

Oaktree Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	258404
Inspection date	13 March 2007
Inspector	Sheena Gibson
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Registered person	Neil Gordon Vickers
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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Oaktree Day Nursery opened in 1997. It operates from purpose built premises in a suburb of Derby, serving the local and wider areas. The setting opens five days a week all year round, except bank holidays. Sessions are from 07:30 until 18:00. The setting is registered to care for 71 children under eight years at any one time. There are currently 122 children from birth to eight years on roll, who attend for a variety of sessions. This includes 24 children in receipt of nursery education funding.

Out of school care is provided for children aged five to 12 years. The setting currently supports a number of children with a learning difficulty. The setting employs 16 part-time and full-time childcare staff who work with the children; they also employ domiciliary staff. At least 50% of the staff have appropriate childcare qualifications to NVQ level two or three. The setting receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's understanding and awareness of good health and hygiene is suitably promoted. Staff explain the importance of hand washing, providing encouragement and support; notes on the walls of the toilets gently remind children to wash their hands and as a result their understanding is effectively supported. Some staff have a sound understanding of the procedures to follow with regard to positive hygiene practice. For example, suitable methods are in place for nappy changing, children use individual flannels for face-wiping and some staff have undergone food hygiene training. This contributes beneficially towards children's health as it reduces the risk of cross-infection. Children who are unwell are well cared for as the setting's detailed procedures encourage parents to keep poorly children at home, which prevents germs spreading. Children are appropriately cared for if they have an accident or require medication. Most staff are trained in first aid for babies and have suitable procedures in place for the administration of medication. Records, although not completely confidential, are detailed, which enables on-going care to be effective.

Children's dietary needs are satisfactorily met. They are offered meals and snacks in sufficient quantities. Some meals contain fruit and vegetables and children have daily opportunities to have some fruit for snack, suitably supporting their understanding of healthy eating. Drinks are available to them throughout the day and most children are confident to access their drink independently. Children's health is effectively supported by daily physical activity. They benefit from having the facilities to go out in all weathers as the setting has an outdoor under-cover area plus an indoor soft play area. They enjoy, jumping, skipping, playing with balls and balancing on stilts. This enables children to successfully keep fit and develop physically. Babies have a spacious area where they are free to build on their developing mobility skills.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

Children are able to feel safe and welcome within the setting. Staff are friendly with parents and generally approach children to greet them when they arrive, helping them to settle. The rooms are bright and cheerfully decorated with some colourful displays. Space is used effectively and appropriately furnished, with each age group having their own base room and also accessing shared space within the building to offer more varied experiences. For example, all children enjoy using the soft play area. The building has suitable security systems in place and these are generally used to satisfactory effect, which supports children's safety. Children enjoy easy access to a wide range of toys and activities, which they enjoy and that further their development. The accessibility successfully supports their growing confidence and independence as they make choices about what they want to do.

Children's safety is effectively maintained through steps taken by staff to ensure that hazards are reduced. For example, risk assessments are carried out on a regular basis and all equipment is safety checked as it is used. Practical steps are taken to promote safety. For example, children are prevented from accessing unsuitable items such as cleaning products. Children's welfare is well supported with regard to child protection. Most staff have a confident awareness of the signs of abuse. A detailed policy is in place, which sets out procedures to follow and staff are fully aware of their role in what to do if there is a concern about a child.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's care, learning and development is satisfactorily promoted; they are settled and their individual needs given due consideration. Young babies are cared for within their own routine to ensure that they are able to feel secure and comfortable. There is a suitable range of planned activities that cover all areas of development within the play. For example, babies enjoy toys that stimulate their senses, shape sorters and musical toys. Toddlers enjoy pretend play where they make cups of tea in the home corner kitchen. The setting is using 'Birth to three matters' to support children's learning and development. However, currently this is not effectively used and inconsistencies within the planning and assessment mean that children's progress is not maximised. Children have a satisfactory level of independence and confidence. Most children have many opportunities that promote independence. For example, they access resources for themselves, using their initiative and taking responsibility. Children's interest, involvement and learning is suitably promoted by the adults positive interactions. They have amiable relationships with staff; some staff are skilled at extending children's learning through interacting. For example, they join in with a game, chat to the children and respond appropriately to children's signals and comments. Children who attend the out of school club enjoy a wide range of toys and games suitable for their age. Their opinions are valued as they are consulted about what they want to do; often requesting to help with tasks. This supports the continuation of their skills development and builds their confidence and self-esteem.

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Children make suitable progress towards the early learning goals because some staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage and the stepping stones; their progress is more rapid when supported by knowledgeable staff who role-model skills and behaviours. Planning indicates how the areas of learning are covered over a period of time, although it is not clear how individual activities are adapted to support individual children's progress. This results in some children not being sufficiently challenged and their learning potential not fully exploited. Assessments are beginning to identify children's progression to the next stage in their development. However, these are not always clear, consistent and some staff do not have a clear understanding of how to effectively assess the children, compromising their progress. Some suitable methods are used for teaching that suit the needs of most children. For example, some role model skills such as counting, enabling children to follow. However, some activities are pre-determined and children do not have opportunities to consolidate their skills through everyday activities. Staff have an adequate understanding of how to manage children's behaviour in an appropriate manner, which promotes generally positive behaviour from children.

Children enjoy their time at the setting. Most are well motivated and keen to learn. Some are very confident and independent and thrive on taking responsibility, for example during tidy up time. They are aware of the expectation for behaviour at certain times, such as circle time or when lining up. Generally they behave well and most enjoy time spent playing with their peers. Most children are capable communicators and confidently talk about things that interest them. They are curious and ask many questions both to staff and visitors. They listen quietly to stories, only joining in where appropriate. They look at books independently and know how they work. For example, they role model staff, pretending to read the story and showing the pictures. Most children recognise their own name and some can write their name. More able children can type their name on the computer, sounding out the letters as they do.

Children's mathematical development is progressing adequately. Most children count to five and some very able 4-year-olds can count to much larger numbers in familiar contexts. Some

mathematical language is used during play. For example, a staff member discusses bigger and smaller during construction. Most children recognise a selection of primary colours and common shapes. Games and activities where children match the colours and patterns help children to understand sorting and ordering. Simple counting songs give children a rudimentary understanding of more than and less than. Some children have vivid imaginations and confidently make up games and pretend situations. Children enjoy playing in the role play area where they pretend to be police officers and fire-fighters, going out to 'help people who are hurt and bleeding'. Although some craft activities are pre-determined, children are encouraged in arts and crafts, for example, through making a Mothers Day card where they create a picture for the front of the card.

Children investigate objects & materials, using their senses. For example, they enjoy an activity where they play with coffee and sugar. They collect leaves and other objects from the outside in the garden; they also look at bugs and insects through magnifying glasses, grow sunflowers and cress, which supports their learning of the natural world. They use a variety of materials and fabrics when building their 'family' out of junk modelling. They gain experience with technology when using the computer; some children can capably use a mouse and keyboard. They learn about the passage of time through their 'journal' which they take on trips and outings and then recount the events to the other children. Children's physical development is suitably supported. They enjoy spending time outside where they balance, hop, jump and skip. They are able to negotiate around the area capably; they have some opportunities to climb when in the soft play area. Most children can use small tools, such as paint brushes and pens, competently.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is satisfactory.

Children's individual needs are suitably met to ensure they are fully included in the life of the setting. This is well supported by detailed information gathered at registration and on-going conversations with parents. Children are helped to feel sense of belonging through some of their pictures being displayed on the walls, creating a welcoming child friendly environment. Staff take positive steps to ensure that they follow the setting's equal opportunities policy with regard to non-discriminatory practice; some resources are provided to support children's inclusion, such as left handed scissors. Children are beginning to learn about other people in the world through activities that consider other religious and cultural festivals. However, they do not freely access toys and activities that fully encompass anti-discriminatory practice and promote positive images of different people, which compromises their learning. Children who have a learning difficulty or special need are effectively cared for by staff who are knowledgeable in how to access appropriate external support. The regular monitoring of children ensures that any difficulties are identified early and discussed with parents.

Children's welfare and well being is suitably supported through satisfactory systems that are in place to promote positive behaviour. Most children are able to share toys and enjoy playing together. Older children understand the expectations for behaviour and have developed 'rules', encouraging them to take responsibility for their own behaviour. The setting's behaviour management policy stresses that staff concentrate on creating a positive environment. Most staff have an adequate understanding of the management of difficult behaviour, which generally provides consistency and therefore security for the children. Children's self esteem is effectively promoted through praise and sometimes stickers that lead to a treat. Children's social, moral, spiritual and cultural development is fostered. Children benefit from positive and co-operative working with parents. Staff take positive steps to maintain effective relationships with parents

through, for example, involving parent in events. Some useful information is available to parents on the notice board; staff speak to parents on a daily basis to discuss their child's well-being. This ensures that there is consistency for the children.

The partnership with parents and carers of children who receive nursery education is satisfactory. Parents receive some initial, verbal information regarding the nursery education. They have regular opportunities to view their child's assessment record and also to be involved with the assessment. For example, staff ask parents to complete observations alongside them and to comment on their child's progress. Parents are given some valuable information about how they can support their child's learning at home in the form of ideas on the nursery newsletter. This effectively supports children's further development.

Organisation

The organisation is satisfactory.

Children are cared for by staff who are suitable and sufficiently experienced, which positively supports their care and education. Systems that are in place for recruiting staff are suitably robust, which promotes children's safety. Children have sufficient adult support to be secure and confident in the setting. However, the deployment of staff is not always effective and can sometimes be disruptive for the children and potentially compromise their welfare. An induction process ensures staff are aware of their responsibilities. All the required documentation is in place to promote children's sense of well-being. However, some documentation is not confidential, impacting upon children's privacy. Parents are given some useful information that contributes to the consistency of care for children. However, the setting's operational plan, including policies and procedures, are not freely accessible to parents, which means that they are not aware of the systems in place that impact upon their child's care and well-being. Overall the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

The leadership and management of the nursery education is satisfactory. The management team work well with external agencies, such as the Local Authority support, to identify strengths and areas for improvement. However, systems are not in place to formally monitor the quality of teaching and learning. As a result, children are not consistently challenged to achieve their full potential and some staff lack the training to maximise children's learning.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last Children Act inspection the provider was given recommendations around: Revising the system for registering children's attendance on a daily basis, showing hours of attendance; ensuring cots or other appropriate furniture are provided for children to rest or sleep, particularly in relation to children under 2 years. Also ensure furniture provided for children's sleep is in good repair, in relation to individual mats in Buttercups; ensuring pushchairs stored in Buttercups toilet area are made safe or inaccessible; keeping a written record of medicines given to children, signed by parents to acknowledge the entry; ensuring information about children includes individual requirements in relation to sleeping arrangements, these are agreed with parents; revising the child protection statement in line with current guidance, including procedures to be followed in the event of an allegation being made against a staff member or volunteer; devising and implement a statement of the procedure to be followed in the event of a parent failing to collect a child or of a child being lost. These have been suitably addressed, which effectively supports children's care and development.

At the last nursery education inspection key issues were raised around: Including activities to extend the children's understanding of information and communication technology and calculation into the curriculum planning; ensuring that children are suitably challenged through everyday learning opportunities; expanding the range of multi-cultural resources to support the children's learning about other cultures and beliefs. These have been satisfactorily addressed, which benefits children's learning.

Complaints since the last inspection

Since April 2004 Ofsted has received one complaint that required the provider to take action. This related to Standard 1: Suitable Person, Standard 2: Organisation, Standard 11: Behaviour and Standard 13: Child protection. The complaint related to the inappropriate handling of children and insufficient staff ratios. We carried out an unannounced visit to the provider to investigate the concerns raised in October 2006. The provider reviewed systems for recording staff attendance and ensured that records were maintained of incidents which were shared with parents.

The provider remains qualified for registration. The provider has made a record of the complaint in their complaint record. 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):

- further develop staffs knowledge and understanding of the effective planning and implementation of activities and the assessment of children using 'Birth to Three matters'
- develop the range of resources and play opportunities that promote anti-discriminatory practice and depict positive images of culture, disability, gender and ethnicity
- ensure that all documentation is confidential, with particular reference to accident and medication records
- ensure that the deployment of staff is effective at all times
- ensure that the setting's operational plan, including the policies and procedures, is freely available for parents.

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):

- ensure that all staff who work with the pre school children have a sufficient knowledge of the Foundation Stage and how to effectively support children's learning
- review the systems for assessment of children and the planning of activities to ensure that they are effective for all children and offer sufficient challenge
- provide opportunities for children to consolidate their skills through everyday activities and play opportunities.
- consider the monitoring and evaluating staff's practice to ensure that the planning and implementation of activities is effective.

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