

Staffordshire University Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	224664
Inspection date	30 March 2007
Inspector	Jacqueline Mason
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Registered person	Dean of Students - Francesca Francis
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?

Staffordshire University Day Nursery opened in 1992. It operates from four rooms in a single storey building at Winton Square in Stoke. The nursery serves the students of the Stoke-on-Trent site of Staffordshire University, although places may be available for university staff and the local community.

There are currently 76 children from birth to five years on roll. This includes 20 funded children. Children attend a variety of sessions. The setting currently supports a number of children with special needs.

The group opens five days a week all year round. The setting is open from 08.00 until 18.00 during term time and 08.45 until 17.15 out of term.

There are seven full and six part time staff that work with the children. All staff have early years qualifications to NVQ level 3 or above. The nursery has a healthy eating accreditation and has an Investors in People award.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Staff are aware of the need to promote good hygiene to promote good health. Older children are encouraged to wash their hands before eating and after toileting and staff working with these children also act as positive role models by washing their hands before serving foods. However, younger babies do not have their hands washed before eating, including eating 'finger foods', and staff do not always wash their hands before serving food and feeding babies. This compromises the health of babies. Parents and carers are encouraged to provide toothbrushes and toothpaste for their children and staff help children to brush their teeth after lunch. Individual disposable paper towels are provided and effective nappy changing procedures are in place to help reduce the risks of cross-infection.

Healthy eating is promoted very well. The daily menu is displayed and accurately reflects what is provided to ensure that parents and carers are fully informed about what their children are eating each day. Children are well nourished because the meals and snacks provided are healthy and offer a varied and balanced diet. Fresh fruit and vegetables are used and the use of processed foods is avoided. Special dietary needs are met in agreement with parents and carers. Drinks are kept readily available and children are developing independence as they help themselves to their individual cup. Younger children are offered drinks regularly to ensure that they do not become thirsty.

The provision for physical development is good. Although younger babies do not have daily opportunities to be outdoors the outdoor space is used well by the rest of the setting. Children enjoy active physical play and enthusiastically choose from a good range of wheeled toys including tricycles, prams and scooters. Other outdoor equipment, such as bats and balls, is also available. Provision is made to ensure that older children have daily opportunities for energetic physical play and this helps to contribute to a healthy lifestyle.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is satisfactory.

The premises are made welcoming and friendly to parents, carers and children. The building is decorated to a good standard and children's art work is displayed well, helping children to develop a sense of belonging. However, the temperature of the rooms used by children under the age of two years is not adequately monitored to ensure that they are of a suitable level. The rooms are sometimes very hot and are not sufficiently ventilated. However, staff do take good precautions to ensure that safety hazards are minimised. For example, socket covers are used to make electrical sockets inaccessible to children and radiators are covered. The outdoor play area is fully enclosed.

Toys and equipment are appropriate to the age and level of understanding of the children in each of the base rooms. Children have free access to toys that are stored on low-level shelving. Other toys are stored out of reach and are brought out by staff. A cleaning rota for the toys and equipment ensures that they are clean, safe and suitable for their purpose.

Good attention is paid to ensuring that all staff have a thorough knowledge of emergency evacuation procedures. Staff are aware of their roles and responsibilities to evacuate the building quickly and safely. The policies for lost children or children not collected at the end of the day

are in place and are displayed in each room to ensure that staff are aware of the procedures that they should follow. Staff have a sound knowledge and understanding of child protection issues. They are aware of the signs and symptoms of abuse and know what to do if they have a concern that a child is being abused or is at risk of abuse. Staff are due to attend child protection training in the near future to further develop their awareness. This helps to ensure that the welfare of children is safeguarded.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff have a sound understanding of how children develop and use the 'Birth to three matters' framework effectively to ensure good outcomes for children under three years of age. They effectively plan and carry out a varied range of activities that help children to build on their natural curiosity as learners. Staff provide children with accessible resources so that they can begin activities independently. Children enjoy exploring activities that are interesting and stimulating and through this are becoming confident in what they can do and gaining self-assurance. For example, children explore PVA glue and enjoy watching it as it drips from the glue spreader onto their paper during a collage activity.

Adults show a good interest in what the children say and do and respond well to them. Staff respond well to babies' babbles and gestures, such as picking babies up to enable them to reach items that were previously out of reach. Younger children seek out adults for support and are developing self-assurance through their close relationships with them. They enjoy looking at books with adults and sharing toys with them. Adults in turn encourage playfulness, turn taking, and they talk to babies and young children to help language development. Consistent routines are followed that promote confidence and a sense of belonging.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good and children are making good progress towards the early learning goals. Staff have a sound understanding of the Foundation Stage of learning and use their knowledge of how children learn to set realistic challenges. Staff are careful to plan a varied and interesting range of activities that build on what children already know and motivate them to want to learn. Appropriate teaching methods are used and children are provided with good opportunities to work independently as well as with adult support. Adult-led activities are linked directly to the stepping stones and individual learning needs are identified to help ensure that activities are sufficiently challenging for more able children but not too difficult for younger and less able ones.

Children are encouraged to work independently in the environment and choose from the good range of activities provided each day. In addition, children are able to self-select from the toys and resources that are stored in low-level storage units. Children are able to use resources to learn at their own pace. Children have very good relationships with staff and each other. They play well together and engage each other in conversation and role play. For example, children enjoy using the dressing up clothes and co-operate with each other in their imaginative play as superheroes. Children have good vocabulary skills. Staff are good at extending conversations to encourage children to think. They help children to make links between the home and nursery environment, such as during snack time they talk about what they have had for breakfast. Children also talk about activities they have carried out at home and respond well to staff's interest in what they are saying. Listening skills are also developing well and children listen to each other at snack and circle time.

Children enjoy listening to stories and look at books independently as well as sitting in large groups with an adult. They understand the sequencing of a story and confidently predict what happens next, joining in enthusiastically with repeated refrains. The book area is inviting to children. Most children recognise their first name when it is written and are aware that print carries meaning. They have made 'registration plates' for the outdoor tricycles using initial letters from their names and children readily recognise the plate that belongs to them. There is a good range of outdoor play equipment for energetic physical play. A good range of outdoor play activities takes place, such as chalk boards and a sand tray. Outdoor play could be further improved by planning for it in line with the six areas of learning to ensure that it covers the same broad curriculum that is planned for indoors.

Staff provide opportunities for children to count in routine and everyday play situations. Children count readily at registration and are learning about the days of the week and months of the year during this time. At snack time children are selected to count how many children are sitting at the table and how many cups are needed. However, the other children are not actively engaged in this and improvements to whole group activities are needed to ensure that all children are able to participate. Despite this, mathematical understanding is promoted well through this routine situation and through it children are learning about using numbers in practical contexts.

Children show an awareness of shape and confidently name two-dimensional shapes. They use shape language confidently, such as the shape name 'oval' during an Easter egg hunt.

Children enjoy exploring everyday technology such as computers and telephones. Staff provide good opportunities for children to see and use technology, such as putting telephones and clocks into the role play area. Information technology skills are developing well. Children confidently use the computer and are able to complete simple programmes without adult support. Hand-to-eye co-ordination is developing well. Children are able to use the mouse accurately. They pour milk from the jug independently and are able to pour it without spilling. Children enjoy wheeled toys, pedalling confidently and stopping, starting and changing direction to avoid obstacles, with ease.

Art and craft activities are enjoyed by children and they are developing individual creativity as they carry out activities independently. They enjoy creative activities on a large and small scale and work together to create collages of cut-out 'Easter eggs', exploring the properties of each oval as they work. They use good, descriptive language to describe the texture of the eggs such as shiny, bumpy, smooth and soft. The Easter egg hunt has helped children to learn about positioning such as under and over.

Adult-led activities are evaluated well to monitor children's enjoyment and learning experiences. Evaluation of activities feeds into children's individual assessment records that are in turn used to plan the next steps in their learning. Through this, staff are able to ensure that all children are making progress along the stepping stones and identify any areas for concern.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Staff have a good understanding of equal opportunities issues and use it effectively to help children learn about the world around them. They provide art activities and a good range of play materials to help children develop positive attitudes towards their own and other cultures and beliefs, disability and gender. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development

is fostered. There are currently no children on roll with disabilities and/or learning difficulties but there are very good arrangements in place to ensure that such children are identified and are fully included in the life of the nursery. Staff find out about individual needs through discussion with parents and carers and by observation of the children. In this way concerns can be identified, routines adapted and activities planned to promote development. The setting currently supports children who speak English as an additional language.

Unwanted behaviour is managed well to help children learn right from wrong and play harmoniously together. Staff help children to understand why the behaviour is unacceptable by explaining to them the effects that their behaviour has on others. Staff have high expectations and there is a very strong emphasis on focusing on good behaviour. Verbal praise and reward stickers are used and children's self-esteem flourishes when staff praise them for sharing, being kind to each other, and using good manners. Staff lead by example. They act as positive role models and show good respect to children, helping them to develop caring relationships with others.

Staff have friendly and trusting relationships with parents and carers and recognise the importance of working in partnership with them. Parents and carers are encouraged to share what they know about their child and this helps staff to be able to meet children's individual needs. The individual routines of babies and young children, such as sleeping and feeding, are discussed and recorded to ensure that continuity of care is promoted. Parents and carers are kept informed about their children's day through verbal feedback when they collect their children.

NURSERY EDUCATION

Partnerships with parents and carers of children receiving nursery education are good. There are good arrangements in place for involving parents and carers in their children's learning, for example by encouraging them to use the nursery library. Parents and carers are encouraged to report anything that their child achieves at home. The achievement is recorded on the 'achievement tree' and children are congratulated at circle time, helping to promote self-esteem and confidence. There is an 'open-door' policy in place in the setting which enables parents and carers to come in at any time to chat to staff about their children and look at developmental records. A display board in the pre-school room is used to display information for parents and carers about the Foundation Stage of learning and activity planning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are settled and secure in a welcoming, friendly and caring environment in which staff put the interests of the child first and spend most of their time working directly with them. An effective key worker system is in place that ensures a named person is allocated to each child to take responsibility for their day to day care and development needs. Children are grouped appropriately according to their age and level of development to ensure that their individual needs are met and to ensure that they have sufficient adult support to promote self-confidence. Students mostly interact well with the children.

All documentation, necessary for the safe and efficient running of the setting, is in place. Parent and carers have access to policies and procedures and this helps them to make informed choices about their children's care. Registration systems are good to ensure that staff know at all times the children, staff and visitors that are on the premises. Appropriate arrangements for visitors

helps protect children from persons who have not undergone relevant checks. There are effective procedures in place for the recruitment and selection of staff and this helps to make sure that those looking after children are suitable to do so. Overall, the provision meets the needs of the range of children for whom it provides.

Leadership and management are good. Staff work well together and are aware of their roles and responsibilities. The setting has robust systems in place for monitoring and assessing its strengths and weaknesses and strives for continuous improvement. Action plans are in place that are monitored and acted upon. They are reviewed each school term and the action taken to improve is recorded.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection the setting was required to improve the opportunities for children between the ages of one and two years to access books and to develop a system for recording incidences of physical restraint. As a result, a purpose designed bookcase has been installed in the one to two age group room. This ensures that children have free access to books and good quality books have been added to help children develop an interest in books. A system has been implemented for recording any incidences of physical restraint.

NURSERY EDUCATION

At the last inspection the setting was required to develop opportunities for children to see and use mathematics in everyday routine situations. Staff have made changes to the way that registration and snack time are carried out to ensure that children are able to use mathematics in a practical context.

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 hygiene practices in the baby room

- improve opportunities for babies to be outdoors
- monitor the temperature of the rooms to ensure that they are of a suitable temperature and sufficiently ventilated.

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):

- develop whole group activities to ensure that all children are able to participate
- further develop outdoor play to ensure that the 6 areas of learning are promoted.

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