



Early Days Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	310413
Inspection date	13 February 2007
Inspector	Sheila May Price
Setting Address	6 Alexandra Road, Waterloo, Liverpool, Merseyside, L22 1RJ
Telephone number	0151 928 4422
E-mail	
Registered person	Mr Malcom Russell & Mrs Clare Russell
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?

Early Days Day Nursery was registered in 1990 and is run by a private organisation. It operates from a converted Victorian detached property in the Waterloo district of Liverpool and serves families within the local district and surrounding areas. The provision caters for children aged from nought to five years and opens Monday to Friday from 08.00 to 18.00 all year round except for the Christmas week. There are three care rooms with associated facilities.

A maximum of 31 children aged under five may attend the provision at any one time. There are currently 29 children on roll, of whom eight receive funding for nursery education. There are seven members of staff employed to work with the children at the nursery who all hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from a teacher from the Early Years Development Childcare Partnership.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff follow suitable hygiene practices to prevent the spread of infection and thus ensure children play in a healthy environment. Rooms and equipment are kept clean. Staff wear disposable aprons and gloves when changing nappies and babies are provided with fresh bed linen daily. Children learn to wash their hands after going to the toilet and before eating and some know that this is to remove germs that might make them ill.

Children receive appropriate attention when they feel unwell and are given extra water. Parents are informed of the sickness policy so that they know sick children should not attend. Parents authorise staff to administer prescribed medicine, but the recording of whether this has been administered is not consistently carried out, which could put vulnerable babies at risk.

Children are provided with regular meals and snacks to sustain them, which meet their individual dietary needs. Information is shared between staff and parents about what children have eaten to ensure their diet is balanced overall. The reliance on processed food for convenience is being gradually reduced in line with the development of a new healthy eating policy. Children have sufficient access to water when they need it.

Children develop healthy bodies through planned activities which promote their physical development. All children use the outdoor facilities daily so that they get fresh air. There is some attractive fixed outdoor play equipment providing challenges for different ages. Babies learn to roll over, sit up, crawl and eventually walk, through using a good range of equipment and the helpful support of staff who understand their developmental needs. Funded children learn to move with agility and co-ordination through a variety of games and equipment. Not all sleeping arrangements are good for children's posture and older children do not have good facilities for resting in comfort when they wish to.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is inadequate.

Children are not provided with adequate protection from harm because fire safety procedures have not been followed and risk assessments are not regularly reviewed. Fire alarm systems have not been regularly checked, fire practices have not been recorded, fire fighting equipment has not been checked, and a review of fire safety has not been carried out, in line with changes to fire safety regulations and the change in layout of the building. Fixtures, such as the radiator guards, work loose because they are not securely attached to the wall and one falls off with the potential to cause children injury.

The premises are in a state of alteration. Parts of the building are new, attractively decorated and spacious, such as the baby room. Other parts of the building, such as the two rooms for children over the age of two, are less well maintained and more cramped, thus limiting activities and access to resources. Staff in these rooms compensate by ensuring children have some

equipment available for easy access and use display well to make the rooms attractive for the older children.

Children are well supervised indoors and out and staff know which children need more attention than others for their safety. Sometimes older children are not reminded enough of their responsibilities to play safely and have regard for other children's safety when out of doors. There are adequate measures to ensure appropriate action is taken should there be a concern or allegation that a child is being abused.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children throughout the nursery are familiar with the routines and staff establish trusting relationships with them which develops their confidence and self-esteem. New children are helped to settle in by staff who understand their emotional need for reassurance. Babies are curious about what goes on around them and respond positively with smiles and sounds as staff talk to them or hold things for them to look at, touch or listen to.

Babies that are mobile, happily explore the content of boxes and the process of filling and emptying. Staff plan a messy activity each day for children to experience different textures and children have fun as they play together imaginatively and creatively. Key workers keep a record of children's achievements to share with parents. They do not yet take enough responsibility for their key children's intimate personal care when they are babies, make evaluative observations, or plan for individual children's next steps.

Nursery Education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make steady progress towards early learning goals. Staff have good qualifications that provide them with an underpinning knowledge of child development, however, they do not have a secure knowledge of the Foundation Stage curriculum guidance to apply to their teaching. There is adequate planning of activities and resources to ensure children have sufficient opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and understanding in all six areas of learning. Staff do not identify learning objectives well in their plans, which makes it difficult for them to evaluate whether aims have been achieved and to plan next steps.

Staff conduct small group activities in a well organised manner. Children enjoy participating in these, having learnt how to take turns and follow the rules of a game. Staff adjust their questions to children's differing capabilities, but they sometimes fail to provide sufficiently challenging activities for more able children to work on. Records of children's progress are kept but insufficient observational evidence is recorded to show convincingly how such conclusions have been drawn.

Children enjoy free play time when they explore materials like coloured water and dry sand mixed with glitter. They talk about what they are doing and the staff respond with interest, encouraging conversation. All children are developing their skills well in fine motor control through daily opportunities to draw, paint, and make constructions. They learn to recognise

and write their names, and talk about letters and sounds in words. Pictures children draw of themselves show some good observational skills. These help them to discuss similarities and differences and they learn to identify and describe different emotions from photographs. Children play games with flash cards to help them remember and describe shapes and enjoy learning how to count through singing number rhymes. Books are easily accessible to children who understand how to handle them properly and enjoy talking about the pictures and stories.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's social emotional, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Babies gain a growing awareness of self as they interact with others within the safe confines of an established routine and friendly carers. Toddlers begin to explore confidently what they can do and are helped to cope with their emotions as they begin to appreciate the need for give and take. Pre school children learn to appreciate the social boundaries for behaviour, such as not hurting others and taking turns. Older children gain some independence in dressing themselves but they are not encouraged enough to help others, such as putting things out or away, setting the table, and serving themselves or others at meal times. Children's behaviour is generally good and most staff use positive methods to handle occasional challenging behaviour.

Most children's individual needs are generally met well, although planning and monitoring systems are not completely effective in identifying and meeting the needs of the most able, funded children. Staff value children's individuality and help children to value themselves and others. They plan activities to help children appreciate diversity through topics about themselves, discussing people's different abilities, likes and dislikes, and learning about how differently people celebrate significant events. They do not have many good resources and positive images of diversity on display to remind children of this and to use incidentally as a talking point.

Good relationships are fostered with parents. Information is obtained from parents when children are admitted to ensure their needs are met and they settle in well. Informal methods are used to exchange information about children's welfare with parents on a daily basis as they bring and collect their children. Some useful information is displayed outside children's rooms and in the hallway. Parents confirm that they feel comfortable to discuss any concern with the staff who they find friendly and helpful.

Partnership with parents over nursery education is satisfactory. Parents are not given much information about the Foundation Stage and are therefore at a disadvantage when it comes to making a contribution. Parents are informed about topics and can see the weekly plans displayed but they are not actively encouraged to be involved in children's learning. Parents know they can ask to see their child's work or their records at any time but the staff do not involve them in the assessment process.

Organisation

The organisation is inadequate.

Overall the provision does not meet the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides. Staff have the qualifications and skills to be able to meet children's needs and to provide worthwhile activities to promote children's all-round development, which they apply with enthusiasm for children's enjoyment and achievement. However, their training on risk assessment is not thorough and the health and safety policies they currently use lack depth and guidance. This has had an impact on the effective monitoring of the safety of the premises and has led to an unsatisfactory outcome for children's protection.

The deployment of staff has not been entirely satisfactory, owing to a misunderstanding over ratios fostered by some misleading policy documents. There has also been too much reliance on the manager covering for both absent staff and the midday period when staff take statutory breaks. This has an effect on the quality of supervision for older children who do not take a rest and also means that the manager has less time for important managerial duties.

New systems have been recently introduced for keeping better regulatory records, such as recording children's times of arrival and departure in their room registers, and transferring medical information onto individual sheets for confidentiality. Not all required records are consistently maintained however, such as the fire log book and records of medication administered. Written policies and procedures have yet to be fully reviewed and incorporated into a clearly organised operational plan.

Leadership and management for the nursery education is satisfactory. The manager is keen to improve the provision and is using the early years advisory service well to give support and advice for herself and the staff. She has begun to monitor the delivery of the educational provision, as well as the provision for the under threes, and has identified some strengths and weaknesses to work on. She conducts regular meetings to involve the staff. She has, however, been in post for too short a time to put many of her plans into effect yet.

Improvements since the last inspection

There were six recommendations for childcare arising from the last combined inspection and three for nursery education.

The childcare recommendations related to health and safety, policies, the introduction of a key worker system, providing equipment to promote equality of opportunity, and the recording of visitors. One of the recommendations has been fully met which was to ensure that the presence of visitors is recorded. A key worker system is in place and used for the keeping of children's records of progress, but not yet for the personal care of babies. Some adjustments have been made to policy documents and information for parents. There is little evidence of improvements to the resources to reflect diversity and promote equal opportunities.

A recommendation was made to develop staff knowledge of risk assessment and to ensure that a fire log book was maintained. Staff still lack knowledge of the risk assessment process and

the fire drill log book continues to be inadequately maintained. This means that the nursery has fallen behind in its protection for children to a level which is now unacceptable.

The recommendations for nursery education were to develop planning to extend and challenge more able children, make better use of free play activities for children's personal choice, and increase opportunities for children to develop their own creativity when exploring colour, texture and shape. Children now have more time for free play where they can make choices about what they do. However, staff continue to focus more of their teaching through staff-led rather than child-led activities. Children have some good opportunities to explore colour, texture and shape in their own way, although there are still some over directed craft activities. Planning has not yet developed well enough to always include activities to challenge the more able 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 complaint 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 that fire extinguishers, alarms and smoke detectors are regularly checked and kept in working order, fire drills are carried out periodically, and a fire log book is available for inspection
- ensure that all records of medication given to children are recorded
- ensure that ratios are met and there are sufficient additional staff for domestic and managerial tasks to enable staff to work directly with the children
- conduct a new risk assessment of the premises which includes fire safety and provide an action plan with time scales identifying action to be taken to minimise identified risks

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):

- make better use of the 'Foundation Stage curriculum guidance' to inform practice, review planning, and improve assessments for monitoring progress and planning next steps

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