



Mucky Pups Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

Unique Reference Number	250093
Inspection date	19 February 2007
Inspector	Adelaide Griffiths
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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 satisfactory.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Mucky Pups Nursery is one of three nurseries in a chain. It opened in 2000 and operates from one large ground floor room in a converted shop building. It is situated in a small row of shops in Olton. A maximum of 20 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open from 07:30 to 18:00 all year round except for bank holidays. All children share a secure enclosed play area.

There are currently 44 children from two to eight years on roll. Of these, eight receive funding for early years education. Children attend for a variety of sessions. Children come from the wider community. The nursery supports children with learning difficulties.

The nursery employs six members of staff. All hold appropriate early years qualifications. The nursery receives support from the Local Authority.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

Children are clearly learning about hygiene as all wash hands as part of the daily routine. For example, they are reminded to wash hands following some activities including messy play. Children have some protection due to procedures which minimise the risk of infection as a probe is used to test the temperatures before food is served. Staff have some awareness of cleaning tables with anti-bacterial spray before snacks and meals are served. However, this is not applied in the practice relating to sleeping arrangements. Younger children share bedding as all sheets and blankets are stored in a sleep box. This means that children's protection against infection is potentially compromised.

Children's health is effectively protected due to established procedures regarding exclusion in the event of infectious illnesses and sickness. Parental permission is obtained for the administration of medication and for emergency medical treatment. Staff hold current first aid qualifications and a first aid box is replenished at regular intervals.

Children's understanding of healthy eating is strongly promoted through activities and parents are consulted regarding personal preferences. Children are clearly learning about healthy options. For example, they eat a selection of apples, bananas, kiwi fruit and oranges during snack time. Water is available throughout the day. Children's self-reliance is competently promoted as they access their individual bottles which are recognisable through different colours and labels.

Children benefit from daily exercise. For example, low beams are provided to promote balancing skills. Children gain spatial awareness as they ride around in bubble cars and on bikes. In the event of inclement weather children have opportunities to join in with indoor activities. For instance, they participate in movement to music and dancing. Young children sleep according to their established pattern while older children engage in quiet activities such as reading. Children experience a balance between vigorous play and quiet activities.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a welcoming environment. The room is cheerful with brightly coloured posters and examples of children's work. Children are welcomed warmly and most settle quickly. There is sufficient space for all children due to the arrangement of furniture and versatile storage facilities are provided. Outdoors children play in a safe area. For example, the gate is locked at all times. They access safe toys which are chosen for age-appropriateness and educational value.

Children's safety is significantly protected as staff carry out daily risk assessments. Their security is ensured due to controlled entry to the premises. Children are supervised consistently. For instance, whilst they are asleep a member of staff remains nearby. Children are supported in gaining an understanding of road safety as they are reminded to take note of the traffic before

crossing the road. Children are protected in the event of emergencies through participation in frequent fire drills.

Children's welfare is strongly safeguarded due to staff's substantial knowledge and understanding of child protection. Staff are confident about procedures for recording and reporting concerns. Parents are informed about staff's responsibility for protecting children and this is supported by a statement.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in a cheerful environment and younger children's independence is competently promoted. For example, they freely access a wide range of stimulating resources stored within reach. Children's recognition skills are effectively promoted as they repeat the colours of toys and resources used in play. Children are clearly learning to take turns at stirring the cake mixture whilst participating in a baking activity and their social skills are firmly promoted as they play together. Their concentration is focussed whilst listening to stories and their language skills are promoted as they enjoy the singing of nursery rhymes. Staff listen as children talk about experiences at home. For example, they share information about pets and siblings. Children are at ease in the setting and have a sense of belonging. Most younger children's development is consistently promoted as they participate in a wide range of activities but for some children these are not developmentally appropriate. Staff acknowledge that activities do not focus specifically on the needs of younger children in line with the 'Birth to three matters' framework.

Older children's independence is promoted as they contribute to the planning of a wide range of activities which take place towards the end of the day. During half-term break children are free to attend the setting and they join in with some of the activities, for example, story time. They choose from a vast selection of board games which they play together with minimal adult assistance. This supports children in developing social and collaborative skills. Children's self-esteem is effectively promoted as they are given responsibility for turning off the computer after play and ensuring that books are put away after use. Children's individual needs are met.

Nursery education

The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory. Although the manager has sound knowledge of the Foundation Stage this does not apply to all staff. Plans include different outcomes according to age groups but information gained from assessment are not used to support children's individual progress by moving them on to the next level of learning.

Although a variety of teaching methods are used to promote children's learning they are implemented mainly by the manager and other staff are less skilled at doing so. During registration staff talk with children about a range of topics including the date and weather. Staff also use repetition to reinforce learning. For example, children are clearly learning to link letters to sounds as staff repeatedly sound out first letters of their names when reminding children to line up for hand washing and during self-registration. Children are supported in developing a range of skills. For instance, they learn the correct method to ladle the cake

mixture into baking cups as the adult demonstrates this. Additionally, children's small muscle skills are appropriately promoted through stirring of the mixture.

Children are encouraged to try new experiences and they are provided with a learning environment that reflects the community that they come from. For instance, as they visit the florist children participate in taking photographs. Their interest is promoted through the reading of stories at story time. They remain focussed as the story progresses and children are supported in understanding that information can be relayed in print as they look at the large book whilst a story is read. Staff help children to consolidate their learning of numbers through a range of activities. For example, children are learning problem-solving skills as they count the number of children who are walking to the florist and then calculate the total number of people including an adult.

Children are well behaved due to positive strategies. They are supported in learning conventions of acceptable behaviour through reminders to say 'thank you' when served with fruit. Children are gaining some independence as they act as monitors to hand out and collect beakers at snack time. However, they are not encouraged to pour drinks. Although children are learning in an inviting environment organised predominately to promote their independence they do not have opportunities to access all books and a writing area is not set up for spontaneous use. Children's choice is restricted through this arrangement. Staff make effective use of outdoor accommodation as they are extending outside play through the provision of natural materials and development boxes. On the whole, children's learning is promoted through staff's support.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children are valued in the setting and their individual needs are met. For example, children are free to choose from a wide range of activities and their preferences are addressed with regard to dietary requirements. Children are clearly learning about other cultures through the celebration of festivals and the provision of a wide range of resources including toys and books. Children are gaining a good understanding of the wider community. For instance, they participate in outings to the park and library. Their interest in the environment is stimulated as they grow vegetables and have opportunities to water the plants. Staff have current experience of caring for children with learning difficulties. They work with parents to agree on strategies for meeting children's needs and external agencies give support and guidance as required. Children's individual needs are met.

Children are well-behaved due to positive strategies to encourage good behaviour. For example, they comply with rules when reminded and apologise to others as required. Children are clearly learning to share and take turns as they participate in activities. They are supported in learning right from wrong. For instance, explanations are given when requests are made. Children are encouraged to take responsibility. For example, they join in with tidying away and put away outdoor clothes with minimal adult support. Children's self-esteem is consistently raised as staff offer praise frequently for effort and achievement. Children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

There is a good relationship with parents. Parents are pleased with the service provided due to staff's approachable and friendly attitude. Information about children's experiences is shared on a daily basis. A parents' board is available to provide information about events including fundraising. Parents are informed about the complaints procedure and a complaint record is set up. Children benefit from the partnership with parents.

The partnership with parents and carers is satisfactory. All parents are provided with information about nursery provision. They are supplied with a prospectus including information about early education. Parents are seen as partners in their children's learning and they are provided with information about children's progress in formal feedback at parents' evening. Parents are making some contribution to a shared reading scheme. Children's learning is generally supported through the partnership with parents and carers.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are competently protected due to effective suitability procedures. For example, all staff are vetted and rigorous recruitment practice is in place. All staff undertake an induction programme and attend updating training. This means that children are cared for by staff who have a clear understanding of important areas applicable to their welfare. There is good organisation for the care of children. For instance, adult to child ratios are maintained and staff are deployed effectively to ensure that children are supervised consistently.

Policies are available for supporting working with parents and these are reviewed regularly. All required documentation is available. Children's records are securely stored and routinely updated. There is awareness of procedures for the retention of records and of notifying Ofsted about significant changes. This means children's welfare and care are fully promoted through the documentation maintained and the safe management of the provision.

The leadership and management is satisfactory. The registered person aims to ensure that all children reach their potential before starting school. All staff have some awareness about their responsibilities in developing children's learning but they are not confident about all aspects of their role. This means that staff do not always reflect the aims and values of the setting in the quality of their teaching.

Strengths of the setting include a family atmosphere with a safe and homely environment that promotes children's confidence and self-esteem. Most staff have worked at the setting for a considerable period. This means that children feel secure due to continuity in care. Some key issues identified in the previous inspection have been tackled. However, those relating to challenge for children's individual learning have not been fully achieved. Overall, children's needs are met.

Improvements since the last inspection

At the last inspection several recommendations were made. The provider was asked to improve procedures regarding medication records. Records are signed consistently and children's health is fully protected. A recommendation was made regarding fire drills. These are practised

frequently, records are maintained consistently and staff are informed about procedures. This means that children's safety is protected in the event of emergencies. With regard to the procedure to be followed if a child is lost a statement is in place and staff are informed about procedures. Children's safety is protected.

At the last inspection the provider was asked to extend the programme for mathematical development. Children are supported in developing a range of mathematical skills including problem solving. The provider was also requested to improve opportunities for imaginative play. A role-play area is set up and adapted at regular intervals and children access a range of role-play equipment to stimulate their imaginative skills. The provider was asked to make improvement in observing and assessing children's progress. Some improvements are made with regard to the assessment of children development but planning does not include challenges to support children's individual progress.

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):

- ensure that staff are informed and aware of the importance of good hygiene practice in order to prevent the spread of infection
- improve outcomes for children from birth to three by using an approach in line with 'Birth to three matters'

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):

- improve planning in order to ensure that information gained from assessment is used effectively to include challenges to support children's individual progress
- provide an environment that is organised to promote children's independence through routine activities and accessible resources including books and writing materials
- improve staff's knowledge and understanding of the Foundation Stage in order to effectively support their role in promoting children's learning through a wide range of teaching methods.

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