. The setting operates two mini-buses for transporting children to and from local schools and on outings.

The children are grouped according to age. The four-year-olds and the majority of the three-year-olds are accommodated in separate rooms on the first and second floor. Children under two-years are located on the first floor and ground floor. The lower ground floor is used for after school and holiday care. There are various outside play spaces for the different age

ranges, all of which are enclosed. There is also an indoor swimming pool, which is used during the summer months.

The nursery is well established in the community and serves families from the local and wider community. It is open Monday to Friday, from 07:00 to 18:00. The setting is closed for 25 days a year for staff holiday and training.

There are currently 121 children on roll, including 41 children over the age of five years. There are 45 funded children. The nursery supports children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties.

The staff team comprises; a Principle and two managers, all of whom hold a recognised childcare qualification. There are 23 staff working with the children, 20 are suitably qualified with a range of qualifications including the NNEB Certificate, NVQ Levels 2 and 3 in childcare and education, BTEC in childcare. Ten members of staff are working towards a qualification. Swimming Pool staff hold Teacher's Life Saving Certificates. Most staff are qualified in first aid and mini bus drivers are PSV qualified.

The nursery is working towards the QUILT quality assurance scheme. It is affiliated to the Pre-school Learning Alliance and uses Smart and Set Training for staff's ongoing training.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children learn about their personal hygiene through independent access to toilets and sinks with additional support from staff for less able children. Children develop an understanding for washing hands, after toileting, before eating and after messy play. They have access to soap and hand towels to ensure this is carried out thoroughly and appropriately. Adequate measures are taken to prevent cross infection throughout the nursery such as staff wearing gloves for nappy changing, children using tissues well and disposing of them in the bin and cleaning rotas being followed and implemented by staff in all rooms. However, some practices do not always promote good hygiene or prevent cross infection, such as dummies dropped on the floor and then given back to babies and children having access to dough that has been in contact with children's mouths and noses.

Effective documentation is used to promote safe administration of medication and recording of accidents. Accident information is shared with parents at the end of the day. Consent is sought for medication and information shared at the end of the day such as the specific time the medication was given. Therefore children's ongoing health needs are promoted.

Children have some opportunities for healthy eating. At snack time, children are given a range of choices of healthy foods, from breadsticks to raisins and fresh fruit. Children can access drinks freely throughout the day within all rooms. Staff ensure children's drinks are regularly replenished to encourage children to choose when to drink. However, children have set menus that offer a limited amount of fresh and frozen vegetables, mainly carrots and peas. Children

are only offered fruit once a week for their lunch, in the form of a banana, otherwise they are offered choc ices and mousses which does not promote learning about healthy eating.

Children have good opportunities to develop physical skills both indoors and outdoors, all year round. They have beautiful woodland walks to play in and manoeuvre around as well as an abundance of equipment to use to extend their skills. Children over three years have regular opportunities, in good weather, to use the swimming pool to learn to swim. All children have daily opportunities to be in the fresh air to promote their wellbeing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children play in a safe and secure environment, where they make good use of the space available to them, both indoors and outdoors, to enhance their freedom. Good security measures are in place to ensure children cannot leave the premises unaccompanied; an intercom system is linked to each room to allow communication at the door, as well as staff being vigilant to know where the children are at all times. Unknown visitors are challenged and a visitors book is in place to record their attendance, although this is not always effectively used.

Children's play equipment outside is formally risk assessed for hazards and action is documented to demonstrate that the equipment is safe. However, there is no such procedure for inside equipment to further promote children's safety. Some younger children have access to potential hazards in the bathroom, as they can reach plastic bags containing their bedding. On some occasions these are empty and children can access this area independently.

Children learn about promoting their own safety and the safety of others through explanations and discussion. They are reminded to be careful of other children's fingers when sitting down and to hold the scissors correctly when walking with them. Children are evacuated safely out of the building in the event of an emergency as there are effective procedures in place that are regularly evaluated. Children are regularly taken on outings using the mini bus, particularly children within the Out of School Club. Outings are carefully planned for children of three years and over, including qualifications of the mini bus driver, contact labels for children and staffing ratios. Children over three years take part in regular swimming activities in fine weather. Action is taken to ensure their safety whilst in the pool, such as the use of qualified life savers, high ratios of staff to children in the pool and consent from parents.

Children's welfare is safeguarded due to the majority of staff having a clear understanding of internal and external procedures to protect children from harm. However, a minority of staff lack clarity as to who to contact for support out of the nursery. Clear procedures are in place in the event of allegations made against staff.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are mainly busy and occupied within the nursery setting. They have plentiful activities to choose from; especially the younger children who do not have a rigid routine to follow within their rooms. Children receive good levels of interaction from all staff to ensure that they are

participating in play, having fun and learning new skills. Children make good use of the extended play areas such as the woodland area, swimming activities and the marquee to enhance their development in all areas. Children, particularly the younger ones, receive plentiful cuddles to reassure them, when they have woken up, are upset when leaving their parents and when moving rooms.

Staff are developing a basic understanding of the Birth to three matters framework, however they have a limited understanding of how to use observations effectively to plan for children's further development. At present most children's development is assessed under test situations using tick charts and work sheets, which does not show children's true understanding of practical situations and how they are progressing.

The children attending the Out of School Club have access to a good range of activities and resources to stimulate their interest and concentration. They have lots of trips arranged for them on a daily basis to local places of interest, such as museums and historical places.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children are making adequate progress within the Foundation Stage. However, staff have very high expectations of children's concentration and expect them to sit and listen for long periods of time, such as circle time, group activities, snack time and story time, some taking up to 30 minutes each during a three hour session. Therefore children have limited time and opportunities to learn through play situations and child initiated experiences. Children's achievements are recorded under the Foundation Stage headings but very few observations of children's progress are observed through play situations and most demonstrate children's progress through worksheets and test situations; such as colours, counting and matching. Therefore children's learning through everyday practical experiences is limited.

Children follow a routine within their day to incorporate mainly adult led activities such as group discussion, worksheets and interactive whiteboards. Their learning is based on adequate planning, produced by the nursery management. There is limited differentiation for abilities within the planning, although staff do have knowledge of children's abilities and actively simplify or extend questions according to children's abilities and stages of development. Children with special educational needs are supported well by knowledgeable staff who have close professional links with additional support services. Children who speak English as an additional language have support systems in place; such as pictorial aids and dual language books.

Children communicate clearly through gestures, expressions and spoken word and receive good explanations of complex words linked to their topic of learning. Children make marks freely to represent their name in adult led activities but are not always encouraged to use these skills in child initiated activities. Children show a limited interest in the book corner, some participate fully in adult led story times, although less able children lose interest quickly in complex and long stories.

Children develop an interest and understanding of shape and size, mainly through adult led group activities. They are developing a knowledge of differences and similarities by comparing

size and shape. Children's mathematical development is not always recognised during practical situations such as laying the table and comparing numbers of children during routine daily events. Children recognise numerals and can use them to order and count.

Children use computers independently and effectively. They manoeuvre the mouse correctly to good effect. They learn to change interactive screens using touch to initiate problem solving. Children learn about animals and caring for wildlife due to their regular trips to the chickens and guinea pigs within the nursery. They enjoy investigating and experimenting with malleable resources such as dough, changing its surface and appearance confidently. Children have a good sense of time as they are aware of the routine that is followed within the setting, although this diminishes their opportunities to complete an activity of their choice.

Children actively take part in creative activities although this usually consists of pre-drawn pictures. Children have limited opportunities and access to a range of resources to allow them to express their ideas and use their imagination in art and design. Children thoroughly enjoy role play situations where they act out community or fantasy roles. However, children have very limited lengths of time to take part in this type of play due to the routine and group activities.

Children are developing good fine motor skills such as rolling out dough, cutting with scissors, controlling the computer mouse, dispensing their own soap and helping themselves to paper towels.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children's individuality is promoted well within the nursery. Staff are aware of individual children's needs through information gained from the parents. Children learn about diversity and celebrate differences within the local community through the use of resources that portray positive images of culture, race, religion, ability and gender.

Children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties are supported well. Staff work closely with parents to gain relevant information and adapt resources and the provision to ensure children can be included in all activities and play.

Children receive plentiful praise and recognition for positive behaviour. Staff cuddle children, give them claps, inform other staff and children about their achievements and share these openly with parents. This results in children's pride in themselves and developing their self-esteem. Unwanted behaviour is dealt with sensitively and subtly through distraction and explanations. Incident forms are used effectively to inform parents of significant changes in children's behaviour and to positively share effective strategies.

Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. They make some choices of activities within short free play sessions which promotes their decision making and independence. Although children sometimes have limited opportunities to lead the play due to adults taking the lead in play. Children are able to bring their own toys to nursery to aid their separation from parents and to give them familiar comforts whilst in the setting. Children

have some independence; to take themselves to the bathroom, to put on their coats, but have limited independent skills at snack time due to staff pouring children's drinks and preparing their snacks for them. Children have a clear understanding of right and wrong and confidently tell others when they are in the wrong, usually explaining what they must do to make the situation right. Children demonstrate good social interaction and negotiate well in their play. They invite others into their play and activities and ensure that they know what to do.

The partnership with parents is good. Parents receive plentiful written and displayed information about the setting, the Birth to three matters framework and the Foundation Stage. They are able to visit and view children's work and folders on set afternoons or by prior arrangement. Staff positively discuss children's progress and future development, using parental information as well as staff's knowledge of the individual child. Parents receive books to read with children and worksheets and word cards to promote learning at home. However, parents do not receive information on how children's learning can be promoted at home through practical and play situation. Parents have access to the nursery's policies and procedures, to ensure they are aware of the service that they receive. There is an efficient complaints log and procedure in place to ensure parent's concerns are dealt with quickly and effectively. Parents are requested to give written consent for all aspects of care; such as outings, swimming, authorised collection, observations and emergency treatment. Therefore enhancing children's welfare.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by a mostly qualified team of staff, who have relevant checks carried out to allow unsupervised access to children. The nursery implements a robust recruitment procedure to ensure only suitable staff have access to children.

The nursery ensures staff are available to care for the children in each room providing good ratios of staff to children. Children's and staff's attendance is recorded accurately, showing who is in the nursery at any given time. Children receive good levels of consistent interaction from staff, which results in happy, content and settled children. Staff have annual appraisals to discuss their performance and practice. Issues are addressed to ensure children receive satisfactory quality of care whilst in the nursery. Staff's ideas about their own development is not a strong emphasis within the appraisal system. Staff do have opportunities to develop within childcare but only occasionally attend training courses of their choice.

All documentation is kept safe, secure and confidential. Only authorised people have access to children's details and information. Therefore promoting children's welfare.

Leadership and management is satisfactory. Staff hold regular staff meetings to discuss children's development and educational systems. However, staff do not recognise the impact that the rigid routine has on children's learning. Staff recognise the importance of children's achievements through adult led activities but lack an understanding of using observations of child initiated play to assess their development. The nursery receives positive feed back from local schools regarding children's confidence and interest in learning when they start school. The nursery has identified the structure of play as a weakness but lacks some understanding of the National

Standards and how this impacts on children's learning regarding the use of rooms, space and routine . The setting meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the nursery was given four recommendations to improve the care of the children and three recommendations to improve the quality of nursery education.

There was limited planning and implementation of suitable activities for younger children. Activities for the under two year olds are now freely accessible to them. Children of this age have a good range of activities provided for them but can make additional choices from low level shelves and boxes. However, free play for under fives, particularly in the pre-school room is still limited. This is due to mostly adult led activities and short periods of child initiated free play.

Staff did not have an adequate knowledge of the systems to promote care for children with special needs. Children with disabilities and/or learning difficulties are now supported well within the nursery, due to staff's knowledge and good, local support systems from outside professionals.

The menus did not reflect a balanced diet for children. Children's menus for lunch and tea have been assessed but little development has been made to promote children's healthy eating. The menus reflect some fresh vegetables and fruit but this is limited and occasional; such as a banana offered as a health pudding once a week.

There was a limited balance of adult led and child initiated activities for pre-school children. The nursery education system still continues to offer predominantly adult led activities and does not actively recognise the learning and development of children through child initiated activities.

There were limited opportunities for children to access creative materials and media to enable them to create their own pictures. Children's creative opportunities continue to be mainly pre-drawn pictures, diminishing children's development in self representation and choice.

There was insufficient planning to support children's learning within the Foundation Stage. The planning of children's activities and further development is carried out by management with some input from pre-school staff. Staff use their knowledge of children's development to extend and simplify activities according to their level of development, although some younger children who are more able are not always given relevant challenges to extend their learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since the last inspection there has been one complaint received by Ofsted that required the provider to take action in order to meet the National Standards. Concerns were raised on 27 January 2006 regarding the care of children relating to National Standards 1: Suitable Person,

Standard 3: Care learning and play, Standard 7: Health and Standard 11: Behaviour.

An Ofsted inspector and a Team Manager made an unannounced visit on 06 February 2006, to investigate the concerns. No evidence was found relating to the concerns. However actions were made, as further evidence identified a breach in the following National Standards:

1: Suitability

7: Health

9: Equal Opportunities

12: Working in partnership with parents and carers

13: Child Protection

The provider has taken appropriate action to meet the National Standards in question. A record of this complaint is available within the provider's complaints log.

The provider remains qualified for registration.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE AND NURSERY EDUCATION

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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's knowledge of the Birth to three matters framework to provide children with ongoing progress opportunities through effective observation
- further develop the children's menus to promote healthy eating

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):

- ensure assessment of children's progress takes sufficient account of all their achievements. Use the information gained to effectively plan for children's next steps in learning

- improve teaching methods to ensure children are given sufficient opportunities for child initiated play, increase their choices and ensure that activities are structured according to children's developmental stages
- ensure children are provided with sufficient opportunities to represent their own ideas within creative play using an extended range of medium

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