

Pixley Dell Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	508263
Inspection date	14 March 2007
Inspector	Andrea, Jane Lockyer
Setting Address	8 Coulson Street, Spennymoor, County Durham, DL16 7RS
Telephone number	01388 816299
E-mail	info@pixleydelldaynursery.co.uk
Registered person	Northumbrian Trust Day Nurseries 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 good. 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?

Pixley Dell Nursery is part of the Northumbrian Trust Day Nurseries Limited and has been registered under the current provider for approximately six years. It is based in a two storey building in the Spennymoor area of County Durham. Local amenities and public transport systems are within walking distance.

Children are based in three core rooms on both levels of the premises. There is a safe, end enclosed rear yard available for outdoor play.

There are currently 48 children on the roll. This includes 11 funded three and four-year-olds. Children attend for a variety of part-time or full-time sessions. There are currently no children on roll who speak English as an additional language or who have a disability or learning difficulties.

The nursery is open Monday to Friday from 07:00 - 18:00, 52 weeks of the year, closing only for bank holidays.

There are 12 staff who work directly with the children, 11 of whom hold a recognised childcare qualification, ranging from National Vocational Qualification (NVQ) Level 2 to NVQ Level 3.

The nursery receives support from the local Early Years Development and Childcare Partnership, and from a link teacher from the local education authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Effective procedures implemented by staff ensure that all children are protected from illness and infection. Good standards of hygiene are maintained throughout the setting, which ensures that children's health is promoted very well. Children are learning effective practices relating to cleanliness and personal care. The consistent adult support and guidance helps children gain a good understanding of hygiene, and a desire to become increasingly independent in their personal care, for example, as they help to wipe tables before and after meals, wash toys, clean their own teeth and learn about how to protect themselves in hot and cold weather. Older children demonstrate competence and independence as they wash their hands after toileting and before eating, help themselves to tissues to wipe their nose and apply their own sunscreen. Younger children are supported well by staff who help them towards independence by giving just sufficient help, such as encouraging them to wash their face with their own face cloths. In depth discussions with parents and comprehensive records ensure that children's individual health needs are met very well.

Children are developing a good awareness of the benefits of a healthy diet. They are able to make choices from the well balanced, nutritious, healthy meals provided, and enjoy a flexible snack time, when they can freely choose from a selection of fresh fruit. All children are able to help themselves to drinks throughout the day, either from their own made up bottles of water or by pouring out their own. Children enjoy taking part in activities which help them learn about the principles of healthy eating, such as helping to buy fresh vegetables to make soup, growing their own herbs, helping to prepare fresh fruit for snacks, making their own sandwiches and taste testing a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables. Menus are planned very well, which take account of any special dietary requirements or parental wishes. Daily written and verbal communication with parents ensures that babies and young children's developing nutritional requirements are continually met.

Regular daily opportunities for physical play, indoors and outdoors, help children to enjoy exercise and develop new skills and healthy bodies. They take part in a wide range of fun activities, such as making den's out of cardboard boxes or materials, playing in tents and tunnels, using sit and ride toys, bats, balls and hula hoops, playing hopscotch, joining in with music and movement and planting flowers. Children also benefit from regular walks to local amenities, such as the shops and allotments. Children who are not yet independently mobile are supported very well in a variety of ways to help them develop their gross and fine motor skills, for example, using furniture to pull themselves up, crawling, stretching, reaching and manipulating multi-sensory toys. Very good opportunities are available for children to take a rest or be active according to their individual needs for example, as they take themselves off to the 'cosy corner' for a sleep or to engage in quiet activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children enjoy comfortable premises that are warm and well maintained. Core rooms are organised very well to maximise space and play opportunities, which provide interest and ensure children are effectively motivated to learn. Children have very good opportunities to freely choose from a broad range of good quality activities and resources that are stored accessibly at child height. As a result, they are learning to make choices and gaining confidence and independence. However, there are limited resources available for children under the age of three years to extend their imaginative and role play skills in the home corner.

Safety procedures and risk assessments are effectively carried out by staff, within the provision and on outings, which ensures that children are able to move around, freely, safely and independently. Staff give high priority to helping children understand how to keep themselves safe, both in and out of the premises, and effectively achieve a good balance between freedom and setting safe limits. Children are developing a good awareness of safety and how to keep themselves safe, for example, as they learn to cross roads safely when on outings, practise fire drills, discuss firework safety on Bonfire Night, enjoy a visit from the fire brigade and explore the fire engine and listen to a talk from a policeman. Gentle reminders from staff throughout the session also increase children's awareness of safety during their daily routines, for example, staff encourage children not to wave scissors around, to help pick up toys, to hold onto the rail when walking downstairs, and to be careful when playing outside.

Effective policies and procedures implemented by staff ensure that children are well protected from possible abuse and neglect. All staff have a good understanding of the procedures in line with the Local Safeguarding Children Board guidelines and are aware of their roles and responsibilities.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children thoroughly enjoy their time at the childcare provision. They enjoy affectionate, sensitive and caring relationships with staff who know them well and inspire them with their own enthusiasm. This means that children are developing high levels of self-esteem, confidence and trust. They engage eagerly in a wide range of stimulating and enjoyable activities, such as exploring natural objects in treasure baskets, creating collages and designs using a variety of different textured materials, exploring coloured water with glitter floating on the top, experimenting with sound and rhythm using musical instruments, baking cakes, and using all their senses as they play with peppermint flavoured play-dough.

Activities and themes are planned in advance, are well thought out and take account of children's interests. They are purposeful and provide all children with good levels of challenge, appropriate to their age and stage of development. Activities cover all areas of learning and are linked to the 'Birth to three matters' framework. Staff actively encourage children's free choice and there is a good balance between adult-led and child-led activities. Plans and daily routines are flexible which allow children time to consolidate what they have learnt and extend their own play. Detailed records of children's progress are used in conjunction with planning, to plan the next steps in individual children's learning. This means that children are involved in a broad range of interesting experiences that promote and enhance their individual development and learning skills.

Nursery Education.

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Children are making good progress across all areas of learning. Staff are well qualified and experienced. They are secure in their knowledge of the Foundation Stage and the methods that help children learn. Children enjoy interesting topics and themes that link curriculum planning successfully to all six areas of learning. They have a good balance of adult-led and child-initiated activities to choose from and staff ensure that all children are involved, well supported and have good opportunities to practise and consolidate their learning. Most activities are planned well to ensure that all children are able to take part and that more able children are challenged to extend their learning. However, there are limited opportunities for more able children to link sounds to letters, and to practise simple addition and subtraction. Children are motivated to learn through the staff's own enthusiasm and are skilfully guided to extend their own play and learning. All children are effectively assessed using good, clear systems that are updated regularly and used effectively to plan the next stage of learning.

Children are confident, happy and developing a good sense of self. They show confidence as they explore their environment and engage in activities of their own choosing. They interact with staff and each other very well. They initiate discussions with adults and each other, talking with growing confidence about what they are doing and what they have observed. Children have a sense of belonging; they accept the rules of the setting and react enthusiastically to tidy up time and to help set the table for lunch. They show pride and pleasure in their achievements and maintain interest and concentration in activities that are adult-led or child-driven. They are kind and helpful towards each other and behave extremely well.

Children have good language and communication skills. Many talk enthusiastically with staff and peers about things that interest them. They enjoy stories and listen attentively. More able children attempt to read stories to others or describe what is happening in the pictures. Most children can recognise their own name as they find their own placemat at lunchtime and more able children can recognise other children's names. Children are able to practise their writing skills as they make lists of what they need from the local shops, and are encouraged by staff to write their own name on their pictures. Older children listen well to each other and take turns in the conversation and narrate the story line as they act out role play scenarios.

Many children show an interest in numbers and counting, some using number games and counting spontaneously during their play. More able children can successfully touch count a series of objects very well, such as counting how many children there are, or counting out cake cases for each child. Some children correctly identified that there were the same amount of children in one area of the room as there were sitting at the table. Children can successfully recognise and competently use positional language relating to size.

Children demonstrate a strong interest in the world in which they live. They have good opportunities to use their senses about living things, objects and events. For example, as they help to look after the nursery hamster, experiment with electrical circuits, and colour paddles, explore mini beasts and the natural world through magnifying glasses, and taste test different foods. Children's learning is further enhanced by visitors, such as the fire brigade, police, and a first aid trainer who taught the children how to apply bandages and put people in the recovery position. Children thoroughly enjoyed a visit from the 'zoo lab' where they learnt about living things and were able to handle small animals and insects. Children are learning to operate simple equipment well and many use computer programmes competently. They are developing a good sense of time and talk about significant things that have happened to them. All children

benefit from positive images and planned activities that teach them about different cultures or beliefs and their own community, such as celebrating Chinese New Year, Holi and Passover, and visiting local places of interest, such as shops, parks, allotments and the library.

Children move around confidently, both indoors and out. Most demonstrate good spatial awareness and control of their body movements very well whilst walking, running, and negotiating obstacles. A recent topic about 'How exercise affects our body' has helped children gain a greater awareness of changes in their body after physical activity. As a result, they are able to recognise when they need to take a rest or a drink. All children demonstrate increasing control as they play with large climbing apparatus, riding bikes, catching and throwing balls. Children show a good awareness of personal needs and most carry out a range of healthy practices, such as hand and face washing, cleaning teeth and personal hygiene. All children are developing good hand-eye co-ordination through using one-handed tools and equipment with increasing control, such as knives, forks, spoons, pencils, paintbrushes and computer mouse.

Children enjoy a broad range of creative materials that promote colour, texture and sensory awareness. They show interest in what they see, smell, taste and touch. For example, they make patterns and shapes with dough, enjoy sand and water play, craft activities and exploring textured and natural materials. They enjoy using role play resources to develop good imagination. Children enjoy using and making musical instruments, join in songs and rhymes, and some older children sing to themselves whilst at play.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Partnerships with parents and carers are good. Children's individual needs are thoroughly met because staff have effective procedures in place to ensure relevant information is consistently exchanged. Parents are kept extremely well informed about the care, welfare and education of their children through policies and procedures, displays of planning linked to the Foundation Stage and the 'Birth to three matters' framework, newsletters, parents evenings and reviews, children's progress files and notice boards. Parents are actively encouraged to become involved in the group and their children's learning by being given suggestions on how they can help their children at home, making comments in their children's progress files, and fundraising. Comments received from parents indicate that they are very happy with the quality of childcare and education provided, that they have trusting relationships with staff, and that children thoroughly enjoy attending.

Staff have realistic expectations of children's behaviour. They implement a range of good strategies to promote positive behaviour that help children to understand right from wrong. Children respond positively to meaningful praise and sensitive encouragement, which contributes to their social skills, confidence and self-esteem. They willingly help clean up, share activities and games, and help one another with activities and personal care, for example, older children happily help younger children to put their coats on. They show care and concern for each other and behave extremely well. Children are actively encouraged to make their own choices and take part in the day to day organisation of their room; for example, they help to tidy up, prepare snacks, set the table, and take part in activities of their own choosing, which helps children take responsibility for themselves and others and promotes a strong sense of self and belonging.

All children benefit from activities that are gender-free as they readily access the full range of toys, resources and learning opportunities. They enjoy informative activities that help them to learn about other cultures, religions and the wider world, such as celebrating Chinese New Year,

Diwali and Passover. They help with charity events that support other people, such as making cakes to raise funds for Red Nose Day and celebrating Children in Need. As a result, children are learning to make connections between their own life and that of others in the wider world. They have daily access to a range of resources that reflect positive images of race, culture and gender, however, there are limited resources available to increase children's awareness of people with disabilities or learning difficulties. Children have good opportunities to learn about their own community as they visit local shops and allotments, and take part in seasonal activities and topics.

As a result of good practices within the nursery, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is effectively fostered.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

The well-organised environment and good daily routines ensure that children are extremely happy and self-assured. Very good opportunities are made for all children to be involved in free play, social interaction, eating, resting, physical activity and outings. This means that children are very confident to initiate and extend their own play and learning.

The quality of leadership and management is good. Staff are very well supported and work extremely well together. Effective organisation, planning and communication between all ensures that roles and responsibilities are clearly defined, which contributes to the smooth running of the nursery and provides children with stability and a sense of security. Robust procedures for the recruitment, induction, appraisal and ongoing training of staff ensure that they are skilled, knowledgeable and qualified. Staff are committed, enthusiastic and highly motivated; they continually evaluate their practice, which significantly enhances the care and development of all children.

A comprehensive range of policies and procedures are in place. They are implemented effectively, to promote the care, welfare and learning of children. Regular reviews are held to update all policies and procedures which ensure that staff and parents are kept informed of new legislation. They underpin the successful management of the provision.

Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the provider was asked to: improve opportunities for older and more able children to develop their large physical skill; improve the monitoring and evaluation of the curriculum relating to physical development; improve the procedure for completing medication records; ensure positive images are pictured of all children; ensure that staff and parents are made aware of roles and responsibilities; and further develop planning for the youngest children.

Children's physical development has improved because good planning ensures that children have daily access to the outdoor area where they are able to use a variety of equipment to promote their gross motor development, such as riding bikes, climbing large apparatus, playing with bats and balls, using hula hoops and making tents and dens. They also go on regular visits to places of interest.

Children now benefit from displays of photographs showing positive images of children enjoying themselves and having fun.

The 'Birth to three matters' framework is effectively implemented, ensuring that younger children enjoy a full range of activities that contribute to their individual development and learning skills.

Notice boards, and policies and procedures ensure that staff and parents are made fully aware of their roles and responsibilities.

Medication records now maintain confidentiality because details are recorded on single forms.

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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The quality and standards of the nursery education are good.

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):

- provide a range of resources that increase children's awareness of people with disabilities and learning difficulties
- develop the range of resources for children under the age of three years in the 'home corner' to extend children's imaginative and role play skills

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 opportunities for more able children to link sounds to letters and practise simple addition and subtraction.

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