



## Milestones Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

<b>Unique Reference Number</b>	EY273848
<b>Inspection date</b>	28 February 2007
<b>Inspector</b>	Ann Webb
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<b>Registered person</b>	Childcare Strategies Ltd
<b>Type of inspection</b>	Integrated
<b>Type of care</b>	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](http://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?

Milestones Nursery is a privately owned nursery that offers full-time care. It has been operating since 1993 and had a change of ownership in 2003. It operates from three rooms in a single-story building. It is situated in a suburb of Leeds known as Meanwood. A maximum of 56 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 08.00 to 18.00, with the exception of bank holidays and one week between Christmas and New Year. The children share access to two outdoor areas.

There are currently 74 children aged from three months to five years on roll; of these, 23 children receive funding for nursery education. Children attend from the surrounding areas. The nursery currently supports a number of children who speak English as an additional language.

The nursery employs 21 staff. The majority of staff, including the managers, holds appropriate early years qualifications and two staff are working towards a qualification.

## **THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION**

### **Helping children to be healthy**

The provision is satisfactory.

Hygiene routines are mostly well implemented by the staff and the children have an appropriate understanding of personal hygiene. For example, they wash their hands after toileting and before they eat food and help in the cleaning of table surfaces. The staff further promote the children's understanding by being positive role models. For example, they follow good nappy changing routines, wear protective clothing and wash their hands. However, some of the carpeted areas are unclean and outdoor play equipment is dirty.

During the hot weather the children learn effectively about protecting themselves from the effects of the sun; they apply sun lotions and wear hats whilst playing outdoors. They understand about keeping themselves warm and dry in colder weather and use wellington boots and umbrellas as part of their outdoor play experiences.

The children learn effectively about healthy eating. For example, they try fresh vegetables each day and at lunchtime they help themselves to fresh carrots and peas. They enjoy a pudding of bananas and custard. Additionally, the children drink water throughout the day. A three-month menu details breakfast, lunch, tea and two snacks, and a weekly menu is displayed for parents. A vegetarian option is always included and all individual dietary requirements are catered for.

There are good opportunities for the children to have fresh air and exercise. Each day the children are able to access adjoining outdoor play areas. They use large physical equipment to develop their skills for climbing, jumping and sliding, such as a climbing frame, slide, playhouse, and sit and ride toys. Younger and less mobile children practise rolling, crawling and walking, supported and encouraged by the staff.

A written sickness policy ensures that children with an infectious illness do not attend. This further promotes the children's health and well-being.

### **Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe**

The provision is satisfactory.

The children are cared for in a reasonably safe and appropriately maintained environment. The staff take appropriate measures to reduce risks and hazards to children, for example, through conducting risk assessments, grouping children in age bands, and supervising and planning children's activities. Additionally, they ensure that most of the furniture and equipment used by the children is safe and suitable for its purpose. However, the table used for the computer is too high for the children to use comfortably.

Access to the premises is monitored by the staff. The premises are secure with a buzzer system. However, some parents let in unidentified persons and not all visitors are asked to sign in.

Procedures to record accidents and the administration of medication are followed consistently by the staff. For example, parents are required to sign records, which ensures that they receive accurate information regarding their children's care.

The children are helped to keep themselves safe indoors and outdoors. The staff give gentle reminders about safety; they explain to them about not running and pushing. During emergency evacuation practices the children learn about fire safety.

The children's welfare is further promoted through the staff's appropriate understanding of the Local Safeguarding Children Board procedures. There is a written child protection policy which is understood by the staff, for example, notifying the relevant child protection agencies. Some staff have undertaken additional training and share their knowledge with other team members.

### **Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do**

The provision is satisfactory.

The children access a reasonable range of resources and materials in most areas. For example, construction, sand and water, art and craft, and small world play. However, books throughout the nursery are limited and some of them are in poor condition; some jigsaw puzzles have pieces missing; and there are limited resources in the role play area for the children aged three and four years.

Children are given opportunities to share their thoughts, feelings and ideas. They talk with other children, visitors and adults, and communicate confidently. Babies enjoy one to one attention from caring adults; for example, they enjoy moving through shredded paper, feeling its texture. They also experience musical toys and heuristic play. Adults echo sounds young babies make and interpret meaning to children's words, which encourages them to be confident and competent language users. All the children join in enthusiastically with the activities provided, such as painting, playing with cornflour 'slime' and singing songs. They join in enthusiastically with 'Hop, bunny, hop' and sing the familiar parts.

During a painting activity children dip their hands into trays of coloured paint; they eagerly stamp their paper and examine the pattern they make. The staff talk positively to the children, encouraging them to talk about their experiences and ask them questions to make them think. For example, they ask the children what happens to the paint when they mix it together. The children's creativity is further developed through opportunities to listen to music, dance and use a variety of materials and techniques.

The children's key worker tracks the children's development appropriately and they follow the 'Birth to three matters' framework and the Foundation Stage guidance. Children's progress is recorded in development profiles which capture the children's achievements with photographs, samples of their artwork and short written observations.

### **Nursery Education**

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Some key staff have attended training on the Foundation Stage and competently put this into practice. They show a good knowledge of the Foundation Stage and provide a good range of activities and experiences to cover all areas of children's learning. Planning is flexible, clear and covers all areas of learning in the curriculum. Detailed planning for focused activities ensures clear learning intentions are identified for children.

Assessment records for each child clearly show the children's approach to learning, their achievements and progress, and show planning for children's individual steps in learning. The staff use very good teaching methods to challenge and question the children. For example, they ask children about how babies are fed and why they need food, and talk to them about taking care of others. They ask the children if the microwave makes food hot or cold.

Most of the children are confident to count to five and older, more-able children can count beyond 10. When children line up outside they count each other out loud. They are eager to join in a game of snakes and ladders; they understand that they can move their counter and count out the dots on the dice. Children take an interest in using information and communication technology and with the assistance of staff they load a program and work through some activities.

Some older and more-able children are able to form recognisable letters and make good attempts to write their names; some children can recognise their written name from their drinking bottles. However, the children do not mark their own artwork with their names. The children are confident to speak to each other and with adults; they are able to make their needs known and are able to ask for what they want. They know where resources are stored and make independent choices form a reasonable range of activities.

Children show curiosity, observe and manipulate objects. They realise tools can be used for a purpose and construct with a purpose in mind, using a variety of resources. For example, they make spaceships from construction bricks and use a saw and hammer to fix a hole in the playhouse roof. The children show an interest in the world in which they live. They remember and talk about significant events that have happened to them, for example, having a cake for their birthday. They are beginning to know about their own cultures and beliefs and those of other people, such as celebrating Chinese New Year.

The children are sociable and confident to talk to each other and with adults. They are able to sit quietly when needed and can concentrate on tasks, for example, during a cornflour 'slime' activity. Most children are developing attachments to each other and seek out their friends, for example, to sit next to at lunchtime. They are able to independently contribute toward their own care needs and attempt to fasten their own shoes and clothing. The children enjoy listening to stories. They join in enthusiastically with the story of the magic porridge pot and anticipate parts of the story. They eagerly attempt to rhyme words with pot, such as hot and dot.

Children's physical abilities are well developed. They participate well in large physical activities, such as jumping, balancing, riding tricycles, running in large spaces and constructing using large equipment. They are able to use smaller items to build and construct, joining equipment together to make models. Older children are developing good hand-eye coordination; for

example, a child ties knots into a piece of string around a table leg and says, 'I am tying it up'. The children have good coordination skills and know to take care when moving and running around other children and items of furniture.

### **Helping children make a positive contribution**

The provision is satisfactory.

There are suitable opportunities for the children to learn about festivals and traditions other than their own. For example, they celebrate Chinese New Year with food tasting, a visit to the Chinese supermarket and creating a role play Chinese restaurant. They access a sufficient range of resources which reflect positive images of race, gender and disability, such as dressing up clothes and small world figures. The children are able to access all resources and activities and their individuality is acknowledged and respected by the staff. The children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Partnership with parents and carers is good. All of the nursery's policies and procedures are shared with parents and their written permission is sought for outings and the administration of medication. Information regarding the children's care is shared daily both verbally and in writing, and regular newsletters and notices provide up to date information. Parents of children receiving nursery education are informed about the Foundation Stage, and children's individual development profiles are available for parents to make their own contributions. There are practical opportunities for parents to be involved in their children's learning, for example, through a self-registration system and a question of the week.

The children are well settled in their environment. They behave well and their behaviour is successfully managed by the staff who offer clear guidance and support. For example, they gently remind the children to be kind to their friends and to share and take turns. The staff reward positive behaviour with praise and encouragement and ensure that the children understand what is expected of them. The children know about sharing and taking turns and play well together in groups, happy to be involved with their friends.

### **Organisation**

The organisation is good.

There are good procedures in place to ensure that the staff working with the children are suitable to do so. For example, all the staff are selected through a rigorous recruitment process, which includes background checks, a full induction process, frequent training, such as on 'Birth to three matters' and first aid, and regular appraisals.

The environment is well organised with all the required records and documents in place; confidential information is stored securely and retained for the required period. The staff work well as a team and they know their roles and responsibilities, implementing routines which give children a sufficient range of experiences. The children benefit from well-deployed staff who consistently interact with them and offer effective support and encouragement, which helps them feel secure and confident.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is good. The manager oversees the planning of the educational programme and advice and guidance is sought from an advisory teacher. The children's progress is monitored and used to identify areas of strength and weakness. Action plans are used to ensure that the provision of activities continues to develop. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

### **Improvements since the last inspection**

At the last inspection the nursery were asked to improve some aspects of their documentation and to provide opportunities for the children to link sounds to objects. They were also asked to extend mark-making and resources for assembling and develop children's understanding of calculation. Additionally, they were asked to develop ways for parents to share information about their children.

The nursery now complete accident records with the required details, including parental signatures, and maintain records for the required period. Children now confidently link sounds to letters of familiar and everyday objects and their names. They mark-make for a variety of purposes, such as writing lists. The children use resources to explore methods of assembling and joining. For example, they stick materials together, fasten paper with clips and join construction pieces together to make models. During their everyday play they make good attempts to solve simple problems through calculation, such as whether there are too many children in an area or if they have enough plates for everyone. Parents and carers' information about their children is valued, and there are opportunities for them to contribute information in development profiles and children's information sheets. These improvements significantly improve the care and education of the children.

### **Complaints since the last inspection**

Since 1 April 2004 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 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 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):

- ensure resources are sufficient and in a suitable condition, with regard to books, outdoor play equipment, puzzles and role play resources
- ensure that furniture is suitable for the ages of the children with regard to the computer workstation
- improve hygiene practices with regard to floor coverings
- improve safety with regard to access to premises and signing in procedures.

### **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):

- increase the opportunities for children to mark make with regard to labelling their own art work.

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](http://www.ofsted.gov.uk)