



Dale Avenue Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	EY315868
Inspection date	31 January 2007
Inspector	Jennifer Devine
Setting Address	41 Dale Avenue, Edgware, Middlesex, HA8 6AD
Telephone number	
E-mail	
Registered person	Shanthini Sivanathan
Type of inspection	Integrated
Type of care	Sessional 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 inadequate - notice of action to improve.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Dale Avenue nursery is run by a private provider. It opened in 2005 and operates from one large room in a scout hall in Edgware in the London borough of Harrow. A maximum of 25 children may attend at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 09:00 to 12:00, term time only.

There are currently 25 children aged from two to under five years on roll. Of these, 12 children receive funding for nursery education. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs five staff, of whom all hold an appropriate early years qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's health is generally well promoted as the premises are maintained to a good standard of cleanliness. Children are encouraged to wash their hands at appropriate times and the well equipped, clean bathroom facilitates this. Effective policies and procedures are in place to manage accidents and administer first aid or medication. This ensures children's well being.

Children learn about the importance of healthy eating through enjoying their daily snack of fresh fruit, vegetables and drinks of milk or water. Fresh drinking water is available throughout the day but it is positioned away from children's view, consequently few children take a drink. Children's independence is not sufficiently promoted at snack time as the fruit and vegetables are prepared by staff in the kitchen and are handed out to the children. In addition, children do not routinely have the opportunity to pour their own drinks. Children sit around the tables for snack time, which creates a social atmosphere and promotes social skills and manners. Staff are fully aware of children's individual dietary requirements.

Children have daily opportunities for indoor physical play, which most of the time is held in the large hall at the very end of the session. Physical play is satisfactorily planned for on the curriculum and children have opportunities for climbing, sliding, balancing or ball games. At times though, staff do not organise activities which sufficiently challenge children, such as when providing tricycles and push along toys with no specific learning intention identified.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children move around freely in an environment which is free from obvious safety hazards. Risk assessments are carried out daily on all the areas used by the children and satisfactory security devices and procedures are in place to further protect the children. For example, the front entrance is kept locked during operational hours and all visitors to the nursery are required to sign the visitors book. Health and safety policies and procedures are in place except for the omission of a policy on the procedures to follow if a child went missing whilst at the nursery. This compromises children's safety. Fire drills are carried out regularly and the procedures for emergency evacuation are in place. This promotes the children's awareness of fire safety.

The nursery is generally well equipped with appropriate furniture and resources that are safe, clean and well maintained. Children move confidently around the nursery, making their choices from the toys available. Space is satisfactorily organised to allow children opportunities to be active, engage in floor or table activities and to enjoy time to relax and look at books in the comfortable book corner.

Children's welfare is safeguarded by the staff's knowledge of child protection matters. They understand the signs and symptoms of child abuse and are familiar with the reporting procedures.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is inadequate.

Most children arrive happy and generally settle well into the routine of the day. Some children are not so confident and find separating from their parent difficult. Some unsettled children spend time observing the group and then gradually begin to mix and explore. Staff have satisfactory relationships with most children but are not aware of all children's needs in relation to developing their confidence and self assurance. For example, some children have not built up close relationships with staff and become unsettled and upset during the morning. Children play with the activities offered to them and spend generally good periods of time exploring and concentrating. Staff sit with the children during this time and provide encouragement but they fail to sustain children's interest and consequently they become distracted and wander around. Staff use the Birth to three matters framework in their planning but do not understand how to implement it effectively to enable young children to become independent, confident learners. For example, a group of children make a train from lining up their chairs but as no adult interacts to develop their learning further, children lose interest and wander. Young children are not learning to manage their own behaviour and often have disagreements over sharing toys which results in children hitting out at each other.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is inadequate. Children fail to make sufficient progress in their learning because teaching is poor. Staff plan a generally well balanced long term curriculum which covers all areas of the early learning goals. Staff then plan topics weekly but they fail to ensure that these planned activities are always carried out and this impacts on the learning opportunities for children.

Assessments of children's learning is weak; although staff regularly observe children's development these are not used effectively enough to plan consistently for all children's next steps of learning.

Staff provide satisfactory support during the morning play session. They sit with the children and encourage learning but they do not always provide sufficient challenge to older or more able children.

Older children are beginning to build up friendships and work together, sharing and taking turns. For example a group of children sit together making sticking pictures and share pieces of material, glue and scissors. However, this becomes disrupted by younger children who have not developed their sharing skills. Children have some opportunities to develop their independence such as when taking them selves to the bathroom and washing their hands. Most resources are easily accessible and children can choose activities but there is limited choice for challenging tasks; for example, the range of puzzles were all very easy, which most children confidently complete quickly and present no challenge.

Children are becoming confident speakers and interact generally well with each other and familiar adults. Children with English as an additional language benefit from clear systems to support them. Although staff sit with children during their play they do not provide sufficient

attention to developing language for thinking. They enjoy listening to stories in small groups where they are learning to turn the pages carefully one at a time. There is generally good resources available to encourage children's pre writing skills and children are beginning to write their names on pieces of work.

Children have some opportunities to develop their mathematical understanding such as when participating in singing time. There are satisfactory resources available to support children's learning but staff do not promote mathematical thinking in everyday situations. For example, they do not provide mathematical conversations around numbers when building with bricks. Children have some opportunities to be involved in exploratory play and find out about the natural world when they cover topics such as lifecycles of the caterpillar or study the features of a spider. Staff lack understanding of developing everyday investigative opportunities; for example, whilst reading a book on reflections staff showed children a mirror and quickly put the mirror in front of each child's face. One child particularly was fascinated but was not allowed the chance to explore this further. Children are able to use the computer, they have developed a sound understanding of following a simple programme and thoroughly enjoy painting computer pictures.

Children develop their creativity and imagination through a range of resources such as when playing in the home corner and dressing up. They have generally good opportunities to explore sand, water and paint freely. Children enjoy and spend time at creative sticking activities which are readily available. A particular strength of the group is the organised singing sessions. Children look forward to and thoroughly enjoy this time where they sing songs in different languages and participate in well known action songs such as ' stir up the porridge'.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is inadequate.

Children develop an understanding of different cultures and faiths within society as they have access to a generally good range of resources that give a positive reflection of diversity such as dressing up clothes and books. Children who speak English as an additional language are well supported by the staff who speak additional languages and this ensures children feel secure particularly when settling in.

Children's behaviour at times is poor. Younger children are not supported adequately to learn to manage their behaviour. They often hit out and hurt each other and although staff deal with any incidents calmly and consistently they do not have strategies in place to prevent this behaviour occurring. Children do not always have a clear understanding of what is expected of them and this results in erratic behaviour. This is particularly apparent during tidy up and story times when there is a lack of guidance and ineffective organisation. Story times are poorly organised as staff do not plan effectively to take into account individual children's needs and abilities. Children do receive lots of praise and recognition which reinforces their good behaviour during the morning.

Overall, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered appropriately.

Information about the group is made available to parents to ensure they are aware of what the group provides. Some of this information has been translated for parents who speak English as an additional language. Policies and procedures are readily available for parents to consult. Staff are friendly, approachable and available daily to keep parents informed about their child's day.

The partnership with parents whose children receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are invited in to discuss their child's progress on a regular basis where they have the opportunity to see their child's developmental records and discuss further learning needs. Posters on the curriculum are displayed around the nursery and this ensures parents have a good understanding about what their child is learning.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Children's welfare is adequately safeguarded because satisfactory recruitment procedures are in place and staff hold appropriate early years qualifications, which ensures they are suitable to work with children.

The leadership and management of the setting is inadequate. The registered provider has worked hard to improve the practice and procedures within the nursery and has addressed most of the previous actions raised from the last inspection. However, the staff team work well together but lack organisation and clear direction for the smooth running of everyday tasks. This has a large impact on the children, resulting in them displaying erratic behaviour patterns. The staff have received some training on the Foundation stage but they still are not fully secure in their teaching which results in gaps in some children's achievements. Children do not benefit from a clear assessment of their learning needs because there are no systems in place for monitoring, reviewing and evaluating the nursery education offered.

The nursery maintains the required documentation and has most of the required policies and procedures in place.

The setting does not meet the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the quality of care and nursery education was judged as inadequate. The nursery has made some improvements in the care and education offered since the last inspection.

All staff now hold an appropriate early years qualification and therefore children benefit from being cared for by qualified staff. They have attended food hygiene training which ensures they are aware of the regulations relating to food safety. Daily risk assessments are conducted and records of children's attendance is carefully recorded and these ensure children's safety whilst at the setting. The room has been organised to allow children to move more freely around the setting.

Staff have taken steps to increase their knowledge of the Foundation stage curriculum and this remains on going. Assessment methods have been developed but do not clearly identify the next steps of learning for individual children. Partnership with parents has developed and parents now receive and can share information on their child's progress through meeting regularly with staff. This results in children's continuity of care. Limited progress has been made on developing staff's understanding of behaviour management strategies and this remains an ongoing concern.

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.

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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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- ensure the organisation of routines are clear to minimise disruption to children
- improve teaching methods which encourage children to learn to respond to appropriate expectations for their behaviour (applies to nursery education also)
- ensure a procedure is in place in the event of a child going missing

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, the registered person **must** take the following actions:

- continue to improve all staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage of Learning and the Birth to Three matters framework (applies to care also)
- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of questioning techniques to develop children's thinking and communication skills

- improve assessment methods to ensure individual children's learning needs are fully met and ensure they identify the next steps for learning.(applies to care also)

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

The Department for Education and Skills and the local authority have been informed.

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