



Monkton Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	322347
Inspection date	22 January 2007
Inspector	Ann Lee
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Registered person	Susan Poole
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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Monkton Day Nursery was registered in 1980. It operates from a converted detached house in Liverpool. There are seven playrooms and a fully enclosed outside play area.

A maximum of 46 children may attend the nursery at any one time. There are currently 78 children from aged from one to four years on roll and this includes 35 funded children. The children attend for a variety of full and part time sessions. The setting supports children with additional needs and/or disabilities. None of the children speak English as an additional language.

The nursery opens five days a week, 51 weeks per year. Sessions are from 08:00 to 18:00. There are 15 staff who work with the children on a full and part time basis. All of the staff have early years qualifications.

The setting is currently completing a National Day Nursery Association Early Years quality assurance scheme. The nursery receives support from the Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a warm, clean environment where staff take steps to keep them free from infection and cross contamination. The cleaner ensures that all areas used by children are clean and hygienic and staff use anti-bacterial spray to wipe tables before and after meals and snack times. Children have separate bedding and there is a laundry area where towels, flannels and bedding can be washed. Children learn about good personal hygiene because staff encourage them to wash their hands appropriately and there are colourful posters around the building which reinforce the hygiene messages.

All staff are trained in first aid and they follow the sickness policy to ensure that children are safeguarded in the event of accidental injury or illness. Parents provide information about special diets and medical requirements so that they can meet the individual needs of children.

The experienced cook prepares a varied menu of meals and snacks from fresh, nutritious ingredients. All food is prepared and cooked on the premises and is low in fat, sugar and salt so that children are encouraged to develop a taste for healthy foods. The cook is trained in food hygiene and ensures that all food is stored and prepared hygienically to prevent the spread of infection.

There are daily opportunities for children to practise their physical skills because they play outside in the garden at least twice each day. There is a good variety of outside play equipment so that children can climb, jump, balance, throw balls and ride wheeled toys. There is plenty of space in the garden for children to run around and explore and staff change the equipment each day so that they enjoy different play and learning experiences. Indoors children dance to music and enjoy playing circle games. They practise their small motor skills when painting, manipulating shape sorters, puzzles, dough and building blocks.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The staff provide a warm and welcoming environment for children because they greet them on arrival and decorate the nursery with colourful, multi-cultural posters and pictures. Children feel a sense of belonging in the setting because their artwork, and photographs of them at play are displayed.

Staff carry out daily hazard checks on each playroom to minimise the risk of accidental injury to children. For example, they check that radiator covers and book cases are secure and door finger guards and socket covers are in place. However, the cord curtain tie backs in one of the playrooms are hanging loose and this is potentially dangerous for children.

The front door is always locked when children are present and they are escorted into the outside play area to make sure they are safe and secure. However, children's safety may be compromised because parents are not closely monitored when they collect their children and visitors do not always sign the visitors book.

There is a wide variety of suitable toys and equipment for both indoor and outside play. Staff set out a selection of toys, puzzles, books and other items before the session and they change them throughout the day. Children's opportunities to become more independent are sometimes limited because many of the toys and other items are stored out of their reach.

Staff take satisfactory steps to promote the welfare of children. They have an understanding of how to safeguard children and all of the necessary emergency telephone numbers for Social Services and Ofsted are available so that they can obtain help and advice if an issue arises.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children feel happy and secure because they are cared for by kind, friendly and approachable staff who develop close relationships with them. They play with a wide range of resources and staff plan activities using the 'Birth to three matters' framework so that they make progress in all areas of development. Staff observe the children and use their observations to plan activities which meet their needs and help them to make progress. Children enjoy being creative as they paint, make models using different materials and play musical instruments. They have many opportunities to be imaginative during role play, while dressing up and when playing with a range of small world toys such as farm animals and cars.

Babies and young children develop good language and communication skills because staff talk to them, listen, read stories, join in their play and encourage them to sing songs and rhymes from memory. The staff cuddle the babies to comfort them so that they feel secure and content. There is a basic routine to each day which allows time for meals, snacks, rests, outdoor play, structured activities and free play. Parents provide information about children's likes and dislikes so that they can care for them according to their individual needs.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is good and staff use appropriate assessment methods to monitor children's development. Staff have a understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Children are happy and interested in their play and they confidently talk to adults and explore their environment. The key worker system helps staff to develop close relationships with the children and this helps them to settle in quickly and feel secure and happy in the nursery. Observations of the children are used to help staff to plan activities which meet their individual needs. Space, resources and time are organised to support children's learning. However, many of the toys and resources are stored out of reach of children and this can restrict their learning opportunities. When children are engaged in play and activities the staff intervene appropriately to challenge them to think and extend their play.

There is a friendly, cheerful atmosphere in the group and children become independent as they go to the toilet, wash their hands, pour their own drinks and dress themselves. They play well together and show enthusiasm and curiosity. Children are well behaved and they respond positively to the staff who act as good role models. Children learn to share and to take turns and they develop good self-esteem because staff praise their good behaviour and achievements. There are displays of photographs showing the children enjoying their play and this promotes their feelings of belonging in the group.

Children communicate well because the staff involve them in purposeful conversation, read stories and encourage them to sing songs from memory. There is a wide selection of books which children enjoy looking at and there are examples of the written word on display which help children to become familiar with the written word. During storytime children are encouraged to participate by answering questions and commenting on the story. Children speak confidently in the group and show very good use of vocabulary. For example, they use 'camouflage' and 'lion's mane' in the correct context. Children practise their early writing skills when they make lines in the sand, draw, paint and practise writing their names. They write letters to Father Christmas and walk to the local post box to post them.

Numbers and shapes are included in the wall displays and this helps children to become familiar with numerals. Staff take opportunities to encourage children to count and to recognise numbers. They practise their counting skills when singing songs, such as 'Five currant buns' and while playing board games, such as dominoes. They count to 10 with confidence. During cooking activities and sand and water play children learn about weight and measure as they fill and empty containers and weigh ingredients.

Children's creativity is promoted through an interesting and varied range of activities. They paint, draw, cut and stick and make models out of dough and junk. They also enjoy music, singing and dancing and they play imaginative games using a good variety of role play equipment and small world toys. Staff change the role play area so that it becomes a doctors surgery or shop to ensure that children have more scope for interesting and stimulating play. Staff introduce new ideas through topics and this also extends their play opportunities. For example, they are given different sized carrier bags and paper bags to play with outside and in the sand tray as part of the 'paper products' theme.

Staff devise a range of activities to teach children about the wider world. They learn about living things when they are visited by the 'Animal Lab' and can hold and examine a variety of small animals and insects. Staff also encourage them to notice changes in the weather and they take advantage of more unusual weather conditions to learn about the changes brought about when water freezes. The children feel the ice and look the different shapes and colours in the frozen water. Children are not taken on outings but visitors, such as fire fighters and mounted police are invited into the nursery to talk to the children about their work or interests. Children learn about technology because they have access to a computer and can operate the music centre. They also play with cash registers, telephones and programmable toys.

Children have at least two sessions of outdoor play each day so that they can develop their physical skills and have fun in the fresh air. They are very active and well coordinated as they run, climb, ride wheeled toys, jump on the trampoline and balance on the beams. Staff help

them to extend their play because they encourage them to find different ways to use the equipment. For example, when they walk across the beam they are asked to think of different ways of getting across or getting off the equipment. Indoors, the staff create other opportunities for children to be active and they dance to music and take part in circle games.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

All children are made welcome in the setting including those with additional needs and/or disabilities. Staff work with parents and other professionals where necessary to meet the individual needs of children. There is a range of resources, such as books, puzzles, dolls and posters which provide children with positive images of different cultures, religions and disability. Children also learn to understand and appreciate differences through discussion and arts and craft activities linked to festivals from around the world. Children are not taken on outings into the community but the staff invite visitors into the nursery to talk to them about their work.

Staff are kind and friendly and they use praise and encouragement to help children to be well behaved and cooperative. There are clear boundaries for behaviour and children learn to share, to take turns and to play well together. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents is satisfactory. Staff provide a prospectus which gives parents information about the aims and objectives of the nursery. They are invited for introductory visits with their children when they can look at the policies and procedures, get to know the staff and provide information so that their children can be cared for according to their needs. Regular newsletters keep parents up to date with issues and events. Staff develop good relationships with parents and are happy to talk to them each day when they collect their children. There are also regular open evenings when parents can talk to staff and look at their children's development records. Parents are asked to evaluate the service and there is a suggestions box available to invite their comments. Parents are pleased with the care provided for their children. However, they would benefit from more information about the Foundation Stage and early learning goals so that they can be actively involved in their children's learning.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

There are satisfactory procedures in place for the recruitment and induction of new staff which ensures that children are cared for by suitable, qualified staff. Children are protected in the setting because they do not come into unsupervised contact with people who have not been vetted. The correct adult-to-child ratios are always maintained and there are contingency plans in place for staff absences to ensure that children are always well supported and supervised. Staff are supported through regular team meetings and appraisal. The nursery is committed to improvement and this is reflected in the programme for staff training and the participation in the National Day Care Association quality assurance scheme. This commitment helps to improve the quality of care and learning for children.

There is a key worker system in place which promotes consistency and encourages communication between staff, children and parents. The space is organised to allow children some freedom of movement and they move between rooms during the day which provides them with variety and interest. Staff set out a range of resources before each session and these are changed throughout the day. However, many of the toys are stored out of reach of the children which limits their choices and does not encourage them to become more independent.

Most of the necessary documentation is in place to safeguard the welfare, care and learning of children. The manager is working with the early years development worker to update the policies and procedures in line with current guidance.

The quality of leadership and management is good. The provider and manager work well together to ensure that the staff are well supported and the nursery provides a warm, comfortable and stimulating environment where children feel secure and happy. The providers value their staff and have good systems in place to monitor and evaluate children's progress. There are good staffing levels in place and staff are encouraged to update their training regularly. They also work closely with other agencies to improve their knowledge and understanding of childcare issues. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the last inspection the safety of children has improved because the staff have introduced a daily risk assessment. This ensures that staff check each of the playrooms for hazards before each session. Children are given some choices about activities and food so that they become more independent. The policies and procedures are in the process of being reviewed and updated to safeguard the welfare, care and learning of children.

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 further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- improve the safety of children by closely monitoring the access of visitors to the nursery, ensuring that they sign the visitors book and making curtain tie backs inaccessible or safe for children
- provide low level storage for toys and equipment so that children can become independent as they make more choices about what they do in the nursery
- continue to review and update policies and procedures in line with current guidelines.

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 more information for parents about the Foundation Stage curriculum and the early learning goals so that they can be actively involved in their children's learning.

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