



Chatterbox Day Nursery

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | 253794 |
| Inspection date | 23 February 2007 |
| Inspector | Patricia Dawes |
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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 good.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Chatterbox Day Nursery opened in 2000 and operates from a single storey building in the Netherton area of Dudley, West Midlands. There are two rooms in which children are based depending on their age. A maximum of 38 children may attend the nursery at any one time. The nursery is open each weekday from 07:30 to 18:00 for 51 weeks of the year. All children share access to an enclosed outdoor play area.

There are currently 46 children aged from birth to under five years on roll. Of these 12 children receive funding for nursery education. Children come from a wide catchments area and attend for a variety of sessions.

The nursery employs 12 staff. Of these, seven including the manager hold appropriate early years qualification and two members of staff are working towards a qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is satisfactory.

Children thrive well because staff provide effective adult support and guidance to enable children to develop their understanding of good hygiene practices and become independent in their personal care, such as washing hands after toileting or messy play and before snacks and meals. Clear procedures for sick and infectious children are used to help prevent the spread of infection and keep children healthy. Accidents are managed appropriately; entries in the accident record contain parental signatures, which clearly demonstrate how information is shared with parents. Medication is stored appropriately and records are maintained; however some medicines stored in the fridge are not clearly labelled. This has the potential to compromise children's health and well-being.

Children are offered a varied choice of snacks and meals which are freshly prepared, well-balanced and take account of individual and cultural needs and respects parents wishes. Most children are able to access fresh drinking water, milk or juice and enjoy a selection of fresh fruit or vegetables at snack-time; however the current use of the café style in the two to five year room does not take account of all children's age and stage of development resulting in some children not accessing this area. This means not all children's individual dietary needs are met. Older children learn about healthy foods through discussion and activities, for example, talking about favourite foods at circle time and using play-doh to make these foods. Suitable and sufficient equipment where children can rest and have quiet times is available in both rooms. As a result, children are developing a positive attitude to maintaining a healthy lifestyle.

Children benefit from the daily use of outdoor play space which allows time for exploring, testing and developing physical control. Staff have good understanding of each child's stage of development and as a result children are confident to try out new skills, ask for help when needed and set their own limits within the safe environment. Most children develop a positive attitude to physical exercise as they become excited running around in an attempt to make balloons fly with the wind or successfully manoeuvring a three wheeled tricycle with adult help.; however resources to challenge more able children are limited as equipment is not always age-appropriate such as the larger climbing frame, slides, balancing beams, bikes and tricycles. This has the potential to hinder their overall development and promotion of skills such as climbing and balancing.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children are cared for in premises that are safe, secure and suitable for its purpose. Security of the premises is good and there are effective procedures for the collection of children to ensure that their welfare is safeguarded such as requesting parents of older children to use a side entrance to collect and drop off their children during certain periods of the day. Children use high quality equipment appropriate to their ages and stages of development. All toys and equipment are thoroughly checked and cleaned daily to ensure they meet safety standards.

Resources are well-organised on shelving at the children's level so they can independently select resources which are not gender biased or restricted.

Considerable priority by staff is given to setting limits to maintain children's safety such as conducting regular risk assessments which are recorded and reviewed regularly to ensure hazards are effectively identified and minimised. They create an environment where children are beginning to learn some sense of danger and develop their knowledge of how to protect themselves from harm such as regularly practising fire safety routines which are recorded to demonstrate how practice is monitored and improved. Staff also ensure babies have a safe space to roll, crawl and sit with support. They encourage and remind older children not to run indoors, sit correctly on chairs and to carry scissors and other equipment correctly. This ensures risks of accidental injury to children are minimised.

Comprehensive and effective policies and procedures are in place with regard to child protection and these are shared with parents. Children are protected by staff that have a good understanding of child protection. They understand their role and responsibilities and are able to put appropriate procedures into practice where necessary. This ensures children are cared for effectively and actively promotes children's safety and well-being.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Staff are qualified, skilled and continuing to develop their understanding of the early years framework 'Birth to three matters' to provide good quality care and education. All children arrive happy and eager to participate and enjoy their time in the nursery. Close and caring relationships are promoted by the quality of the staff interactions which increases children's sense of trust and helps them to develop a strong sense of self. Children enjoy making contact with adults and gaining their attention and staff positively promotes their early communication skills through offering appropriate support and responding to their questions and gestures.

Children are confident to try new experiences due to staff's good understanding of how to motivate children by ensuring activities are adapted, so all children can participate. A range of planned activities allow babies and younger children to explore, discover and begin to make sense of the world and express their ideas. They are able to join in a varied range of exploratory and sensory experiences, for example, using sand, paint and glue to make art displays in the baby room; however these do not always enable children to express their own creative skills as they appear to be over-directed by staff. This has the potential to impact on children's development and learning.

NURSERY EDUCATION

The quality of teaching and learning is good. Staff have an adequate knowledge of the Foundation Stage, however, the staff has yet to consolidate their teaching skills to become a stronger unified team. Key workers are beginning to know their children well and have a good knowledge of methods best suited to individual children. Staff plan a balanced range of practical activities and use a good range of equipment and resources to ensure children are interested, motivated and absorbed in their learning; however staff do not always use daily routines as

learning opportunities to support children's progress in all areas of learning. Systems to observe, monitor and record children's achievements and to plan experiences that help children take the next step in their learning are adequate.

Children are developing positive relationships as they behave well in response to the high expectations and sensitive support of staff. They are beginning to work well together, showing care and consideration for each other and staff. They readily help each other and staff to clear away activities and help plan the rooms for each activity. Some children are developing an increased independence as they access drinks and snacks in the café, select resources and take care of their own personal needs, however, this does not always take account of individual children's skills.

Children are eager to learn, self-assured in their play and confident to try new experiences. They enjoy stories and listen intently and question with enthusiasm as a member of staff tells a story about Bambi. They also learn that print carries meaning and use books to gather information. For example, children learn about foods from other countries and how people live there through looking at information books and discussion. All children use marks readily through the creation of a writing area and older children learn to write their own names.

Children gain confidence and respond enthusiastically during number rhymes. All children are able to recognise numbers 1-10; older children have increasing knowledge of higher numbers. Children use various tools and resources for measuring and comparing shape, position and size such as tape measures and rulers. They are beginning to use mathematical vocabulary such as, big and small, however, opportunities to extend their skills in early calculation and problem solving through daily routines are less well planned.

Children make sense of the world around them through discussions about holiday places they have visited with their families taking Ted the bear on their travels. They learn about other cultures and beliefs as they enjoy celebrating different festivals throughout the year such as Chinese New Year, Pancake Day and Christmas. They are developing an increasing awareness of technology as they access cameras, electronic tills and a lap-top computer to complete educational programmes with their friends and staff.

Children move confidently when playing outside as they ride a tricycle or scooter or practise throwing and catching hoops to improve their physical skills, however, opportunities for more able children to further develop their physical skills in climbing and balancing are limited and do not offer challenge as equipment is too small. Children enjoy music and movement sessions indoors where they learn to develop their awareness of space, themselves and others.

Children's creative development is promoted well with daily opportunities to paint, draw and use collage. They explore and investigate, mixing colours using paints, experimenting with 'gloop' and shaving foam or making foods from play-doh which provides opportunities to use their senses and look closely at changes. Children recognise sound patterns and match movements to music and rhythms during indoor singing sessions as they access the musical instruments.

Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

All children are made welcome and treated with equal concern as staff recognises each child's individual needs to ensure their time is spent purposefully. They are valued and respected as staff encourage all children to take an active part in the nursery. Activities and resources are appealing, stimulating and fun and provide good opportunities for children to have choices in their play. Staff uses constructive praise and encouragement on arrival and throughout the day. All of this helps to increase children's confidence, self-esteem and build positive relationships with staff and each other.

Children have ample opportunities to learn about themselves, each other and the world around them through imaginatively planned activities and the use of good quality resources such as playing in the snow, blowing bubbles, or skating on shaving foam. Children have unlimited access to a variety of resources depicting positive images of diversity, and celebrate various festivals from around the world, the most recent being Chinese New Year and Pancake Day. As a result, children's spiritual, moral, social and cultural development is fostered.

Children's behaviour is good due to the clear boundaries and positive role models set by the staff. They are beginning to understand the difference between right and wrong as they respond well to gentle reminders from staff to care for their environment, the nursery resources and each other such as taking turns, sharing, tidying away toys after use and remembering to say 'please' and 'thank you'. As a result children are learning to negotiate with others and take responsibility for their own behaviour.

A good partnership with parents contributes well to children's well-being, development and learning. New parents receive a comprehensive prospectus which ensures they are aware of how the setting operates. Parent's views are sought regarding their children's needs and interests by completing a registration form and care plan with a key worker before the child starts the setting. They are informed on a regular basis of topics and operational changes from the parents' notice board and printed information sheets located at the entrance to each room. Children settle well because staff work closely with parents to ensure their child's individual needs are discussed and recorded. Daily exchange of information keeps parents informed of their child's well-being. An 'open door' policy exists which promotes a positive relationship between children, parents and staff.

Partnership with parents and carers for children in receipt of nursery funding is good. They receive detailed information on the educational programme and have open access to regular written developmental reports. Parents are given ideas to help with their child's learning at home and are encouraged to become involved in projects like "Ted the Bears travel". Good systems are in place for staff and parents to share information to meet children's individual needs, such as parents afternoons/evenings and newsletters. Staff uses questionnaires to seek parent's views, which are valued and used to improve practice. This enhances all areas of the children's development and learning.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Rigorous and robust recruitment procedures are in place to ensure all staff are appropriately qualified, vetted and receive a full induction regarding the use of appropriate policies and procedures. Adequate contingency arrangements make certain there are the required levels of qualified staff working with all children. Staff are motivated and committed to improve and develop their knowledge and practice through regular and ongoing training. This has a positive impact on children's safety and well-being.

Children are happy, comfortable and settled and benefit from a warm, caring environment where their individual needs are well-met. Indoor and outdoor space is organised well to maximise play, learning and development opportunities. Staff are motivated, committed and provide a varied programme of activities which ensure children's time is spent purposefully. Comprehensive policies and procedures are in place that has a positive impact on children's safety and well-being. There are clear systems in place for recording accidents, medication and children's and staff attendance. Documentation is reviewed and updated annually to continually reflect the good quality provision.

The leadership and management of the setting are good. Children benefit from a staff team who continually evaluate their practice to increase their knowledge and understanding of how children learn. They are able to assess their own strengths and weaknesses through regular staff meetings and appraisals. Key staff within the education provision have regular planning and assessment meetings working alongside a teacher advisor and the Early Years Development Team. The management team work well together and have high expectations of the staff as they regularly reflect, monitor and help to improve the quality of their care and education. The whole team displays an encouraging commitment to continuous improvement and development in the quality of the provision.

Overall the nursery meets the needs of the range of children who attend well.

Improvements since the last inspection

Since the previous care inspection the person in charge has made improvements to the procedures for staff recruitment. There is now a rigorous and robust system in place. The equal opportunity policy is now consistent with current legislation and guidance and all staff understand and implement this policy. Facilities for hand washing have been improved through the provision of an additional sink and updating the written procedures for staff. All staff has attended training and now use the 'Birth to three' framework well with regard to planning for the next steps in children's play, learning and development. As a result of these improvements a positive impact has been made on children's safety and well-being.

Considerations from the previous nursery education inspection have been sufficiently well-addressed. Staff work closely with a teacher advisor and use the Local Authority children's profiles for the recording of children's assessment and progress. These effectively identify the difference in planning for individual children's levels of ability and understanding. Staff provide parents with detailed reports on children's progress and development and actively encourage

parents to become more involved in their child's learning through the introduction of "Ted the Bears travels".

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.

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 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 all children's medication is individual and clearly labelled
- improve children's access to drinks and snacks to take account of their age and stage of development
- continue to develop staffs understanding of how child-initiated learning with particular regard to creative learning for under 2's.

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):

- continue to develop staffs understanding of the Foundation Stage curriculum and how daily routine activities can be used as learning opportunities
- extend the range of outdoor resources to offer greater physical challenge to more able children. (This also applies to care).

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